



# IONS 2016 SEMINAR – CONCEPT PAPERS

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

**SESSION-4 THEME:** COOPERATION AND COLLABORATION

## CONCEPTS

**TOPIC 1 - COLLABORATIVE CAPACITY BUILDING OF IONS NAVIES AND MARITIME SECURITY AGENCIES: PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS**

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.



Maritime cooperation does not work in vacuum. There are certain prime movers that are central to the success of any cooperation or collaboration. Identifying and understanding those crucial factors are important. For instance, Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) is crucial for any maritime cooperation to function, while information lies at its core. Again, efficacy of information collection and sharing depends on the capacity of the collaborating partners. Hence, to have an effective MDA, it is essential to understand the information sphere as well as cumulative capacity of the collaboration itself. Similarly, in any cooperation or collaboration initiative, identifying and assessing these critical factors are vital. The fourth session of the seminar, is premised on *'Cooperation and Collaboration'*, and thus aims at stimulating a deeper understanding of the significance of the driving factors of cooperation and collaboration.

The driving factors of a maritime cooperation may be ascertained by assessing the balance between its goals set (ends), strategies adopted (ways) and the capacities employed (means). In a multinational collaborative framework, the correct combination of capacities of the collaborative partners often becomes pivotal for a cooperation to work desirably. Hence, while blending the capacities of the cooperation partners into desired proportion, capacity building often becomes essential in order to ensure the much-needed compatibility of the equipment and operating procedures. Additionally, diversity and complexity of the threats indicate that no country can create an omni-capable military to counter all kinds of maritime security challenges. That is why, regional level collective capacity building for mutual cooperation needs a comprehensive and collaborative approach. In this backdrop, the first topic of session 4 has been chosen as *'Collaborative Capacity Building of IONS Navies and Maritime Security Agencies: Problems and Prospects'*, with a view to highlighting the scopes as well as probable options and fields of collaborative capacity building between the IONS navies including its problems and prospects. The topic also entails drawing of few guidelines as well as a broad framework under which IONS navies and maritime security agencies can cooperate.



## TOPIC 2 - INFORMATION SHARING AND INTEROPERABILITY: BRIDGING THE GAP OF EXPECTATIONS AND REALITY

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In this information age, where every sphere of life is influenced by and dependant on information, maritime cooperation is also no exception. Information sharing is best encapsulated in the concept of MDA, which is a common concern for all the states having vested interests in the maritime front. Since MDA cannot be achieved or maintained effectively by a single littoral, cooperation in terms of information sharing is critical. However, due to the difference of aspirations, objectives and capabilities, effective information sharing between collaborating navies or maritime security agencies becomes challenging. Added to this are interoperability issues stemming from differences in technology, doctrines, procedures, etc. As such, the second topic of session 4 has been selected as *'Information Sharing and Interoperability: Bridging the Gap of Expectations and Reality'* in order to bring the challenges of information sharing into focus and derive some ways to strike the right balance between the varying expectations/ aspiration vis-à-vis capabilities of the collaborating partners. Specific reference to the Singapore Information Fusion Centre would be pertinent to ascertain the feasibility of adopting such model in IOR.