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PATHFINDER INDIAN OCEAN SECURITY CONFERENCE PHASE II – 2022

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Conducted as a Webinar

Organised by the Pathfinder Foundation

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Opening Session

Welcome Address by Ambassador (Retd.) Geetha de Silva
Secretary General, Pathfinder Indian Ocean Security Conference

Good afternoon, good morning to those participating from the West and good evening to everyone from the East. It is my great pleasure to welcome everybody joining us today from across Sri Lanka and beyond on the zoom platform, to Phase II of the Pathfinder Indian Ocean Security Conference.

The Phase II Conference is a follow up to the Pathfinder Indian Ocean Security Conference which took place in November 2020. Probably some of you joining us today may have attended the 2020 Conference as well. If so, it would be recalled that conducting meetings of this nature, at regular intervals, in order to focus on the multi-faceted issues related to the Indian Ocean region was a recommendation that emanated from the 2020 Conference.

Today's Conference too is being held at Track 1.5 level. I understand that there is wide participation at a local level; from countries in the region; as well as from key global players; regional and international organizations; experts; think tanks; researchers; academics; and the private sector.

The conference will address three topics. They are, (1) A new security architecture for the Indian Ocean aimed at a rule based international order, (2) Expansion of the current arrangements for maritime domain awareness, and (3) Enhancing confidence building measures for the Indian Ocean region.

With the guidance and collaboration from the International Advisory Group of the Pathfinder Indian Ocean Security Conference, the Secretariat identified experts to conduct a research study on each of the topics and prepare a position paper that the experts will be presenting today during the working sessions.

Panels comprising a moderator and two panelists would lead a discussion on each of the three topics to be followed by an open discussion. We hope that today's activity will be a stepping stone for Sri Lanka to engage with countries and organizations in the region as well as those outside, on the necessity for Indian Ocean security.

Such continued activity, very likely will bring together vital players of the Indian Ocean on a single platform, where discussion and deliberation of critical issues could be used to enhance bilateral, regional and multilateral cooperation and collaboration to address common issues and possible threats in this global maritime domain.

We look forward to an afternoon of interesting, useful and stimulating discussion. We also look forward to the contribution of the numerous participants joining us on the zoom platform during the open discussions of the conference through their questions, observations and comments that can be placed on the "chat box".

Thank you.

Opening Remarks by Ambassador (Retd.) Bernard Goonetilleke

Co-Chair, Pathfinder Indian Ocean Security Conference and Chairman, Pathfinder Foundation

Ambassador Shivshankar Menon, Co-chair of PFIOSC, Members of the International Advisory Group (IAG), Members of the Diplomatic Corps, representatives of governmental and non-governmental organizations, and, dear participants.

Let me begin by extending a warm welcome to all participants, to Phase II of the Pathfinder Indian Ocean Security Conference. To quote Alfred Mahan, a great maritime strategist who said "whoever controls the Indian Ocean will dominate Asia, the destiny of the world will be decided on its borders".

Pathfinder Foundation's involvement with ocean-centric matters goes back to five years. We began our work by holding two regional conferences on the Bay of Bengal named Trincomalee Consultations in 2017 and 2018. Those two events were followed by our first international conference focusing on Indian Ocean Security, which was held in 2020. That conference was assisted by a well-represented International Advisory Group (IAG) from ten countries within and outside the region. The IAG met again in December 2021 to advise the Phase II of the Conference, we are holding today.

Based on the conclusions of the 2020 Conference, Phase II of the conference will focus on three areas as indicated by the Secretary General. I need not highlight the importance of the Indian Ocean which covers economic, political, strategic and social fields to a well-informed audience.

The great power rivalry in the Indian Ocean was a source of concern to the countries in the region half a century ago. To address the issue, Sri Lanka, with the support of ~~the~~ non-aligned countries, succeeded in adopting Resolution 2032, at the 26th session of the General Assembly in 1971, which declared the Indian Ocean as a "Zone of Peace". However, as we know, the intensity of the Cold War did not permit such a concept or such a venture to take root.

Exactly 50 years later, the countries in the region are facing great power rivalry once again, and now we are discussing the utility of a New Security Architecture for the Indian Ocean Region. The question is whether the countries in the Indian Ocean Region, the great powers and the major maritime users are now ready to consider a new security architecture for the Indian Ocean. If so, under what framework should it be, the United Nations or a similar international regional organization? We are aware that IORA has given some consideration to security issues relating to the Indian Ocean. However, the focus has been limited to soft security cooperation that includes search and rescue; the safety of shipping; transboundary challenges; etc. In turn, IORA has mandated the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium, known as IONS, to develop a cooperative structure involving these areas. However, we know that of the 37 rim countries of the Indian Ocean, IORA membership is limited to only 23 countries.

The next question is whether one country or a group of countries could give leadership to such a challenging venture. These issues will undoubtedly receive attention during our discussion today.

The recent developments in Europe confirms that diplomacy, dialogue, international law and even the Charter of the United Nations cannot transcend power politics.

Against this backdrop, our first session will have to consider options and mechanisms the Indian Ocean countries should consider to address this vital issue. It is in the interest of all countries to ensure that the sea lanes of communication in the Indian Ocean are not disrupted in any action by any country or group of countries, that would render the Indian Ocean region insecure.

Consequently, steps need to be taken to establish a cooperative security architecture involving the littoral countries, the permanent five and the major maritime users. The other two themes, which we will discuss today, those are Maritime Domain Awareness and Confidence Building Measures, will form an integral part of such a Security Architecture for the Indian Ocean region.

On a different note, the Pathfinder Foundation has launched a dedicated website for the conference that is pathfinderfoundation.lk. A unique feature of this website is the introduction to the Pathfinder Foundation's Artificial intelligence platform namely Pathfinder Digital Insights. It is designed to deliver a bird's eye view of previous Pathfinder Indian Ocean Security Conference discussions, remarks, background papers and reports. Our goal is to provide insights of topics important to our partners and collaborators. This platform enables its users to utilize their time efficiently while browsing through our publications and unlock insights, giving different perspectives.

I wish to take this opportunity to express our appreciation to the Embassies of Japan and the United States of America for sponsoring this event.

Lastly, let me wish today's deliberation success.

Thank you.

Opening Remarks by Ambassador (Retd.) Shivshankar Menon
Co-Chair, Pathfinder Indian Ocean Security Conference

I want to welcome all those participating in Phase II of the Pathfinder Indian Ocean Security Conference.

Phase II was organized to explore and bridge the institutional gaps of Maritime Domain Awareness and Confidence Building Measures that are integral to a New Security Architecture for the Indian Ocean Region. The concept of establishing a security architecture was acknowledged by various experts. Today, it is even more necessary.

One reason for this is that the world is becoming increasing polarized and fragmented, as Ambassador Goonetileke mentioned, big power rivalries and contention seem to trump international law and the UN Charter, where the very idea of an international order has come under threat. The situation is such that disagreements and violent occurrences outside the region may affect the Indian Ocean region, making a security construct essential.

Another reason is that given the time lapse of 2 years since the Phase I, recent developments around the world, including the COVID-19 pandemic, has forced us to expand our definition of 'security'. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has reminded us of the broader dimensions of our security and
the effects of climate change, especially for maritime countries like those who are represented here and those who have an interest in the safety and security of the Indian Ocean. I believe we are facing a future security crisis.

As a consequence, I would argue that the status quo is no longer an option. Just leaving things as they are, is not going to meet, not only our future needs, but our present needs in the Indian Ocean region for security as well.

Given this context, I look forward to hearing the thoughts and views of the group gathered here today. A new security architecture for the Indian Ocean region does not have to be some single construct which is entirely unified. But, if we can at least make progress towards addressing these larger issues, I think it would help us all, because ultimately, I think we are united at the broadest level in our desire for a safe and secure Indian Ocean region where we can develop in peace.

Thank you.

Opening Remarks by H.E Julie Chung
Ambassador of the United States of America to Sri Lanka

I arrived in Sri Lanka recently and just presented my credentials one week ago today. So, it is a great honor to be participating in my first conference here, and on such an important topic as security and prosperity in the Indian Ocean, and our shared goals.

Excellencies, distinguished panelists, participants, I am very pleased to be able to join you at the opening of this conference and I will examine how we might work together to advance security in the Indian Ocean region. I want to start by recognizing the Pathfinder Foundation and conference organizers Ambassadors de Silva, Goonetilleke and Menon, and the Embassy of Japan for gathering us together for this important conversation.

We continue the fruitful discussion on this topic, led by the Pathfinder Foundation in November 2020. One of the themes raised at that conference was how improved regional connectivity would strengthen development throughout the region. Related to that were concerns about the impact of COVID-19 on development. Over the last two years, this pandemic has made undeniably clear that we are only as strong as our collective ability to respond to challenges, particularly new and emerging global threats such as the impacts of climate. It has also underscored the need to work with partners to adapt regional governance to become more resilient to these and other emerging 21st century threats. For example, as President Biden and Special Presidential Envoy for Climate Change John Kerry have made clear, the United States is committed to working with partners to reduce their vulnerability to the impacts of climate and will support the development of disaster resilient infrastructure and address energy security.

I very much appreciate the opportunity to briefly discuss in these opening remarks the importance of the Indian Ocean within a broader Indo-Pacific context. I think we all know that the Indian Ocean is a vital lifeline for the world's trade due to the sea lanes -passing within 10 miles of Sri Lanka- carrying half of the world's container ships, a third of the world's bulk cargo traffic, and two-thirds of the world's oil shipments. As such, security of the Indian Ocean is a key linchpin for the overall Indo-Pacific, which is the fastest growing region on the planet, accounting for 60 percent of the world economy and two-thirds of all economic growth over the last five years. And Sri Lanka is a key part of that linchpin and should take pride and a leadership role in the region.

The United States is a proud Indo-Pacific nation and our vision for the region, as laid out in the recently released Indo-Pacific Strategy, is centered on five core elements. When I say the Indo-Pacific Strategy is "our" vision for the region, I do not mean it is just a vision of the United States. Rather, I mean to suggest that-whether we realize it or not – this is actually a shared vision, based on collective interests and collaborative partnerships, for an Indo-Pacific that is Free and Open, Connected, Prosperous, Resilient, and Secure. So let me briefly highlight the core elements of our Indo-Pacific Strategy.

First, we will continue to work to advance a free and open Indo-Pacific. In addition to rule-based and responsive governance, this also means that goods and ideas and people can flow freely – across land, air, cyberspace, and most critically here, the open seas. Given Sri Lanka's key geostrategic position, next to key sea lanes vital to world trade, it is no surprise that Sri Lanka invests in shipping-related industries, such as ports and ship building. But these industries, and Sri Lanka's connectivity to the world, are dependent on having freedom of navigation to use sea lanes – together with freedom of overflight – which is why we have a shared interest in a Free and Open Indo-Pacific.

Second, we will look to forge stronger connections to build collective capacity within and beyond the region. We recognize that no country can shape the future of the region by itself and that a robust network of sovereign countries cooperating to secure their collective interests must be an integral part of any vision for the region.

Third, we will promote broad-based regional prosperity. The United States has provided more than a trillion dollars in foreign direct investment in the Indo-Pacific, and at President Biden's direction, we are looking at how to do more. We are developing a comprehensive Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for shared objectives, including key areas such as climate and clean energy, fair trade facilitation, resilient supply chains, and other priorities. We also support sustainable and inclusive commercial activity across the region. For example, the October 2021 Indo-Pacific Business Forum, co-hosted by the United States and India, brought together more than 2,300 business and government leaders to promote economic engagement and highlighted nearly $7 billion in new private sector projects.

The United States and Sri Lanka share a clear interest in Indo-Pacific Connectivity and Prosperity. The United States is Sri Lanka's largest single country export market, accounting for nearly $2.8 billion of the $11.9 billion of goods Sri Lanka exports annually, and Sri Lankan companies that export to the United States account for more than 180,000 jobs in Sri Lanka. Prosperity also calls for an inclusive economic environment that leverages Sri Lanka's assets which is why, in the past year, the U.S. Development Finance Corporation has partnered with private Sri Lankan banks to provide $265 million in financing to ensure that small businesses have access to capital to nourish their own visions.

Fourth, we will help build regional resilience to transnational threats. The COVID-19 pandemic and the climate crisis underscore the urgency of this task. The United States has sent more than 100 million safe, effective vaccine doses to the Indo-Pacific and provided over $2.8 billion in additional assistance in the region to save lives, for everything from personal protective equipment to medical oxygen for hospitals. This has been done free of charge, with no strings attached. Here, in Sri Lanka, we have partnered closely to build COVID resiliency, donating about 4 million vaccines to Sri Lanka and providing close to $18 million to support Sri Lanka's response and recovery since the pandemic's outset. We also are working with countries throughout the region, including in Sri Lanka, to accelerate the transition to clean energy and build climate resiliency.

