



IONS 2016 SEMINAR – CONCEPT PAPERS

SEMINAR THEME: FOSTERING PARTNERSHIP IN IOR: CHARTING COURSE FOR MARITIME COOPERATIVE ENGAGEMENT

SESSION-3 THEME: HADR

CONCEPTS

TOPIC 1 - CHALLENGES OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND NATURAL DISASTERS: NEED FOR ENHANCED MARITIME COOPERATION AND RESPONSE

Proliferation of globalization and the rise of transnationalism have bonded the human-ocean relationship more resolutely than ever before. Today, all the states across the globe commonly share many of their vested interests in the ocean, while faced with multitudes of common challenges with increasing complexities. Given, the transnational character of ocean and the interconnectedness of ocean-related affairs, these challenges are causing far reaching implications in today's interdependent world. By the same token, the transborder nature of oceans that paves the way for many opportunities also invites transborder form of non-traditional threats that are difficult for any state to handle alone, like IUU fishing, piracy, smuggling, gun-running, human/drug-trafficking, etc. The oceans are also breeding grounds for inter-state rivalry and disputes over the resources they offer. Yet, the irrefutable fact remains predominant, that ensuring 'maximised' boons for one state engenders banes for the others, which in turn perturbs the entire interdependent world. Thus, in today's world, there is no alternative to inclusiveness; mutual cooperation is indispensable for attaining the desired benefits from the oceans. Given the growing strategic and economic importance of Indian Ocean Region (IOR) vis-à-vis the quantum of challenges encountered there, the need for meaningful partnership among the littorals is strongly felt by all concerned. In this backdrop, IONS 2016 seminar has been premised on fostering partnership for maritime cooperative engagements by the littorals of Indian Ocean Region (IOR). Accordingly, the seminar topics have been chosen to bring some pertinent issues under spotlight, which hinge upon cooperative engagements in the IOR. The seminar topics are distributed over five sessions, with individual session theme, e.g. strategic and economic outlook, security, cooperation, HADR, etc. The seminar aims at exploring some vital grounds of cooperation in the IOR while offering a comprehensive understanding of its various dynamics, and a piercing vision through the challenges and barriers to a thriving future.



When it comes to maritime cooperation, it is the HADR that always appears in the forefront as an area with a record of lots of successful maritime collaborations between nation states of IOR. The natural disasters like Cyclone and Tsunami are more prevalent in Indian Ocean. More so, many of the IOR littorals are at risk of sea level rise because of the climate change. Thus, HADR can be used as the springboard for greater cooperative engagements. As such, besides the untiring endeavour to enhance our HADR preparedness, we also need to look into the lacunas that are conspicuous in our HADR experiences. Accordingly, an entire session of the seminar has been dedicated for discussions on *HADR*.

Enhancing the HADR preparedness cannot be fully achieved, without a deeper and comprehensive understanding of the climate change phenomena. The environmental impact of the climate change has far reaching effect for all the IOR littorals and probable disastrous effect for the low-lying countries like Bangladesh. Hence, knowing the extent of vulnerability of these countries due to the impacts of the climate change is of great importance. To minimize the impacts of climate change, and eventually our vulnerability, we not only need to develop robust mitigation strategies but also require framing complementary, cooperative and responsive strategies to adapt to our warming world. While these long term goals are essential to attain, the short term objectives like preparedness for HADR is also crucial. Bangladesh being the worst sufferer has fortunately developed a workable mitigation strategy against natural disasters like cyclone over the years. However, the mitigation strategy against climate change which warrants a regional and cooperative approach is yet to be worked out. As such, to attain the required level of preparedness at the regional scale it needs a great deal of collaboration in terms of management, capacity sharing as well as capacity building. Hence, the first topic of the session has been chosen to be '*Challenges of Climate Change and Natural Disasters: Need for Enhanced Maritime Cooperation and Response*', with a view to identify the climate change challenges for the IO littorals, with particular focus on HADR, and draw some response strategies to mitigate the challenges through enhanced maritime cooperation. To this effect, it would be also beneficial to explore the scope of cooperative engagements, regulatory framework and potential funding in order to bring about a stronger and more climate resilient IOR.



TOPIC 2 - COOPERATIVE MARITIME SEARCH AND RESCUE IN IOR: A CRITICAL ASSESSMENT AND LESSONS LEARNED

Proliferation of globalization and the rise of transnationalism have bonded the human-ocean relationship more resolutely than ever before. Today, all the states across the globe commonly share many of their vested interests in the ocean, while faced with multitudes of common challenges with increasing complexities. Given, the transnational character of ocean and the interconnectedness of ocean-related affairs, these challenges are causing far reaching implications in today's interdependent world. By the same token, the transborder nature of oceans that paves the way for many opportunities also invites transborder form of non-traditional threats that are difficult for any state to handle alone, like IUU fishing, piracy, smuggling, gun-running, human/drug-trafficking, etc. The oceans are also breeding grounds for inter-state rivalry and disputes over the resources they offer. Yet, the irrefutable fact remains predominant, that ensuring 'maximised' boons for one state engenders banes for the others, which in turn perturbs the entire interdependent world. Thus, in today's world, there is no alternative to inclusiveness; mutual cooperation is indispensable for attaining the desired benefits from the oceans. Given the growing strategic and economic importance of Indian Ocean Region (IOR) vis-à-vis the quantum of challenges encountered there, the need for meaningful partnership among the littorals is strongly felt by all concerned. In this backdrop, IONS 2016 seminar has been premised on fostering partnership for maritime cooperative engagements by the littorals of Indian Ocean Region (IOR). Accordingly, the seminar topics have been chosen to bring some pertinent issues under spotlight, which hinge upon cooperative engagements in the IOR. The seminar topics are distributed over five sessions, with individual session theme, e.g. strategic and economic outlook, security, cooperation, HADR, etc. The seminar aims at exploring some vital grounds of cooperation in the IOR while offering a comprehensive understanding of its various dynamics, and a piercing vision through the challenges and barriers to a thriving future.

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In spite of many success stories of maritime cooperation in the field of HADR in IOR, it has been increasingly felt that serious shortcomings exist in our maritime search and rescue (SAR) efforts. The present day SAR challenges are chiefly attributable to the continuing increase in the size and number of passenger ships, as well as daily transoceanic passenger aircraft flights. SAR authorities are persistently facing ever increasing challenges of disasters at sea. The recent instances of maritime disasters like the unfortunate loss of Malaysian Airlines flight MH 370 and Indonesian Air Asia flight are two such occurrences. The search for MH 370 is the most expensive and widely participated multinational maritime SAR in the history yielding almost no result. On the other hand, the SAR effort for Air Asia flight, achieved significant success. Notwithstanding the differences in the outcome of these two SAR efforts, both have offered us invaluable lessons regarding the conduct of multinational maritime SAR. The response of all the participating states in these SAR efforts, is a clear manifestation of the firm commitment of IOR countries. However, these incidents are also strong reminder of the long-felt need to develop a robust SAR mechanism in the Indian Ocean. These SAR efforts have also stimulated the necessity to critically re-evaluate the present SAR framework of IMO. As such the second topic of the session has been chosen to be ‘Cooperative Maritime Search and Rescue in IOR: A Critical Assessment and Lessons Learned’, with a view to exploring the scopes of enhanced cooperative engagements including an overall policy guideline for funding, task sharing etc.