

## Letters from Corresponding Editors

### *Australia*

#### *1979 International Conference on Indian Ocean Studies.*

From 15 to 22 August 1979 the University of Western Australia at Nedlands ( a suburb of Perth) will be the host of the International Conference on Indian Ocean Studies ICIOS 1979. In focussing on the Indian Ocean as a coherent region of study, ICIOS 1979 will follow in the tradition established by the earlier, primarily historical, conferences held at Tananarive (1960), Maputo (1962), Beirut (1966) and La Réunion (1972), but at the same time it will cover a much wider field. It will relate to all major historical and contemporary aspects of both the inter-relationships of the various areas within the region (East Africa, the Red Sea and Near East, the Persian Gulf, Malagasy and the archipelagoes, South Asia, Southeast Asia, and finally Australia), and the relationship of the region as a whole with the outside world.

The multi-disciplinary approach of ICIOS 1979 is immediately reflected in its seven specialist sections:

1. Environment and Resources
2. Trade and Development
3. The History of Commercial Exchange  
and Maritime Transport
4. International Politics
5. Cultural Exchanges and Influences
6. Archives and Resources for Study
7. Comparative Education

Moreover, the conference programme contains a formal opening address and four plenary sessions, where addresses of general interest and significance will be delivered.

The aim of ICIOS, to promote academic mutual understanding and cooperation, has already found considerable support from both within and outside the Indian Ocean area, as may be evidenced from the 200 plus preliminary registrations from more than 35 countries. Moreover, the emphasis on interaction between various areas, nations, cultures and economies, is entirely in concordance with the new UNESCO policy to stimulate and promote the study and development not only of individual cultures but also of the interaction between two or more cultural regions.

The recommendations of the UNESCO meeting of Experts held in July 1974 at Port Louis (Mauritius) at which the need to develop the inter-regional and international study of the Indian Ocean was forcefully expressed, has been fully endorsed by the UNESCO executive. The UNESCO executive has now decided on initiating a special effort to establish a programme for future Indian Ocean studies. This programme is to be established at the Perth Conference in August 1979. A preliminary meeting of a small working party of experts will be held later this year (1978) in Sri Lanka for the initial exchange of opinions and the drafting of a working agenda for Perth. During ICIOS 1979 therefore, within the conference programme two business sessions will be set aside, where the programme for Indian Ocean studies will be discussed and subsequently adopted in a special document. As this programme will necessarily relate to the statute of UNESCO itself, it is of most immediate importance to the delegates of Sections III (Maritime History), V (Cultural Relations), VI (Resources for Study) and VII (Educational), but interested delegates to other sections are most welcome to take part in these proceedings. The minutes and any documentation from the Sri Lanka meeting will be available beforehand and all delegates are invited to participate in and contribute to this most important work.

The enrolment fee is AUS \$ 50, which entitles delegates to receive one copy of the volume of papers for their section of prime allegiance and to attend the Conference Dinner. All papers must be submitted by 1 March 1979. They will be united per section in one volume to be distributed before the beginning of the conference. Offers of papers should be made to the secretary of the relevant section. All correspondence is to be directed to:

ICIOS  
 Centre for South and South-East Asian Studies  
 University of Western Australia  
 Nedlands WA 6009  
 Australia

F.Broeze