Finally, we will bolster Indo-Pacific security. As threats evolve, our security approach must evolve too. But we must, and will, acknowledge that our greatest strength is our alliances and partnerships. In doing so, we will continue to provide security assistance to strengthen maritime security and maritime domain awareness, to support humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, to fund peacekeeping, and to counter transnational threats. We will also continue to hold military exercises in the Indo-Pacific that are planned and executed with allies, friends and partners to build trusting relationships, increase interoperability, and expand partner capability and capacity so that we are all better able to respond to the challenges posed by the region.

The United States and Sri Lanka have a number of shared commitments and partnerships to make real our vision for a Secure Indo-Pacific. As people in Sri Lanka well know, illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing threatens marine ecosystems, food security and local economies. That's why both Sri Lanka and the United States are part of an international agreement to prevent illegally caught fish from entering international markets. Smuggling and piracy are also both growing challenges, which is why the United States and Sri Lanka are parties to an international agreement focused on illegal trafficking – of people, weapons and drugs – and are both part of Asia's first regional agreement against piracy. Our maritime security collaboration is clearly evidenced by our partnership with the Sri Lanka Navy and Sri Lanka Air Force to build capabilities for maritime patrols and interdictions. Through this partnership, and with

vessels provided to Sri Lanka by the U.S., Sri Lanka had the largest drug seizure in its history in March 2020. This partnership and these vessels also helped protect Sri Lanka's precious marine resources after incidents such as the MT New Diamond and MV Pearl-Xpress fires. We need to keep working to prevent such devastating disasters in the future.

The United States recognizes that much of our planet's future will be written here in the Indo-Pacific and Sri Lanka is at the heart of the Indo Pacific to play a leading role. That is why we have, and will continue to have, an enduring commitment to the region and to collaboration with our allies and partners to help us to achieve a free and open, interconnected, prosperous, resilient, and secure region for all.

Thank you very much for the time today and I look forward to hearing more from the panel discussions throughout the event.

Thank you.

Opening Remarks by Mr. Iwamoto Keiichi

Deputy Director-General, Southeast and Southwest Asian Affairs Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan

Distinguished participants,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure and honour to participate in this Indian Ocean Security Conference today, which was made possible by the combined efforts of the Pathfinder Foundation, the Government of Japan and the Government of the United States. I would like to express my gratitude to the Pathfinder Foundation and other stakeholders for their tireless efforts to realize this conference in the difficult time of the COVID-19 pandemic.

During today's session, I understand that discussion topics include rule-based international order and confidence building measures, which are highly relevant in light of recent developments in the international arena. The current crisis in Europe shows that once that rule-based order is challenged, the effect can reach the daily lives of people elsewhere, in this highly interconnected world.

That brings me to the main theme of my remarks today, which is the concept of a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific," so-called "FOIP". Promotion and establishment of the rule of law, freedom of navigation, and free trade are all pillars of FOIP. So, allow me elaborate on the importance of FOIP and discuss the major developments.

Japan has been stressing the importance of FOIP since its conceptualization. In recent years, the balance of power in the international community is shifting dramatically due to the rise of emerging countries. At the same time, competition among states becomes more prominent, in which they seek to shape an international order to their advantage and increase their influence. Amid such a situation, we saw the global spread COVID-19, which reaffirmed the importance of multilateralism in the face of crises that no single state can address on its own. Under these circumstances, we are aiming to take on a greater responsibility and roles than before, while collaborating with other countries, toward maintaining and advancing a free, fair and transparent, rules-based international order.

The Indo-Pacific is a region that supports half of the world's population, and it holds the key to global peace and prosperity. A "Free and Open Indo-Pacific," is a vision for ensuring peace and prosperity in the entire region and beyond, through establishing a free and open order, based on the rule of law. The vision is now shared by a number of countries.

Prime Minister Modi unveiled the Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI) in his speech at the East Asia Summit in 2019, explaining IPOI as a cooperative framework to translate principles for the Indo-Pacific into concrete measures, and these principles included freedom of navigation and overflight, sustainable development, protection of ecology and the marine environment, and an open, free, fair and mutually beneficial trade and investment system. FOIP vision completely shares the emphasis on these fundamental principles and values.

The relevance and significance of the vision are growing as we advance toward the post-COVID-19 era. Seizing every opportunity of bilateral and multilateral dialogues, including the Japan-Australia-India-U.S. meetings, or the Quad, Japan will advance coordination and cooperation with various regional partners including Sri Lanka and other South Asian Countries.

In this Indian Ocean area, we are advancing cooperation in the area of maritime security and safety. Japan's Maritime Self Defense Force participated in the joint exercises with regional partners, such as "Malabar" and "La Perouse". With regard to Sri Lanka, ships from Japan's Maritime Self Defense Force are visiting Sri Lankan ports frequently. We are supporting Sri Lanka's response to environmental crisis, including oil-spills by ship-accidents through dispatching Japan's Coast Guard specialists to Sri Lanka for capacity building of Sri Lankan Coast Guard, since 2015. We are also providing support to counter measures for drug-trafficking in the Indian Ocean. All of those collaborations contribute to the realization of FOIP.

In closing, I would like to emphasize that the "Free and Open Indo-Pacific" is not targeted to any specific countries or initiatives. Rather, it is an open and inclusive policy, aiming at promoting common value and interest. We are eager to collaborate and cooperate with all countries that share our vision.

I believe that this Indian Ocean Security Conference is another important step towards deepening mutual understanding and strengthening the relationship among us. I hope today's conference will be a fruitful one.

Thank you.

Opening Remarks by Vice Admiral (Retd) Pradeep Chauhan
Director General, National Maritime Foundation, India

Thank you very much your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, both present here at the Phase II of the Indian Ocean Security Conference organized by the Pathfinder Foundation.

Let me echo the views of the distinguished speakers who have held the floor before me in thanking the Pathfinder Foundation ~~of~~ for persisting with and growing this bit on how best we might approach maritime security in what is undoubtedly becoming a crossroads of maritime traffic around the globe.

I think perhaps the first of my comments would be to emphasize that when we are talking about structure it is very seductive to continuously try and build new structures and new edifices and it may or may not always be the right thing to do. Sometimes it is less exciting but more beneficial if we were to strengthen existing structures rather than expending continuous energy on creating new ones and then having to strengthen the new.

I believe that in any security architecture we need to have at least three basic layers, there must be a conceptual layer, and here I think that the conceptual layer could very well be the Indian formulation or the regional formulation of Security and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR) which is an encapsulation of India's maritime policy, and it is a manifestation made through the Indo Pacific Oceans initiative, bearing in mind that the notion is after all the Western segment of the Indo Pacific.

Then of course, every such structure must have a political layer, and here I think that the ideal political layer, even with its shortcomings notwithstanding, as pointed out already is indeed going to be the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA).

Whether it should be IORA or IORA plus and if it is IORA plus, how do we move through 23 to 38 countries of the Indian Ocean is something that needs to engage us. One thing is for sure, the executive structure, which comprises the actual doing of what needs to be done, that is undoubtedly vested in the Indian Ocean within the India Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS). The interface that is required between IONS and the Western Pacific Naval Symposium is the first point that I would like to emphasize.

The second is the importance of prefacing the term 'maritime security' with the word 'holistic'. If we do not talk about holistic maritime security, we run the grave risk of returning to an antediluvian structure which we are regrettably seeing playing out in Ukraine and in Russia, the Black Sea and therefore we should draw within the Indian Ocean upon our historical legacy of being able to outthink others and also be able to think the problem through for ourselves.

I recall the former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh of India categorically stating that holistic maritime security is simply freedom from threats rising either in the sea, on the sea or from the sea. These could be traditional, man-made, non-traditional threats or they could be natural threats, for example, climate change. They can also be combinations of the first two in the case of climate change and the imperatives that climate change rings upon all of us in terms of security.

When we talk about these freedoms from threats, I think that the underlying aim ought to be the building of and the sustenance of resilience, not just climate change-based resilience, although it is critical. The longer we take to emphasize the importance of port-based resilience, I think the poorer off we will be, but also building resilience in terms of structure, resolve and willingness to actually stay the course in the face of some formidable challenges, both arising

from great power, rivalries as well as from other issues ranging from climate change to illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing.

Food security, in fact is going to be one of the major elements of the manner in which we in the Indian Ocean will tackle the challenges of the future. And if you remember, not very long ago, we had a cool confluence for extreme weather events, which are more ferocious, more frequent and less path predictable creating locust swarms which then ravaged food crops in much of North West India and Pakistan. Food security would then put greater and greater pressure upon fishing, creating more structures to be required to so as to be able to regulate this kind of thing.

We have a full agenda on our hands and I am extraordinarily grateful through the Pathfinder Foundation and also to our co-host Ambassador Menon for whom no praise by me, will be sufficient to emphasize the amount of guidance that I have, and we all in India have received from him.

Thank you very much.

Session 1 – A New Security Architecture for the Indian Ocean Region

Prospects for New Security Architecture for the Indian Ocean Aimed at a Rules-Based International Order, Consistent with the Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy

By Nilanthi Samaranayake[1]

Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to examine the Pathfinder Indian Ocean Security Conference (PFIOSC) 2020 recommendation to design a new security architecture for the Indian Ocean region.[2] The conference observed the:

> "Indian Ocean has been a theatre for conflict involving issues such as trade, conquest, power rivalry, maritime piracy, human and drug trafficking, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing as well as global terrorism. Whilst nations in the region continue to deploy their resources attempting to combat these issues, lasting solutions have yet to be realised. In order to achieve lasting solutions this, the creation of idea for a New Security Architecture for the Indian Ocean was has been considered by stakeholders over the years, but it has failed to materialize."[3]

To address the PFIOSC Phase I recommendation, this paper will consider the following topic: "Prospects for New Security Architecture for the Indian Ocean Aimed at a Rules-Based International Order, Consistent with the Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy."

I. Trends and Drivers: Why a New Security Architecture for the Indian Ocean?

Why should observers be interested in the development of a new security architecture for the Indian Ocean region at the present time? By examining the trends and drivers of this search for a stable order, one understands that this is not a new question for the vast region, which is 70,560,000 square km,[4] spanning multiple continents and sub-regions (from East Africa to the Middle East to South Asia to Southeast Asia to Australia), and includes a diverse set of stakeholders.

Nearly a decade ago, India's National Security Advisor (NSA) Ajit Doval recommended revisiting a UN General Assembly resolution advanced by Sri Lanka in December 1971 for a declaration of an Indian Ocean zone of peace

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[1] Nilanthi Samaranayake is Director of the Strategy and Policy Analysis Program at CNA, a nonprofit research organization in the Washington area. The views expressed are solely those of the author and not of any organization with which she is affiliated. She can be contacted at nilanthi@cna.org or nsamaranayake@hotmail.com. The author wishes to thank Ganidhu Dias Weerasinha for historical research assistance on the Indian Ocean Zone of Peace concept.

[2] Pathfinder Foundation, *Pathfinder Indian Ocean Security Conference*, November 10-12, 2020, 96, https://pathfinderfoundation.lk/images/pdf/PFIOSC-Doc-for_REPRINT-10122020.pdf.

[3] Pathfinder Foundation, "Terms of Reference: Research Study and Position Paper on Indian Ocean Security on 'Prospects for New Security Architecture for the Indian Ocean Aimed at a Rules-Based International Order, Consistent with the Free and Open Indo Pacific Strategy,'" December 19, 2021, 1.

[4] Viktor Filipovich Kanayev, "Indian Ocean," Britannica, Updated December 13, 2021, https://www.britannica.com/place/Indian-Ocean.

