



IGAD DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES ON COOPERATION IN THE RED SEA AND GULF OF ADEN

Preamble

We, the Heads of State and Government of the Inter-governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), in our assembly to deliberate on the principles of cooperation in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden;

Reiterating our commitment to act in a spirit of friendship, multilateralism, good neighborliness, mutual respect, and cooperation based on the principles under the UN Charter, the Constitutive Act of the African Union and the Agreement Establishing the IGAD;

Cognizant of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, the African Charter on Maritime Security and Safety and Development in Africa (Lome Charter) and Africa's Integrated Maritime Strategy (2050 AIM Strategy);

Mindful that four of the eight members constituting IGAD border the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden;

Acknowledging that the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden are important international water-bodies significant to the geopolitical, economic and security interests of littoral and non-littoral Member States of IGAD;

Recognizing the rights and duties of littoral and non-littoral states on utilization of resources and the use of territorial waters, exclusive economic

zones and the high seas in accordance with the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea and other relevant international and regional instruments;

Bearing in mind the inherent ties and deep socio-economic interaction between the peoples of the western and eastern shores of the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden, as well as interests of the international community;

Deeply concerned by the increasing trend of using Red Sea and Gulf of Aden as routes for trafficking of persons, arms, piracy and drugs;

Further concerned by the threats, risks and challenges evolving from the geopolitical dynamics in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden and their impacts on the economic, social and security interest of IGAD Member States;

Reaffirming our determination to cooperate in combating aggression, violence, terrorism, illegal fishing, dumping of toxic waste and lawlessness and all acts and engagements that contravene international law;

Noting the 46th Ordinary Session of the IGAD Council of Ministers held in Djibouti on 27 February 2019, and the subsequent deliberations on the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden at the meeting of the Committee of Ambassadors to IGAD from 3-4 April 2019, held in Nairobi; and their decision thereof;

Hereby Agree to:

- 1. Uphold** the principles of cooperation based on consensus in line with UN Charter, the Constitutive Act of the African Union and the Agreement Establishing the IGAD;
- 2. Further uphold** the vital interests of IGAD in peace, security, economic prosperity, stability and predictability in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden with a view to enhance cohesion and integration among the IGAD Member States;
- 3. Ensure** that the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden remains a peaceful, stable and predictable zone where regional and international cooperation and respect for the principles of international law are the norm;

4. **Adopt** a Common IGAD Position with a view to transform the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden into a region of peace, stability and prosperity through strengthened cooperation towards the sustainable development of the Blue Economy, human security, fair and sustainable use and management of maritime resources and protection of the environment;
5. **Coordinate** the efforts of IGAD with other littoral and non-littoral states in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden and the wider international community for a cooperative venture on peace, security, commerce and trade, climate change, health, education, foster maritime environment, and maritime safety;
6. **Support** IGAD vision and mission of regional integration in the Horn of Africa;
7. **Ensure** the maximum protection of the existing and future interests of all Member States: prioritize and protect the rights and interests of littoral and non-littoral member states of IGAD in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden;
8. **Reinforce the efforts** towards environmental conservation and combating of transnational crimes, including terrorism, drug and human trafficking, piracy and other crimes including illegal, unregulated, and unreported fishing as well as dumping of pollutants at sea;
9. **Collaborate with** all countries littoral to and adjacent with the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden and other stakeholders on the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden on issues of strategic importance that will foster regional and international cooperation;
10. **Promote** resolution of disputes among IGAD Member States and all other stakeholders on the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden issues through peaceful means and in the spirit of good neighborliness;

11. **Put in place** mechanisms of cooperation and engagement with countries coastal to and adjacent with the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden and other stakeholders such as the United Nations, the African Union and other relevant international institutions;
12. **Support** the Office of the Special Envoy to enhance capacity building, institutional linkages and strategic outreach with relevant initiatives, including the proposed Red Sea and Gulf of Aden Council in Saudi Arabia, to promote appropriate framework of cooperation in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden;
13. **Further promotes** co-operation in multi-disciplinary research, knowledge sharing and scientific cooperation to enhance knowledge development, technological and innovation capacity by promoting an interface between knowledge and IGAD policy organs;
14. **Endorse** the recommendations/outcomes of the 46th Ordinary Session of the IGAD Council of Ministers held in Djibouti on 27 February 2019;
15. **Further endorse** the preparation of an integrated regional strategy and plan of action by the IGAD Taskforce to respond to the challenges and opportunities in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden;
16. **Resolves** to ensure regularly follow-up the situation in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden and monitor enforcement of this Declaration.

**Addis Ababa, Ethiopia,
29th November 2019**