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(IOZOP).[5] In his December 2014 keynote address to Sri Lanka's Galle Dialogue, he "call[ed] upon great powers not to allow escalation and expansion of military presence in the Indian Ocean."[6] Doval viewed the resolution through the lens of India's concerns about a rising China. Its submarine had recently paid a highly controversial port visit to Colombo that symbolized Beijing's expanding reach into the Indian Ocean. This statement by India's NSA signified that New Delhi was concerned with the broader development of China's expanding presence in the region.[7]

However, Sri Lanka's reasons for originally proposing this resolution lay in multiple dimensions, including concerns about India's expanding presence in the region. As Gamini Keerawella observes:

> "The original proposal made by Sri Lanka in the First Committee of UN was very comprehensive and it related as much to the naval forces of littoral states as to the forces of the extra-regional powers."[8]

India and Pakistan, for example, fought a naval battle in December 1971 in their war over Bangladesh (formerly East Pakistan). Beyond the regional level, Colombo was also concerned about great power ambitions and operations in the Indian Ocean. The small island state joined with other Asian and African countries committed to non-alignment.[9] In fact, Sri Lanka led thinking on the IOZOP concept in the context of great power rivalry by first presenting it at the Non-Aligned Movement's heads of state conference in Cairo in 1964 and the Non-Aligned Movement's Lusaka conference in 1970.[10] In January 1971, Prime Minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike outlined Colombo's IOZOP proposal at the first Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting. Presciently, she anticipated the use of the Diego Garcia territory for purposes beyond that of a "communications centre."[11] US President Richard Nixon's deployment of Task Force 74, which included the USS *Enterprise* aircraft carrier, to the Bay of Bengal and the operations of Soviet naval forces in the vicinity during the India-Pakistan 1971 war were vivid demonstrations of great power competitive dynamics in the Indian Ocean.

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[5] UN General Assembly, Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace, A/RES/2832(XXVI), December 16, 1971, https://www.refworld.org/docid/528c9f6b4.html.

[6] Meera Srinivasan, "Indian Ocean Has to Remain a Zone of Peace: Ajit Doval," *The Hindu*, December 1, 2014, https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/south-asia/indian-ocean-has-to-remain-a-zone-ofpeace-ajit-doval/article6651325.ece.

[7] Abhijit Singh, "The Indian Ocean Zone of Peace: Reality vs. Illusion," *The Diplomat*, January 7, 2015, https://thediplomat.com/2015/01/the-indian-ocean-zone-of-peace-reality-vs-illusion.

[8] Gamini Keerawella, "The Indian Ocean Space in Sri Lankan Foreign Policy: Evolving Strategic Perceptions Since Independence," Regional Centre for Strategic Studies (Sri Lanka), 2020, 7, https://rcss.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/The-Indian-Ocean-Space-in-Sri-Lankan-Foreign-Policy-Prof.-Gamini-Keerawella.pdf.

[9] K.P. Misra, "Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace: The Concept and Alternatives," *India Quarterly* 33, No. 1 (January-March 1977), 1, https://www.jstor.org/stable/45070608.

[10] Robert O'Neill and David N. Schwartz, "The Indian Ocean as a 'Zone of Peace'" in *Hedley Bull on Arms Control*, Studies in International Security (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1987), 264.

[11] "Indian Ocean Peace Zone Proposed," *The Star-Phoenix* (Saskatoon, Canada), January 21, 1971, https://books.google.lk/books?id=n-lkAAAAIBAJ&pg=PA2&dq=1970+Indian+Ocean+Zone+of+Peace+concept&article_id=3600,3719194&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwjD_sGbrf71AhUO63MBHb8bC0AQ6AF6BAgJEAI#v=onepage&q=1970%20Indian%20Ocean%20Zone%20of%20Peace%20concept&f=false.

Decades later, President Gotabaya Rajapaksa resurrected the IOZOP idea in 2020, demonstrating its ongoing relevance.[12] The promotion of a stable regional order is a persistent interest of smaller states in the Indian Ocean and other regions, which find themselves in a position of asymmetry with more powerful states—India, at the regional level (in the case of the Indian Ocean), and the United States and increasingly China, at the global level. Sri Lankan academics have long examined this position, as seen in the title of the book *Security Dilemma of a Small State*[13] by P.V.J. Jayasekera published in the early 1990s. To address threat perceptions at both the regional and global levels, small states often try to compensate for their lesser defense capabilities by seeking multilateral solutions that emphasize the regional architecture.[14] This approach enhances their security while preserving their autonomy. As a result, many small states in the Indian Ocean, including Sri Lanka, have renewed their pursuit of the aforementioned "New Security Architecture for the Indian Ocean Aimed at a Rules-Based International Order, Consistent with the Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy."

II. Tools: What Are the Ways to Achieve a New Security Architecture for the Indian Ocean?

Given these drivers of the continued pursuit for stability in the Indian Ocean, this section will consider the tools for achieving a new security architecture in the Indian Ocean.

First, multilateral institutions with participation at the global and regional levels is a means for creating a more stable Indian Ocean. As discussed previously, Sri Lanka and other small states in international affairs have pursued this approach. For example, Colombo used the United Nations and Non-Aligned Movement to put forward the IOZOP concept. At the regional level, Sri Lanka participates in institutions such as the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC), Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS), and even launched its own collaborative effort called the Galle Dialogue in 2010.

Second, international law is another key tool for advancing security architecture. While the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) involves the role of the UN global institution, UNCLOS is legally binding on its signatories. Not only is Sri Lanka a signatory, but Colombo takes pride in its contributions to the negotiations of UNCLOS that led up to its conclusion.[15] UNCLOS continues to have particular relevance in an era of great power competition. Washington—which has not ratified UNCLOS, but abides by it—sees a fundamental problem for maritime law under UNCLOS at the heart of these tensions. The past decade of these tensions in the legal domain and in the operational domain at sea led to the creation of Washington's Free and Open Indo-Pacific strategy. According to a

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[12] P.K. Balachandran, "President Gotabaya Reiterates Lanka's Plea to Make the Indian Ocean a Zone of Peace," *NewsIn.Asia*, October 5, 2020, https://newsin.asia/president-gotabaya-reiterateslankas-plea-to-make-the-indian-ocean-a-zone-of-peace.

[13] P.V.J. Jayasekera, editor, *Security Dilemma of a Small State: Sri Lanka in the South Asian Context*, Institute for International Studies, New Delhi: South Asian Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1992.

[14] Shaheen Afroze, "Small States in Global Perspective: In Search of a Role Model in Regional Stability" in *Small States and Regional Stability in South Asia,* Mohammad Humayun Kabir ed., Dhaka: The University Press, 2005, 19.

[15] Sonali Samarasinghe, "Sri Lanka Statement," Minister, Permanent Mission of Sri Lanka to the United Nations, 29th Meeting of States Parties to the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, New York: UN Headquarters, June 19, 2019, https://www.un.int/srilanka/statements_speeches/statements-mrs-sonali-samarasinghe-minister-delivered-29th-meeting-states; Dan Malika Gunasekera, "Sri Lanka's Contribution to the Indian Ocean," *Daily News* (Sri Lanka), October 12, 2018, https://www.dailynews.lk/2018/10/12/features/165258/sri-lanka%E2%80%99s-contribution-indian-ocean.

2022 report from the US Department of State's Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs:

> "The [People's Republic of China's] expansive maritime claims in the South China Sea are inconsistent with international law as reflected in the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea ("Convention")."[16]

In the context of these great power tensions, small states such as Sri Lanka have engaged in building and maintaining international legal mechanisms and norms such as UNCLOS for the purpose of maintaining stability in the Indian Ocean.

Third, informal groupings—sometimes known as minilaterals—are another way of advancing stability. These interactions are not conducted through formal international organizations, and countries are not held to legal scrutiny in their decision to participate. For example, Sri Lanka has resurrected its NSA-level dialogue and maritime activities with India and Maldives under the rubric of the Colombo Security Conclave.[17] The trilateral grouping began in 2011 and was rebranded in 2021.With some hiccups, the three countries over the past decade have shared information about maritime domain awareness and built habits of cooperation at the diplomatic and military dimensions of interaction.

Beyond the externally oriented ways to achieve a new security architecture, there are also domestic tools for realizing this vision. National defense capacity building is an obvious one, especially for a small state seeking to ensure its survival in the face of external threats. Sri Lanka has a fully developed army, air force, and navy and has expanded its military services in recent years to feature a coast guard and marine corps. For example, Sri Lanka participates in bilateral and multilateral exercises with navies in the Indian Ocean. The Sri Lanka Navy conducts regular exercises with the Indian Navy called SLINEX, and the coast guards of India, Maldives, and Sri Lanka participate in the DOSTI exercise. In the multilateral realm, the Sri Lanka Navy participates in IONS' meetings.

Finally, strengthening national economies is a key tool for realizing a stable security architecture. The link may not be as apparent as diplomatic relations with bilateral and multilateral partners or national defense capacity building. However, the factor that undergirds the ability to conduct an independent foreign policy and finance military services is the economic security of a nation. Small states are especially vulnerable due to threats at the regional and global levels due to their comparatively lesser size and capabilities. To offset this asymmetry, building economic security is fundamental for contributing to and maintaining a stable regional architecture. Small states are observed to approach this task by, among other options, leveraging their strategic locations.[18] Sri Lanka appears to follow this model as a small state, such as with its extensive port infrastructure at Colombo as a regional transshipment hub.

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[16] US Department of State, Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs, "Limits in the Seas—People's Republic of China: Maritime Claims in the South China Sea," No. 150, January 2022, 24, https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/LIS150-SCS.pdf.

[17] India's Ministry of Defence, "Colombo Security Conclave Focused Operation between India, Maldives and Sri Lanka," November 28, 2021, https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1775797.

[18] Naren Prasad, "Small but Smart: Small States in the Global System," in *The Diplomacies of Small States: Between Vulnerability and Resilience*, ed. Andrew F. Cooper and Timothy M. Shaw (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2013), 43, 51.

II.   Models: What Are the Possible Visions and Shaping Factors for a New Security Architecture?

The first two sections examined the trends and drivers behind the continued pursuit for stability in the Indian Ocean and the tools available to help achieve a "new security architecture for the Indian Ocean aimed at a rules-based international order, consistent with the Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy." This section will now identify three possible models to help achieve this objective: a status quo model; a regional leader model; and a small states model. They are summarized in the table below. The purpose of this discussion is not to provide a discrete, exhaustive set of options, but rather to conceptualize some alternative ways of thinking about the region's architecture and facilitate a larger conversation.

	Conceptualizing Indian Ocean Architecture		
	Status Quo Model	*Regional Leader Model*	*Small States Model*
Regional institutions	IORA; BIMSTEC; ReCAAP	IONS (i.e., India's founding role)	Singapore's IFC; AOSIS
Factors			
Global & Regional	The role of international legal mechanisms	Small states seeking to affirm sovereignty	Small states constitute a numerical majority
Internal/ Domestic	Changes in domestic leadership	Resourcing for the regional leader	Asymmetric relationship to major & great powers
Pros & Cons			
Pros	Regional diversity	Streamlined command and control	Highlights agency of small states
Cons	Costs to small states	Challengers to regional leader	Risks irrelevance

Status Quo Model

Maintaining the status quo is an option for Indian Ocean stakeholders and one that deserves to be analyzed for its components. Regional states benefit from participating in multilateral institutions such as Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) and BIMSTEC. The Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP) is an international organization devoted to combating piracy. Countries also contribute to informal groupings such as the Colombo Security Conclave.

This status-quo model can be seen as having particular factors that can shape its outcomes. Among external factors, countries' willingness to abide by international legal norms contributes to stability in the region. For example, Bangladesh sought the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) and Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) to resolve its maritime disputes with Myanmar and India, resulting in 2012 and 2014 decisions that have been upheld by all participants. Countries also have internal or domestic factors that shape outcomes of the regional order. For example, Sri Lanka's pursuit of an IOZOP was altered by change in the country's domestic leadership in the 1970s

under President J.R. Jayewardene and change in Colombo's threat perceptions of great power naval capability in the Indian Ocean.[19]

This model presents a set of pros and cons to consider. In terms of pros, the Indian Ocean is a diverse region. While this regional diversity presents challenges in terms of gaining consensus, this trait involves a wide array of countries that resist being controlled by a single power. Second, this diversity entails a reliance on UNCLOS and international law-driven solutions versus nation-state preferences. As an example of this respect for international law, the Indian Ocean is a distinct theater from the Pacific. While US and other allied strategy has begun to link both the Indian Ocean and Pacific Oceans conceptually, the disputes of the Pacific waters stand in contrast to how legal norms and disputes are peacefully resolved in the Indian Ocean.[20]

In terms of cons, the status quo functions with influences by great powers and regionally dominant countries, sometimes at the expense of small states. An example of this is how Mauritius has steadily pursued international and diplomatic venues in its battle with the UK over the sovereignty of the Chagos Islands. While the small state has notched up victories on the issue, the UK shows no sign of withdrawing its forces—and by extension, the US—to comply with international legal and diplomatic opinion.[21]

Regional Leader Model

Departing from the status quo, this paper considers a second model for Indian Ocean stakeholders. This model would involve a single country with sizable economic, diplomatic, and military capabilities assuming the role of regional leader. For some examples across sub-regions of the Indo-Pacific, India is dominant in South Asia, Australia is the major country in Oceania, and France is a leader in the western Indian Ocean. Given the trends in the Indian Ocean region, India stands out as a country with increasing strategy and policy attention to the entire region, supported by increasing capabilities. Therefore, this model will assume India would be the country that is identified as the regional leader by stakeholders in the region.[22]

In terms of regional architecture, India took the initiative to launch the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) in 2008. New Delhi has also devoted greater attention to advancing BIMSTEC as a regional organization, given the difficulties in SAARC's ability to promote regional cooperation due to the India-Pakistan conflict.

This regional leader model can be seen as having particular factors that can shape its outcomes. At the regional level, the Indian Ocean has witnessed a history of countries seeking to maintain their sovereignty in the face of rising countries. For example, smaller countries may not embrace the outcomes of India or any other country serving in a regional leader role. Second, domestic factors may impede a particular country serving as a regional leader—in this case, India. For example, India's internal process of allocating resources to meet national priorities may not permit the

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[19] Gamini Keerawella, "The Indian Ocean Space in Sri Lankan Foreign Policy: Evolving Strategic Perceptions Since Independence," Regional Centre for Strategic Studies (Sri Lanka), 2020, 7, 9, https://rcss.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/The-Indian-Ocean-Space-in-Sri-Lankan-Foreign-Policy-Prof.-Gamini-Keerawella.pdf.

[20] Nilanthi Samaranayake, "The Indian Ocean's Key Role in the Indo-Pacific Rules-based International Order," in "Indo-Pacific Perspective" ed. Peter Harris, *Journal of Indo-Pacific Affairs*, Air University Press, December 7, 2020, https://media.defense.gov/2020/Dec/06/2002546906/-1/-1/1/SAMARANAYAKE.PDF.

[21] Nilanthi Samaranayake, "The Chagos Archipelago Dispute: Law, Diplomacy and Military Basing," *Lawfare*, October 6, 2020, https://www.lawfareblog.com/chagos-archipelago-dispute-law-diplomacy-and-military-basing.

[22] Still, the model is flexible and can incorporate another country as desired.

actions of India serving effectively as a regional leader. Funding for India's military services shows the funding priority is not to the navy and its work in the maritime domain.[23] Other stakeholders could offer resources to India serving this role, but the resources may be insufficient for significant activities such as building capacity which smaller countries at present are already seeking externally.

This model presents a set of pros and cons to consider. In terms of pros, identifying a country to act as a single regional leader presents a streamlined, command and control (C2) architecture for a diverse Indian Ocean region. This is a model that may be of interest to extra-regional stakeholders. For example, Washington could see value in focusing its attention on a few key allies and partners as it focuses on a new era of strategic competition.[24] The US highlighting the Quad (with India, Japan, and Australia) can be seen as an example of this focusing device. A streamlined, C2 structure with India as the regional leader would facilitate prioritization of finite time and limited funds by Washington, located far away.

In terms of cons, this model's trajectory may not adequately incorporate changing geostrategic and regional-level factors. For example, if India serves as regional leader, other countries may seek to challenge its status. Despite being an extra-regional actor, China is rising in its global capabilities, and trends suggest it may seek a greater presence in the Indian Ocean.[25] It has already established one military base (in Djibouti) and could seek additional bases as an indicator of increased regional presence.

At the regional level, other countries may seek to contest India as a sole regional leader. Pakistan is a continual thorn in India's side, given their history of conflict. Meanwhile, Bangladesh is another potential contender to leave its standing as a smaller country and be a meaningful regional leader. Dhaka has a rising economy, set to graduate from least developed countries (LDC) status in 2026; has withstood the travails of the pandemic to maintain robust foreign exchange reserves, where it performed a first-ever currency swap to assist Sri Lanka; and has built its disaster resilience capacity to gradually move away from being a well-known *recipient* of disaster relief to becoming a *provider* of disaster relief to its neighbors, such as Maldives and Sri Lanka.[26]

Small States Model

A third model can be considered for Indian Ocean stakeholders. This model puts at its center the interests of smaller states, referred to subsequently as "small states" as a shorthand. Therefore, this model focuses on small states taking the lead in the Indian Ocean region to advance stability.

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[23] Nilanthi Samaranayake, "India's Naval and Maritime Power" in *Conceptualizing Maritime & Naval Strategy: Festschrift for Captain Peter M. Swartz, United States Navy (ret.)*, eds. Sebastian Bruns and Sarandis Papadopoulos (Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, 2020), 250.

[24] White House, *Interim National Security Strategic Guidance*, March 2021, 20, https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/NSC-1v2.pdf.

[25] Bernard D. Cole, *China's Quest for Great Power: Ships, Oil, and Foreign Policy* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2016), 88-89.

[26] Nilanthi Samaranayake, "Non-Traditional Security in the Bay of Bengal," Observer Research Foundation, December 13, 2021, https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/non-traditional-security-in-the-bay-of-bengal; Nilanthi Samaranayake, "Bay of Bengal as a Microcosmic Model for Law Of The Sea In The Indian Ocean," International University of Bangladesh, Conference on "Moving Forward in the Indo-Pacific: Bangladesh's Role in Fostering An Open, Resilient, and Interconnected Bay of Bengal and Beyond" March 31, 2022.

Small states have shown a desire to advance regionalism. For example, Singapore's Information Fusion Centre (IFC) serves as a useful institution for information-sharing with multinational participation through international liaison officers, including many from the Indian Ocean region.[27] Maldives has served as the chair of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), which assembles small countries concerned about the effects of climate change.[28]

The small states model can be seen as having particular factors that shape its outcomes. Externally, much attention is paid to great powers and regionally dominant countries. Yet, at the global level, small states constitute the majority of the international community.[29] They also comprise a numerical majority at the regional level in the Indian Ocean.

Internally, small states are characterized by their fewer capabilities compared with major and great powers. As a result, they have an asymmetric power relationship to major and great powers.[30] For example in South Asia, India has long been the regionally dominant country, with the smaller South Asian (SSA) countries having faced threats of India's previous military and intelligence operations in their countries.[31]

The small states model presents a set of pros and cons to consider. In terms of pros, it focuses on empowering smaller countries who may feel their voices are unheard in the backdrop of a focus on great power competition and regional rivalries. A focus on building out this model may hold appeal to assemble the numerical majority of small states internationally and serve as a source of moral authority in an era characterized by contestation of the rules-based international order. Second, while small states are defined by their lesser size and capability, small states can also be characterized by their surprising strengths.[32] For example, Sri Lanka is a regional leader with Colombo often ranking as the busiest port in South Asia. Small states can provide military basing for larger powers as seen in Seychelles and the United Arab Emirates.

Regarding cons, the implementation of this model risks irrelevance through a focus on only like-stakeholders, united by their differences from larger and major powers. If great powers and regional countries are not incentivized to engage in this model, small states may not be helped through this vehicle for collective action. Great powers and regional leaders may continue to focus on their interests, without attention to small states' regional objectives.

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[27] Ministry of Defence and the Singapore Armed Forces, "Fact Sheet on Information Fusion Centre (IFC) and Launch of IFC Real-Time Information-Sharing System (IRIS)," May 14, 2019, https://www.mindef.gov.sg/web/portal/mindef/news-and-events/latest-releases/article-detail/2019/May/14may19_fs.
[28] Maldives Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Maldives Chairmanship of the Alliance of Small Island States, August 31, 2020, https://www.gov.mv/en/publications/small-states#:~:text=Maldives%20assumed%20the%20Chairmanship%20of,through%20an%20year%20of%20milestones.
[29] Matthias Maass, *Small States in World Politics: The Story of Small State Survival, 1648-2016* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2017), 34, 152.
[30] Anders Wivel, Alyson J.K. Bailes, and Clive Archer, "Setting the Scene: Small States and International Security," in *Small States and International Security: Europe and Beyond*, ed. Clive Archer, Alyson J.K. Bailes, and Anders Wivel (New York: Routledge, 2014), 8–9.
[31] Nilanthi Samaranayake, *China's Engagement with Smaller South Asian Countries* (Washington: United States Institute of Peace, 2019), 15-16.
[32] Nilanthi Samaranayake, "Indian Ocean Island States and the Quad Plus," *Journal of Indo-Pacific Affairs* 3, no. 5 (2020): 233.

Conclusion

At the recommendation of the PFIOSC Phase I, this paper has studied the "prospects for a new security architecture for the Indian Ocean aimed at a rules-based international order, consistent with the Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy." First, the paper considered the reasons for developing a new security architecture for the Indian Ocean region at the present time. The discussion revealed the persistence of the desire for an IOZOP—a proposal that peaked in the 1970s and has seen a resurgence in the past decade. Rising threat perceptions of small states, especially when considering their asymmetric position in a new era of great power competition, are a key driver of their search for a stable regional order.

Second, the paper examined the range of available tools for achieving a new security architecture in the Indian Ocean. These include multilateral institutions at the global and regional level; international law such as UNCLOS; informal groupings or minilaterals, conducted beneath the level of formal international organizations; and domestic tools such as policies to build defense capacity and strengthen economic security.

Third, the paper presented three models to develop a new security architecture for the Indian Ocean: a status quo model, a regional leader model, and a small states model. Each model identifies examples of regional institutions, external and internal factors that can shape outcomes, and a set of associated pros and cons to consider. This discussion is not intended to be exhaustive but rather to inform a wider discussion about regional security architecture.

Through an examination of these three models, the paper finds that the status quo model may hold the most benefit for the majority of Indian Ocean countries based on historical trends and the current climate of great power competition. A regional leader model would likely benefit the interests of great and major powers, but it would do so at the expense of small states. Meanwhile, a small states model risks becoming irrelevant because great and major powers would likely proceed as they currently do with comparatively less concern for smaller states.

A benefit of the status quo model is the emphasis placed on international law and its applicability to the entire international community. The benefit of this model to smaller states can be seen in the resolution of Bangladesh's maritime disputes. While legal norms are actively being contested in Pacific waters, they are still largely (and peacefully) upheld in the Indian Ocean. Even Mauritius's dispute with the UK—though so far ineffective in changing the situation on the ground—has remained in the realm of law and diplomacy. Despite various efforts in the past decade to link the Indian and Pacific Oceans in strategy, the Indian Ocean remains a distinct theater from the Pacific.[33] This trend may not always hold, but it is a dynamic that works in favor of Indian Ocean security and regional stakeholders at present—including small states.

If none of these models is an acceptable path forward, then what are the alternatives that Indian Ocean stakeholders should consider? This paper encourages the development of additional models and the identification of shaping factors, informed by an assessment of the trends, drivers, and available tools for envisioning a new security architecture for the Indian Ocean aimed at protecting a rules-based international order. Ongoing dialogue to this end, conducted on an annual or biennial basis, will help equip Indian Ocean stakeholders with new concepts and tools to enhance the architecture of their dynamic region.

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[33] Nilanthi Samaranayake, "The Indian Ocean's Key Role in the Indo-Pacific Rules-based International Order," in "Indo-Pacific Perspective" ed. Peter Harris, *Journal of Indo-Pacific Affairs*, Air University Press, December 7, 2020, https://media.defense.gov/2020/Dec/06/2002546906/-1/-1/1/SAMARANAYAKE.PDF.

Open Discussion

1. Why a New Security Architecture for the Indian Ocean Region?

In seeking a response to this question, it was considered necessary to focus on whether the existing structures are adequate and the multilateral arrangements in place have succeeded in achieving this objective.

The rising competition amongst global powers, and, in this background, the presence of external powers in the region give rise to apprehension among the regional countries about their security. With the extra-regional presence becoming more common and visible, the security concerns of regional states have correspondently increased. Marine resources have become a part of this equation, with the seabed mineral resources gaining increased attention.

The focus is on the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA); however, the ability of IORA to play an effective role in this security-related environment is marginal due to the limited responsibilities it is tasked with.

The diversity amongst countries in the region is exceptionally high with the presence of both large and small states. Due to economic reasons and capacity limitations, presently, the small states entertain much concern about their security. Undoubtedly, these countries would welcome a new security architecture to address their concerns.

Stemming from this situation is the desire of states in the region for an arrangement similar to the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace (IOZP), adopted by the 26th General Assembly of the United Nations, which gained global attention since the early 1970s. The rising threat perceptions of small states, especially in a new era of great power competition, explain their search for a stable and secure regional order.

Although it was considered necessary to have an effective security architecture for the Indian Ocean, the possibility of strengthening the existing structures and mechanisms, and, making changes where necessary within the current framework, instead of seeking to introduce a new security architecture was articulated.

2. Measures towards enhancing security in the Indian Ocean Region

In the process of strengthening the security architecture in the region, it was necessary to consider sustainable security arrangements. The role that extra-regional stakeholders and actors play in this effort must be evaluated. How a region such as the EU fits into such a security framework and contributes to a new security mechanism deserves consideration.

As regards small states, increasing their capacity building capabilities should also be given priority.

The definition of *security* needs to be determined in the new security architecture. Besides traditional security, the non-traditional security sector needs attention, and issues such as the depletion of fish stocks and the bio-diversity decline should also be focused upon. Maritime security and great power competition should be given priority in any security arrangement.

The establishment of a rules-based order is a necessity. In this context, International Law and Rule of Law must be given priority. The role that regional institutions can play in this initiative needs further study, particularly on how they can be strengthened to adequately face security challenges in the Indian Ocean Region.

3. Suggestions for creating a new security architecture in the IOR

Different models were presented as having the capability to achieve a new security architecture for the Indian Ocean. The role of a status quo model based on historical trends and the current climate of great power competition; a regional leader model, which is likely to benefit the interests of great and major powers, but at the expense of small states; and a small states model were discussed.

However, it was argued that rather than designing a new mechanism, the existing arrangements could be improved and existing gaps closed. The importance of addressing the concerns of small states through capacity building was underscored, to reduce at least to some extent, the impact of prevailing diversity in the region.

It was articulated that there was no need to create new institutions in this regard.

Capacity building of small states would contribute towards achieving the objectives, in addition to networking and forming partnerships. Retaining existing institutions while enhancing their capacities was emphasized while regional leaders could contribute towards a new security architecture.

Therefore, instead of selecting one model from the models mentioned above, a combination of models could also be a possibility to create a *hybrid* model. This would mean identifying each model's beneficial features, combining them with other contributory factors, and introducing a new security architecture for the IOR.

Session 2 – Maritime Domain Awareness

Maritime Domain Awareness in the Indian Ocean Region: Cooperation for a Free and Open Indo-Pacific

By Samuel Bashfield

Abstract

Maritime blindness is a persistent issue for many Indian Ocean nations. The ability of even large vessels to effectively disappear in the vastness of the Indian Ocean puts maritime domain awareness (MDA) at a premium. If you can find a naval adversary and they can't find your ships, the odds are definitely in your favour. However, nations can attain and maintain a far more nuanced and accurate picture of the maritime domain by working in partnerships than by toiling in isolation. As experts at the 2020 Pathfinder Indian Ocean Security Conference Phase I argued, maritime blindness can be overcome by effective MDA. But specifically, collaborative and inclusive MDA mechanisms among Indian Ocean nations can ensure that MDA intelligence is shareable, and benefits like-minded nations. In this position paper I outline the state of MDA in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR), analyse the Australia-supported Sri Lanka Border Risk Assessment Centre, before making recommendations. I recommend three collaborative steps Indian Ocean nations can undertake to improve collective and inclusive MDA, including increasing bilateral capacity building partnerships, expanding AIS transponder programs and shared access to maritime patrol air staging facilities.

Introduction

The Indian Ocean Region (IOR) is an increasingly contested strategic environment. The ability of even large vessels to effectively disappear in the vastness of the Indian Ocean puts maritime domain awareness (MDA) at a premium. If you can find a naval adversary and they can't find your ships, the odds are definitely in your favour. However, MDA in 2022 is not limited to naval intelligence. MDA encompasses a far wider variety of sea-borne threats, beyond the military domain. Threats now include issues as diverse as piracy, smuggling (drugs, humans, arms, etc), terrorism, search and rescue, Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing, amongst others. MDA is now both a military and a civil issue. In response, MDA is not the responsibility only of a nation's navy, but is often managed by coast guards or local law enforcement agencies.

MDA is simple in theory but complex in practice. One major barrier facing nations seeking to attain and maintain an encompassing and accurate picture of its maritime domain is the varied and expensive resources needed to create said picture. The sea, land, air and space-based assets needed to monitor and surveil the maritime domain are often prohibitively costly, and available to only the most sophisticated state actors. Further, the analyst training and IT infrastructure procurement needed to turn raw intelligence into a digestible product for decisionmakers is onerous. Thus, for many Indian Ocean nations, the maritime domain remains a blind spot, and an entry point for threats endangering national security.

As experts at the 2020 Pathfinder Indian Ocean Security Conference Phase I argued, maritime blindness can be overcome by effective MDA. But specifically, collaborative and inclusive MDA mechanisms among Indian Ocean nations can ensure that MDA intelligence is shareable, and benefits like-minded nations. Put simply, nations working together can attain and maintain a far more nuanced and accurate picture of the maritime domain by working in partnerships than by toiling in isolation. However, even like-minded nations possess divergent national interests, and sharing (often sensitive) intelligence is not always possible. As many modern threats are sea-borne, breaking down such barriers and establishing deeper bilateral and multilateral MDA cooperative mechanisms in the IOR is key to the national security of the region's myriad players.

In this position paper I examine MDA from the strategic, rather than tactical or operation levels. I examine the current state of MDA in the IOR, including the various actors and threats. I describe and assess collaborative mechanisms that are already operational. Then, the paper turns to a case study of the Australia-supported Sri Lanka Border Risk Assessment Centre, which demonstrates a collaborative MDA initiative at the bilateral level. I recommend three actions Indian Ocean players and regional organisations can take to improve collective MDA in this vast region. These recommendations are:

1. Capacity building partnerships;
2. Expanded AIS (automatic identification systems) transponder programs;
3. Shared access to air staging facilities.

Part I: Maritime Domain Awareness and the Indian Ocean Region

The International Maritime Organization defines Maritime Domain Awareness as "the effective understanding of any activity associated with the maritime environment that could impact upon the security, safety, economy or environment."[34] This encompassing definition is narrowed in the defence and security fields, where MDA is defined far more precisely. Specifically, the US Navy articulates MDA as "what is observable and known (Situational Awareness), as well as what is anticipated or suspected (Threat Awareness). It occurs when these two components are brought together to provide a decision-maker with an amalgamation of operational, intelligence and environmental information."[35] According to Indian Ocean security analyst David Brewster, "since the turn of this century there has been a growing realization among security practitioners of the importance of MDA as an essential enabler of maritime security," and that "only with recent advances in sensor and computing technology has it become possible, at least in

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[34] 'International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue Manual (IAMSAR Manual): Volume III', Report (London: International Maritime Organization & International Civil Aviation Organization, 2016), xvi, http://www.icscc.org.cn/upload/file/20190102/Doc.9731-EN%20IAMSAR%20Manual%20-%20International%20Aeronautical%20and%20Maritime%20Search%20and%20Rescue%20Manual%20Volume%20III%20-%20Mobile%20Facilities.pdf.

[35] 'Navy Maritime Domain Awareness Concept 2007', Military (Washington DC: United States Navy, 2017), 6, file:///Users/samuelbashfield/Downloads/719590.pdf.

theory, to create a networked real time picture that allows for a shared understanding of threats and developments in the maritime domain."[36] Thus, MDA is a relatively new concept which is enabled by modern sensor technology.
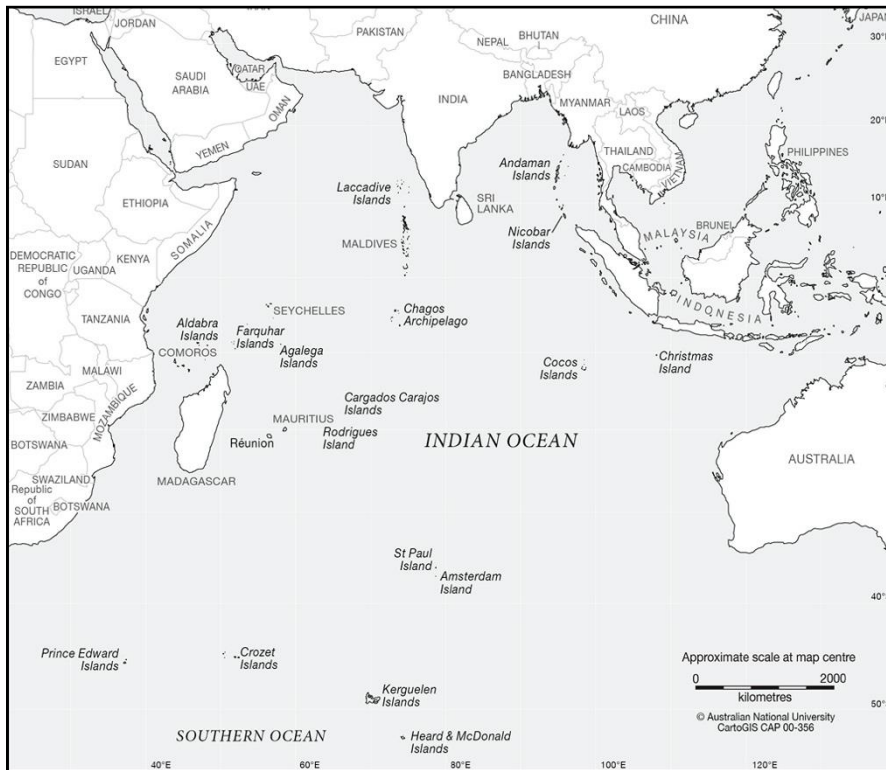

Figure 1: The Indian Ocean Region.[37]

MDA is complicated by various factors less prominent in land, air and space surveillance. The maritime domain is firstly further complicated by the requirement to monitor not just the water's surface, but also relevant activity subsea and in the air.[38] Secondly, MDA is further problematic due to the various actors with interests in the (high) seas, including commercial and nation-state interests, overlayed with the complexities of international law, which rarely factors into land domain surveillance.[39] The combination of these two factors means effective MDA requires highly sophisticated sensors, capable military or law enforcement platforms, and an ability to work within legal regimes and alongside other nations to effectively surveil the sea-scape.

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[36] David Brewster, 'Give Light, and the Darkness Will Disappear: Australia's Quest for Maritime Domain Awareness in the Indian Ocean', *Journal of the Indian Ocean Region* 14, no. 3 (2 September 2018): 297, https://doi.org/10.1080/19480881.2018.1517437.

[37] *Islands of the Indian Ocean* (CartoGIS), accessed 27 April 2021, http://asiapacific.anu.edu.au/mapsonline/base-maps/islands-indian-ocean.

[38] Brewster, 'Give Light, and the Darkness Will Disappear: Australia's Quest for Maritime Domain Awareness in the Indian Ocean', 298.

[39] Brewster, 298.

Importantly, a nation cannot achieve *total* MDA, but rather can only seek to enhance its own MDA (either by its own means or in collaboration with others), in an effort to better respond to threats and opportunities. Likewise, a nation's level of MDA, or MDA proficiency, does not necessarily correlate with it having the corresponding resources to respond to a threat. In this sense, MDA is a sliding scale, in which the aim is to inform military, law enforcement, bureaucratic and political leaders of impending sea-borne threats. Being aware and cognisant of an incoming maritime threat, and a nation's ability to mount a response, are two interrelated but distinct concepts. Accordingly, I limit this paper's analysis and recommendations to MDA in the sense of understanding a potential threat, rather than mounting a response, all the while acknowledging that MDA can never be absolute – but rather is relative.

MDA in the IOR is complicated by the IOR's great size. As Robert D. Kaplan wrote on the Indian Ocean, "no one nation dominates"[40] and the same can be said for regional MDA. The Ocean's size and complexity limits the effectiveness of even the most robust MDA assets, as the MH370 incident attests. Attaining and maintaining MDA is also complicated by the divergent national interests of players – whether a nation is interested in threats within its territorial waters, its exclusive economic zone, or the wider Indian Ocean sea-scape. While larger players usually seek an encompassing picture of the Ocean, smaller nations often only require a narrow view of activity within its littoral waters, in line with response capacities.

Interrelatedly, rationales for MDA differ among Indian Ocean nations. According to Darshana M. Baruah, as "India has accepted the Chinese presence in the Indian Ocean as part of Beijing's great power ambitions while simultaneously acknowledging the need to change its own maritime outlook," it has adopted a determined focus on strengthening its regional MDA.[41] Likewise, Australia's MDA efforts are in part a response to China's increased forays into the Indian Ocean, as well as to counter threats including people smuggling. However, smaller nations are not usually seeking MDA in response to great power competition. Other, more civil and law enforcement-related issues, including people smuggling (drugs, humans, arms, etc), transhipments, IUU fishing and search and rescue usually motivate smaller nations to develop MDA capabilities. In short, the impetus for MDA can differ greatly, from hunting nuclear ballistic missile submarines to intercepting illegal fishing vessels.

Various arrangements already exist in the Indian Ocean to cooperate on MDA. Most notably, three information fusion centre nodes operate in Singapore, India and Madagascar. India's Information Fusion Centre - Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR), hosted by the Indian Navy in Gurugram, aims at "strengthening maritime security in the region and beyond, by building a common coherent maritime situation picture and acting as a maritime security information sharing hub for the region."[42] IFC-IOR has working level relationships with 50 nations and organisations, and hosts International Liaison Officers from partner nations. As well as monitoring Indian Ocean maritime activity, the IFC-IOR reports on maritime

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[40] Robert D. Kaplan, *Monsoon: The Indian Ocean & the Battle for Supremacy in the 21st Century* (Melbourne: Black Inc., 2010), 16.
[41] Darshana M. Baruah, 'India's Evolving Maritime Domain Awareness Strategy in the Indian Ocean', in *India & China at Sea: Competition for Naval Dominance in the Indian Ocean*, 1st ed. (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2018), 165.
[42] 'IFC-IOR', Government, Information Fusion Centre - Indian Ocean Region, 2021, https://www.indiannavy.nic.in/ifc-ior/about-us.html.

incidents and weather. As mentioned, similar centres are located in Singapore and Madagascar, providing coverage of much of the Indian Ocean.

A large amount of multilateral effort is also directed at combatting piracy around the Horn of Africa, in part by improving MDA. These efforts include the European Union Naval Force (EU NAVFOR) Somalia – Operation Atalanta, which protects vulnerable shipping, deters and disrupts piracy, monitors fishing off Somalia, and supports other EU missions and international organisations working to strengthen maritime security and capacity in that part of the Indian Ocean.[43] EU NAVFOR also operates the Maritime Security Centre – Horn of Africa (MSCHOA), located in Brest, which coordinates EU NAVFOR's voluntary vessel registration scheme (VRS), and also coordinates interactive anti-piracy advice to the shipping industry. The EU also coordinates CRIMARIO II, which pursues two main objectives: enhancing information exchange and analysis, and incident management, as well as strengthening inter-agency cooperation in maritime surveillance, policing, investigation and judicial matters.[44] CRIMARIO II operates in both South and Southeast Asia. It cooperates and complements existing regional Information Fusion Centres, national maritime operations centres, national maritime information sharing centres, regional actors, international fora and extra-regional countries active in the Indo-Pacific.

Under the Djibouti Code of Conduct (DCoC), its signatories declared their intention to co-operate to repress piracy and armed robbery against ships.[45] DCoC member nations are located in the western Indian Ocean region. DCoC operates three information sharing centres in Dar es Salaam, Mombasa and Sana'a,[46] which now report not just on piracy, but also wider maritime crime. Under the DCoC information sharing centre initiative, each member has agreed to establish a National Maritime Information Sharing Centre and work to establish such centres is ongoing. However, Christian Bueger noted in 2017 that, as rates of piracy have declined in recent years, anti-piracy efforts transitioned to building regional MDA capabilities.[47] Bueger notes that "the [recent] absence of an immediate piracy threat led to the declining interest of international actors in maintaining their levels of engagement, instead considering long-term objectives in the region," including developing regional MDA capacity.[48]

Additionally, bilateral and trilateral level white shipping agreements exist between Indian Ocean nations, which allow for commercial shipping information sharing. Further cooperation includes mutual logistics agreements (e.g. 2016 India/US Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA)),[49] military-to-military agreements (e.g. India's

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[43] 'About Us | EUNAVFOR', European Union Naval Force (Op Atalanta) Somalia – Operation Atalanta, 2022, https://eunavfor.eu/about-us.

[44] 'EU CRIMARIO | Rationale & Objectives', The EU CRIMARIO Project, accessed 18 February 2022, https://www.crimario.eu/en/the-project/rationale-objectives/.

[45] 'About Us – DCoC', Djibouti Code of Conduct, 2022, https://dcoc.org/about-us/.

[46] The information sharing centre in Sana'a is currently not operational due to ongoing conflict in Yemen.

[47] Christian Bueger, 'Effective Maritime Domain Awareness in the Western Indian Ocean', Policy Brief (Pretoria, South Africa: Institute for Security Studies, 2017), 4, https://issafrica.s3.amazonaws.com/site/uploads/policy-brief104.pdf.

[48] Bueger, 4.

[49] Sushant Singh, 'India-US Joint Statement- Defence: Sorting a Few Legacy Issues, Framing a New Agenda', The Indian Express (blog), 9 June 2016, https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/prime-minister-narendra-modi-us-visit-president-barack-obama-nsg-nuclear-reactor-lemoa-white-shipping-agreement-2842064/.

international costal radar network)[50] and other cooperative agreements (e.g. Sri Lanka, India and Maldives' 2013 maritime security cooperation pact).[51] Furthermore, presumably other intelligence sharing agreements exist between nations which remain secretive. In sum, cooperative mechanisms do exist between Indian Ocean nations to further regional MDA, but there remains more that can be done.

MDA and the Free and Open Indo-Pacific Concept

Effective MDA is consistent with the Free and Open Indo-Pacific Concept. Specifically, as per Japan's Indo-Pacific concept, "securing peace and stability" requires "capacity-building assistance to coastal countries of the Indo-Pacific (strengthening maritime law enforcement capacity and Maritime Domain Awareness capacity, human resource development, etc.)."[52] By enabling nations to surveil and police their own immediate region, peace and stability can be promoted throughout the IOR, and the wider Indo-Pacific. Sea blindness hampers economic and national security, leading to regional instability.

As Part I of this paper has demonstrated, MDA is a relatively new and complex concept, which most Indian Ocean nations pursue, but often for divergent reasons. Part II will outline a new case study, illuminating how Indian Ocean nations can collaborate, at the bilateral level, to improve collective MDA.

Part II: Cooperative Mechanism Case Study: The Sri Lanka Border Risk Assessment Centre

Sri Lanka's Border Risk Assessment Centre (BRAC) is a new Sri Lankan initiative, supported by Australia, and was formally opened in December 2021. The centre, located in Suhurupaya building complex in Battaramulla, Colombo, is under Sri Lanka's Ministry of Defence. BRAC is an initiative under the nation's 2018 Sri Lanka Integrated Border Management Strategy.[53] The Strategy was developed with the technical assistance of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the financial assistance of the Government of Australia, through its Department of Home Affairs. The Strategy called for a 'Multi-Agency' centre which would "comprise representatives from key border agencies, including intelligence and risk analysts, to detect potential threats and risks from people or goods before entry, at the border or post-arrival." By pooling representatives from key Sri Lankan border agencies, it was hoped the "BRAC will foster and support the sharing of data and information and subsequently assessing and detecting potential risks for

[50] Dinakar Peri, 'India Looks at Integrating More Countries into Coastal Radar Network', *The Hindu*, 20 December 2020, sec. National, https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/india-looks-at-integrating-more-countries-into-coastal-radar-network/article33379243.ece.

[51] 'India, Sri Lanka, Maldives Enter Maritime Security Cooperation Pact', Hindustan Times, 9 July 2013, https://www.hindustantimes.com/world/india-sri-lanka-maldives-enter-maritime-security-cooperation-pact/story-6IXkEhgxP8srBnCE0zOMkK.html.

[52] 'Free and Open Indo-Pacific', Government, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan, 2019, https://www.mofa.go.jp/files/000430632.pdf.

[53] 'Sri Lanka Integrated Border Management Strategy', International Organisation, Sri Lanka International Organization for Migration, 2018, https://srilanka.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbdl356/files/documents/Sri%20Lanka%20Integrated%20Border%20Management%20Strategy.pdf.

interception before entry into Sri Lanka." Lastly, the BRAC was designed to be the central contact and focal point for collaboration with international intelligence agencies.

According to Australia's Minister for Home Affairs Karen Andrews, at the BRAC's December 2021 formal launch "The BRAC will significantly strengthen Sri Lanka's border to criminals, smugglers, and terrorists, while also streamlining the entry and exit of traders, travellers, and tourists – all of whom will be vital to regional economic recovery as we emerge from the pandemic."[54] Australia has contributed US$3.6 million to the BRAC. As Minister Andrews noted, BRAC is not just an MDA initiative, but will assist Sri Lanka to attain a degree of not just MDA, but also awareness of its border more generally, including air immigration and imports. BRAC will assist Sri Lanka to process international arrivals, including businesspeople, travellers and tourists. By sharing intelligence, systems, resources, and real-time data among relevant Sri Lankan agencies, the country can collectively protect its borders more efficiently and effectively.

For Australia's part, its involvement in BRAC is spurred in part by a degree of self-interest. Sri Lanka is a significant departure point (in addition to Indonesia) for people smuggling operations en route to Australia. Since Australia established Operation Sovereign Borders in September 2013, its navy and border force has returned 204 Sri Lankan nationals to Sri Lanka, from 12 boats. In October 2021, more than 70 people were apprehended by the Sri Lanka Navy in Chilaw, in addition to another group of 65 people arrested by Sri Lanka Police in Trincomalee. In November 2021, the Sri Lanka Navy disrupted an attempt by 19 more people to migrate illegally by sea in Chilaw. Due in part to Australia's massive public and bipartisan political aversion towards people smuggling, the country invests significant funds in its border security. By assisting Sri Lanka to stop people smuggling operations at the source, Australia is able to avoid intercepting the vessels and subsequent refugee processing. Besides people smuggling, assisting Sri Lanka in this regard benefits Australia by enabling Sri Lanka to govern its maritime domain and address threats including IUU fishing, piracy, plus drug and arms smuggling. Additionally, enhanced Sri Lankan search and rescue capabilities is a positive development for Australia. The better managed Sri Lanka's surrounding waters are, the better for Australia's maritime security.

Furthermore, Australia's assistance to Sri Lanka is justified by its significant experience in combining national agencies and assets to protect its borders. Australia's Maritime Border Command (MBC) was established in 2005 (initially named Joint Offshore Protection Command, then Border Protection Command) and is now enabled by both the Australian Border Force and the Australian Defence Force. Led by a Royal Australian Navy Rear Admiral, MBC detects, deters, responds to and prevent civil maritime security threats, contributes to Operation Sovereign Borders and works with Australian Federal, State and Territory government partner agencies and international stakeholders. Importantly, while led by the Australian Border Force and the Australian Defence Force, MBC is a collaboration between a variety of Federal, State and Territory agencies, and combines an arsenal of air and sea-based assets. Thus, Australian officials possess a wealth of knowledge and experience which can be shared with Sri Lanka's officials to further its combined BRAC model for MDA.

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[54] Karen Andrews, 'Remarks at the Launch of the Sri Lankan Border Risk Assessment Centre – Colombo, Sri Lanka', Government, Minister for Home Affairs, 20 December 2021, https://minister.homeaffairs.gov.au/KarenAndrews/Pages/launch-of-sri-lankan-border-risk-assessment-centre.aspx.

In summary, the BRAC is a new and innovative capacity building project, designed to not only enable Sri Lanka to monitor its borders and safeguard its security, but also to secure Australia's borders from people smuggling and a host of other transnational maritime threats. Part III of this paper will make recommendations building on the BRAC example.

Part III: Recommendations for Building an Inclusive MDA Network in the Indian Ocean

Capacity Building Partnerships

Bilateral capacity building partnerships are an important and powerful way of improving MDA capabilities for Indian Ocean littoral nations. As the BRAC example demonstrates, there exists great potential for capacity building partnerships at the bilateral level to improve regional MDA. Australia's experience, which is being imparted on BRAC, demonstrates that collaboration between government agencies can be a potent tool in creating a more comprehensive MDA picture, compared with agencies going it alone. Such MDA centres would not just be an effective strategy for Sri Lanka to advance its MDA capabilities, but could also be useful for other regional nations, such as Maldives, Mauritius, Seychelles, Comoros and Bangladesh. By combining the national agencies of these nations in a centre, a more comprehensive MDA picture can be attained, furthering national security. While Australia has experience working with fellow littoral nations, other sophisticated naval players including France, the United States, China and India could partner with nations to create such centres. Even the United Kingdom could partner with an IOR nation to further its MDA capabilities. In addition to Sri Lanka, Australia could develop similar partnerships with nations including Bangladesh and Indonesia.

Beyond establishing MDA centres, such bilateral partnerships could incorporate assistance to junior partners to acquire platforms (ships, aircraft, etc), sensors and MDA systems. For example, Australia provided Sri Lanka two Bay-class patrol boats in 2014. These boats, now SLNS *Rathnadeepa* and SLNS *Mihikatha*, assist Sri Lanka to patrol its maritime interests, including preventing people smuggling, which benefits Australia. There exists great potential for bilateral capacity building partnerships, which could involve gifting assets, sensors and MDA systems. Again, middle and superpowers can work together with smaller regional powers to improve MDA capacities.

Cooperative AIS Transponder Programs

Automatic identification systems (AIS) transponders are capable of providing position, identification and other information about a ship to other ships and to authorities automatically. All ships of 300 gross tonnage and upwards conducting international voyages, cargo ships not on international voyages but of 500 gross tonnage and upwards, in addition to all passenger ships are required to be fitted with an AIS transponder. AIS transponders provide information – including the ship's identity, type, position, course, speed, navigational status and other safety-related information – automatically to appropriately equipped shore stations plus other ships and aircraft. Transponders also receive automatically such information from similarly fitted ships, monitor and track ships, and exchange data with shore-based

facilities.[55] These transponders are critical to maritime safety and security, and should not be limited to larger vessels. Indeed, various countries in the IOR are insisting transponders be fitted to all fishing vessels. There exists potential for international collaboration in expanding transponder programs.

As part of Australia's cooperation with Sri Lanka, Australia has assisted the island nation to install 4,500 transponders on multi-day fishing vessels, as well as establishing the required land-based monitoring centre.[56] This monitoring system is an important step to combat IUU fishing, promote Sri Lanka's border security, prevent people and drug smuggling and expedite assistance to vessels in distress.[57] The transponders are monitored by Sri Lanka's Department of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, and also bring Sri Lanka's fisheries export industry in line with international standards. This cooperation can be a model for further bilateral collaboration between Indian Ocean players. For instance, the benefits for regional MDA in working towards equipping Bangladesh's large fishing fleet with transponders would be considerable. According to the Bay of Bengal Programme, Bangladesh's fishing fleet comprises some 243 industrial trawlers and some 67,669 artisanal fishing vessels.[58]

In 2009 India also attempted to fit all its fishing vessels (20 metres in length and longer) with AIS transponders in response to the 26/11 Mumbai terror attack.[59] The 26/11 attack was perpetrated by Pakistani terrorists who hijacked an Indian boat to enter India undetected. In 2015 India amended its requirements, expanding AIS transponder mandates to fishing vessels under 20 metres.[60] However, it was reported in 2020 that only around half of fishing vessels in Indian waters were fitted with AIS transponders. India's fishing fleet size and vast 7,516-kilometre coastline means enforcing its AIS transponder mandate is difficult. There exists great potential for partnerships to extend India's AIS transponder coverage, which would greatly improve that nation's MDA abilities.

Expanding AIS transponder coverage of fishing vessels in Indian Ocean nations, particularly those in the Bay of Bengal region, is a potent method of improving regional MDA. Transponders are a relatively cost-effective way to monitor the sea-scape, as costs per unit decrease and the transponders become more widely available. As the above outlined Sri Lanka/Australia cooperation demonstrates, Indian Ocean powers can work together bilaterally to install more transponders, for mutual security benefit.

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[55] 'AIS Transponders', International Maritime Organization, 2019,
https://www.imo.org/en/OurWork/Safety/Pages/AIS.aspx.
[56] 'Australia and Sri Lanka Partner to Boost Border Security', *Karen Andrews MP* (blog), 21 December 2021,
https://www.karenandrewsmp.com.au/portfolio/australia-and-sri-lanka-partner-to-boost-border-security/.
[57] 'A Multi-Day Fishing Vessel Monitoring System from Australia to Sri Lanka – Presidential Secretariat of Sri Lanka', Sri Lanka Presidential Secretariat, 16 July 2021,
https://www.presidentsoffice.gov.lk/index.php/2021/07/16/a-multi-day-fishing-vessel-monitoring-system-from-australia-to-sri-lanka/.
[58] 'Bangladesh', Bay of Bengal Programme, 2022, https://www.bobpigo.org/bobpcms.
[59] Vishwa Mohan, 'AIS Transponders Now Made Must for All Fishing Vessels', *The Times of India*, 12 July 2009,
https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/ais-transponders-now-made-must-for-all-fishing-vessels/articleshow/4767112.cms.
[60] '6 Years after Mumbai Attacks, Fishing Boats to Have Tracking Device', *The Economic Times*, 8 February 2015,
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/6-years-after-mumbai-attacks-fishing-boats-to-have-tracking-device/articleshow/46161688.cms?from=mdr.

Collaborative IOR P-8 Network

In the military domain, there exists great potential for a collaborative network of bases and facilities to support P-8 maritime patrol aircraft operations across the vastness of the IOR. Individually, Australia and partners such as the United States, India and France already have significant capabilities, including maritime patrol aircraft and uncrewed aerial vehicles, and facilities that, if combined in a collaborative network, would allow comprehensive maritime surveillance of much of the Indian Ocean.

Such a collaborative network would require information sharing, as well as collaborative use of facilities to support maritime air surveillance. Crucially, adequate surveillance coverage of the Indian Ocean by maritime patrol aircraft would depend on access to air staging points and facilities across the region. The US and its allies already have arrangements to provide access and logistical support in each other's facilities, including the US bases at Diego Garcia and in the Persian Gulf. But India, with its growing fleet of Boeing P-8I maritime patrol aircraft and staging points around the region, is an essential partner in building a comprehensive regional network.

Over the past several years, India has reached mutual logistics support agreements with the US and France. The signing of an Australia–India Mutual Logistics Support Arrangement[61] in 2020 represented a big step in building a web of agreements, opening the possibility of mutual use of facilities throughout the region. India undertakes surveillance of much of the northern Indian Ocean with P-8Is based at INS Rajali, near Chennai, and INS Hansa in Goa, as well as airfields in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. Indian P-8s are increasingly also using facilities of regional partners such as Seychelles,[62] Mauritius[63] and French Reunion[64] in the western Indian Ocean. It is anticipated that Indian P-8s will soon also be able to operate from the new Indian-built airfield on Mauritius's Agalega island[65] near the northern end of the Mozambique Channel.

Australia has its own strengths in the eastern Indian Ocean. Since at least the 1980s, the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) has undertaken aerial surveillance of the country's northwest approaches and the Malacca Strait/Bay of Bengal as part of Operation Gateway.[66] The RAAF's use of P-8A maritime patrol aircraft now provides an opportunity for

[61] Linda Reynolds, 'Australia and India Sign Defence Arrangement', Text, Australian Department of Defence (Department of Defence Ministers, 4 June 2020), https://www.minister.defence.gov.au/minister/lreynolds/media-releases/australia-and-india-sign-defence-arrangement.

[62] 'Geo-Strategic Boost: Indian Navy Deploys P 8I Aircraft to Seychelles for Surveillance', *The Economic Times*, 12 July 2018, https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/geo-strategic-boost-indian-navy-deploys-p-8i-aircraft-to-seychelles-for-surveillance/articleshow/51495899.cms?from=mdr.

[63] Ajay Banerjee, 'Indian Navy Sailor Rescued 3 Days after His Boat Was Damaged in Storm', *Tribuneindia News Service*, 25 September 2018, https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/archive/nation/australian-french-ships-close-to-indian-navy-commander-s-location-official-658099.

[64] Xavier Vavasseur, 'Indian Navy P-8I MPA in Reunion Island for Combined Training with French Forces', *Naval News* (blog), 5 March 2020, https://www.navalnews.com/naval-news/2020/03/indian-navy-p-8i-mpa-in-reunion-island-for-combined-training-with-french-forces/.

[65] Samuel Bashfield, 'Why Is India Building a Military Base on Agaléga Island?', *Al Jazeera*, 5 August 2021, sec. Opinion, https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2021/8/5/why-is-india-building-a-military-base-on-agalega-island.

[66] 'Operation Gateway', Government, Australian Department of Defence, accessed 20 December 2021, https://www.defence.gov.au/operations/gateway-south-china-sea-and-indian-ocean.

collaboration with India in sharing facilities and logistics across the region. Both countries are becoming more confident working together following Exercise AUSINDEX 2019,[67] which saw RAAF and Indian Navy P-8s cooperating in anti-submarine warfare exercises in the Bay of Bengal, as well as the Quad exercises off Guam[68] earlier in 2021.

Australia has several facilities in the eastern Indian Ocean that could substantially extend the range of India's operations. There is an existing offer by Australia for Indian P-8s to use Australian facilities at Darwin and potentially also the Learmonth and Curtin air bases in Western Australia. There has been discussion of the potential for India to use of the airfield on Australia's Cocos Islands, and an agreement was reached in February for India to place a temporary satellite tracking station there.[69] But until the runway on Cocos is strengthened and widened (currently scheduled to be completed by 2023), it won't be suitable for P-8 operations.[70]

If Indian Navy operations from Australian facilities were normalised, there might also be opportunities for the RAAF to extend the area of cooperation throughout the Bay of Bengal and further afield into the western Indian Ocean. In particular, the ability for the RAAF to stage out of Indian bases in Tamil Nadu and/or Goa would help extend Australia's reach in the central and western Indian Ocean. US Navy P-8s have already conducted operations from these Indian bases, providing opportunities for combined cooperation among the three countries. Port Blair in India's Andaman Islands is another potential staging point. Foreign militaries in the past were rarely given approval to use those facilities, but in October 2020 a US Navy P-8 aircraft was permitted to refuel in Port Blair for the first time.[71] While the facility could deliver additional operational flexibility for Australian P-8s, given Australia's access to Butterworth in Malaysia, the use of facilities on the Indian mainland would be more advantageous. Sri Lanka's Mattala Rajapaksa International Airport in Hambantota could also be used for P-8 operations in exchange for relevant MDA intelligence. For example, by facilitating such operations at Sri Lankan airports, the nation could be briefed and provided sensitive information to improve its MDA picture. In 2016 a US Navy P-8 visited Mattala Rajapaksa International Airport in Hambantota.[72]

All these facilities could be considered as part of a new network of air staging points and facilities around the Indian Ocean potentially available to Australia, India, the US and other partners. Other nations providing facilities (e.g. Sri Lanka and Malaysia) could be provided intelligence in exchange for use of facilities. This would support a collaborative

[67] Amruta Karambelkar, 'Exercise AUSINDEX-2019: A New High in India Australia Defence Cooperation', Academic, 2 May 2019, https://www.vifindia.org/article/2019/may/02/exercise-ausindex-2019-a-new-high-in-india-australia-defence-cooperation.

[68] Amrita Nayak Dutta, 'With P8I Aircraft, Navy Takes Part in Quad Anti-Submarine Warfare Exercise in Guam', *The Print*, 22 January 2021, sec. Defence, https://theprint.in/defence/navy-takes-part-in-quad-anti-submarine-warfare-exercise-with-p8i-aircraft/590430/.

[69] Sidhant Sibal, 'India's Gaganyaan Mission Gets Support of Australia, Tracking Facility in Cocos Island', Zee News, 20 February 2021, https://zeenews.india.com/india/india-s-gaganyaan-mission-gets-support-of-australia-tracking-facility-in-cocos-island-2343255.html.

[70] Ewen Levick, 'Cocos Runway to Be Widened as Defence Looks North', *Australian Defence Magazine* (blog), 18 April 2019, https://www.australiandefence.com.au/defence/air/cocos-runway-to-be-widened-as-defence-looks-north.

[71] Dinakar Peri, 'U.S. Navy Aircraft Refuels at Port Blair', *The Hindu*, 3 October 2020, sec. National, https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/us-navy-aircraft-refuels-at-port-blair/article32760946.ece.

[72] 'Advanced U.S. Maritime Patrol Aircraft Visits Sri Lanka', U.S. Embassy in Sri Lanka, 13 December 2016, https://lk.usembassy.gov/advanced-u-s-maritime-patrol-aircraft-visits-sri-lanka/.

maritime surveillance system that, potentially, could produce useful intelligence for not only P-8 operators, but intelligence that could be shared with other like-minded regional nations without such sophisticated capabilities.

Coda: Promoting a Free and Open Indo-Pacific via MDA

Achieving absolute MDA is an elusive aim for even sophisticated and advanced militaries. However, as I have argued in this paper, various practical collaborative steps can be taken in the IOR to enhance MDA, to benefit both powerful players and smaller island nations. From hunting nuclear ballistic missile submarines to halting IUU fishing, MDA is an effective tool to combat a myriad of traditional and non-traditional threats. I anticipate that adopting the targeted and concrete recommendations made in this position paper will enhance the MDA abilities of all Indian Ocean nations, thereby furthering national security and the Free and Open Indo-Pacific concept.

Open Discussion

The necessity for expanding maritime domain awareness (MDA) mechanisms

In reality, even large vessels can effectively disappear in the Indian Ocean (IO) with resultant consequences, putting maritime domain awareness (MDA) at a high premium. In addition to the traditional security domain, MDA relates to a variety of sea-borne issues. Such non-traditional issues range from piracy to smuggling (narcotic drugs, humans, weapons, etc.), terrorism, search and rescue, and *Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU)* fishing, making MDA both a security and a civil centric issue.

MDA is not limited to surveillance activities covering the surface of the water alone, as they include situations involving the underwater and the air. Such coverage requires heavy investment involving sophisticated sensors, computer systems, law enforcement platforms and arrangements to work with other states in a particular region/sub-region. Cooperative mechanisms to give effect to MDA exist among some Indian Ocean states. The scope of these arrangements should be further widened and strengthened to cover vital areas of the Indian Ocean.

Augmenting trust and confidence-building efforts is necessary for building MDA in the region. It would facilitate fast and rapid responses to situations such as the incidents related to piracy in the horn of Africa and oil spills in Mauritius (MV Wakashio, July 2020) and Sri Lanka (MT New Diamond, Sept. 2020 and X-Press Pearl, May 2021).

Environment protection measures within the context of MDA can be supported by finding solutions to issues within the region itself. Capacity building, partnership building, information and technology sharing would add to the enhancement of MDA.

However, in the case of sharing technology, mainly where satellite imagery and remote sensing are concerned, there seems to be a reservation on the part of some countries for information sharing and commencing partnership arrangements.

Cooperative Mechanism Case Study: The Sri Lanka Border Risk Assessment Centre

Sri Lanka's Border Risk Assessment Centre (BRAC), supported by Australia and functioning under the Ministry of Defence, is an initiative under Sri Lanka's Integrated Border Management Strategy and an example for cooperative arrangements.

The 'Multi-Agency' Centre comprises representatives from key border agencies to detect potential threats and risks from people or goods before entry, at the border or post-arrival. BRAC was expected to support sharing data and information and subsequently assess and detect potential risks for interception of offenders before they entered Sri Lanka and be the central contact and focal point for collaboration with international intelligence agencies.

BRAC is expected to strengthen Sri Lanka's border against criminals, smugglers, and terrorists while streamlining the entry and exit of traders and travelers. Australia's involvement in BRAC is, in part, an effort to prevent illegal immigrants

from Sri Lanka, which is considered a significant departure point for people smuggling operations targeting Australia, from arriving in Australia.

BRAC is a new and innovative capacity-building project designed to enable Sri Lanka to monitor its borders, safeguard its security, and secure Australia's borders from people smuggling and other transnational maritime threats.

Recommendations to improve collective and inclusive MDA

(i)   **Capacity Building Partnerships**: Bilateral capacity-building partnerships such as BRAC can be important in strengthening MDA capabilities for the Indian Ocean littoral states. In addition to setting up MDA centres, such bilateral partnerships could allow Indian Ocean littoral states to acquire assets such as ships, aircraft, sensors and other MDA systems.

(ii) **Collaborative IOR P-8 Network**: In the military domain, there exists considerable potential for a collaborative network of bases and facilities to support P-8 maritime patrol aircraft operations across the vast expanse of the IOR involving several countries. Such a network would require information sharing and collaborative use of facilities to support maritime air surveillance.

An arrangement of this nature could be considered as a part of a new network of air staging points and facilities around the Indian Ocean region. Countries joining the network could be provided with intelligence in exchange for the use of their facilities.

Promoting a Free and Open Indo-Pacific via MDA

Although achieving total MDA covering the entire Indian Ocean region is difficult, collaborative steps can be taken for its enhancement. Those measures would benefit both large and small states as MDA is an effective tool to combat a range of traditional and non-traditional threats. Such actions would enhance the abilities of Indian Ocean states to expand their maritime awareness capabilities, thereby furthering national security and supporting the Free and Open Indo-Pacific concept.

Session 3 – Confidence Building Measures

Relevance and Necessity of Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR)

By Vice Admiral Pradeep Chauhan, AVSM & Bar, VSM, IN (Retd)

In his enunciation of the rationale underpinning the 2020 edition of the Pathfinder Foundation's "Indian Ocean Security Conference" held in Sri Lanka, the Foundation's Chairman, Ambassador Bernard Goonetilleke, stated, *The Indian Ocean is a common heritage of the global community, and as in the past, its sea lanes will continue to provide accessibility to regional as well as extra-regional states.... What is needed therefore is an arrangement to maintain 'good order at sea'. Ensuring the ocean is 'open and free' for all, without exception, in keeping with the Convention on the Law of the Sea and finding ways and means of addressing any shortcomings in that Convention, through discussion and negotiation, and taking steps for domain awareness are among the solutions to the problem."[73]*

Following through on the ambassador's comment, this paper presents an approach that seeks to identify and analyse the necessity and relevance of maritime "Confidence Building Measures" [CBMs] in the Indian Ocean, which could lead to the desired end-result of predictable maritime behaviour founded upon a mutuality of trust, and the "good order" that arises therefrom. It first provides a broad overview of the types and forms of CBMs and, thereafter, contextualises these to the maritime geography of the Indian Ocean, before focussing upon the question of whether fresh rules and norms governing the conduct of maritime entities — especially military maritime entities — are needed or whether the *"arrangement to maintain 'good order at sea'"* that Ambassador Goonetilleke referred-to is already in place, requiring only adherence.

The United Nations defines "military" CBMs as *"planned procedures to prevent hostilities, to avert escalation, to reduce military tension, and to build mutual trust between countries."[74]* However, even within the ambit of military measures, a more comprehensive definition is offered by the well-known former Director of the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, Dr Johan Jørgen Holst, who describes confidence-building measures as *"arrangements designed to enhance such assurance of mind and belief in the trustworthiness of States and the facts they create."[75]* It should not, however, be concluded that merely because CBMs are preponderant within the military domain, they are confined solely to this domain. In the broader context of contemporary *'holistic'* security, one increasingly encounters non-military CBMs as well. Within this broader context, there is, indeed, much to be gained from the "OSCE Guide on Non-military Confidence-Building Measures" of 2012. It describes CBMs far more expansively, stating that *"non-military confidence building measures are actions or processes undertaken in all phases of the conflict cycle and across the three dimensions of security in political, economic, environmental, social or cultural fields with the aim of increasing transparency and the level of trust and confidence between two or more conflicting parties to prevent inter-State and/or intra-State conflicts from emerging, or (re-) escalating and to pave the way for lasting conflict settlement."[76]* It goes on to dilate upon political CBMs, economic CBMs, environmental CBMs, societal CBMs, and cultural CBMs, averring, quite correctly, that all of these are *"...tools to lower tensions and make it less likely that a conflict might break out,*

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[73] Bernard Goonetilleke, Opening Remarks, "Indian Ocean Security Conference - 2020", Report of the Conference, 10-12 November 2020, p 14. https://pathfinderfoundation.lk/images/pdf/PFIOSC-Doc-for_REPRINT-10122020.pdf

[74] United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs. https://www.un.org/disarmament/cbms/

[75] Johan Jørgen Holst, "Confidence-building Measures: A Conceptual Framework". https://doi.org/10.1080/00396338308442072

[76] OSCE Secretariat Conflict Prevention Centre/Operations Service, "OSCE Guide on Non-military Confidence-Building Measures", 2012. https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/6/0/91082.pdf

escalate or re-emerge through a lack of information, misunderstanding, mistake or misreading of the actions of a potential adversary. They are also means to foster trust and bridge dividing lines between potential antagonists and an essential element of building sustainable peace. CBMs can help to repair the distorted communication between adversaries and to increase confidence among the parties that current and future commitments will be honoured. CBMs will, by themselves, not solve a conflict. But they can modify relations and behaviour and thereby the context in which the conflict resolution process takes place. Thus, they should be understood as an investment in the broader objective of peace rather than as objectives in themselves."[77]

- **Political CBMs.**

Political CBMs are particularly important in addressing trust-deficits. Their criticality remains unabated even in the absence of an overt inter-State armed conflict, as long as a trust-deficit is evident or is perceived to be evident by at least one State-party. The effectiveness of political CBMs, far more than other types of non-military ones, is almost entirely dependent upon *"negotiated actions"*.[78] Both words — "negotiated" and "actions" — are important. While it is possible for confidence to be engendered solely through dialogue, the risks of misinterpretation and misunderstanding are ubiquitous ones, which are greatly exacerbated by apprehensions that one or both sides is/are using words (dialogue) to intentionally mislead the other. Of course, actions, too, like words, can indeed, be misconstrued or misinterpreted — particularly in an atmosphere that is already vitiated or one that is actively hostile. *"Yet because actions require greater effort than words, they are generally more credible and useful in helping conflict parties read each other's intentions."*[79] In situations where conflict is absent but a trust-deficit is deemed by one or another State-party to exist, political CBMs must be adopted as the leading approach. Other types of CBMs — economic, environmental, societal, cultural, and even military — can certainly supplement political CBMs but cannot supplant them.

- **Economic CBMs.**

Where economic CBMs are concerned, apparently firm ground is much more likely to turn out to be quicksand. On the one hand, conventional wisdom holds that *"economic interdependencies foster close and fruitful relationships. States and intra-State actors/communities involved in such relationships seldom risk their economic wellbeing and survival by entering into confrontation."*[80] Regrettably, howsoever seductive, conventional wisdom is seldom a reliable bellwether. There is already significant scholarship — not limited to dyadic (bilateral) inter-State relations alone — that fiercely challenges the notion that economic interdependence amongst nation-states generates peace. For example, Professor Katherine Barbieri, in common with many other influential scholars, offers a stern caveat to governments, strongly emphasising the dangers of any simplistic examination of empirical data in determining the linkages between economic interdependence and security. From the mid-1990s onwards, a number of impressively-researched and increasingly-influential publications show that increased trade interdependence (even where dyadic trade is concerned) leads to an increase in the likelihood that a dyad will fall into a 'Militarised Interstate Dispute' (MID), although this may not escalate into outright conflict. Using an extremely

[77] *Supra 4,* OSCE Guide on Non-military Confidence-Building Measures

[78] Simon JA Mason and Siegfried Matthias, "Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) in Peace Processes", In: *Managing Peace Processes: Process related Questions. A Handbook for AU Practitioners*, Volume 1, African Union and the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, 2013, 57-77. https://peacemediation.ch/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/AU-Handbook_Confidence-Building-Measures-in-Peace-Processes.pdf

[79] *Supra 6*, Mason and Matthias, CBMs in Peace Processes

[80] *Supra 4,* OSCE Guide on Non-military Confidence-Building Measures

large data-set, with data between 1870-1938 and over 14,000 observations (dyadic years), Barbieri draws the very interesting conclusion that dyadic trade flows have a curvilinear effect on MIDs — more trade leads to more MIDs and that higher economic interdependence, both symmetrical and asymmetrical, leads to more MIDs (even after allowing for contiguity, regime-type, relative-capabilities and alliance-commitments).[81] At the very least, as Emiel Awad emphasises, what is beyond debate is the need for further and more rigorous research *"to get a fundamentally deeper understanding of how economic interdependence affects a state's decision-making. Game Theory (but also other approaches) may be helpful to understand more clearly how economic interdependence affects the likelihood of war".*[82] However, even at the present stage of research amongst the intellectual elites of the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) and their institutions, it can hardly be contested that economic-ties between nations are deeply affected by the quality of their bilateral diplomatic relations and that economics and politics are inextricably intertwined.[83]

- **Environmental CBMs.**

Environmental CBMs incorporate, *inter alia*, some combination of joint, cooperative, collaborative, or coordinated planning and training to deal effectively with regional or sub-regional natural disasters (and manmade ones as well) such as earthquakes, seaquakes, *tsunamis*, and floods, vulnerabilities to the adverse impacts of climate-change (port-fragility, for instance), oil-spills, etc. The great advantage of environmental CBMs is that they are perceived as shared solution-pathways to common threats. They are usually, (though not always) less impacted by political suspicion and sensitivities. While it is important to avoid the trap of defining CBMs too broadly — to the point where *"they can mean anything and nothing, thereby losing their conceptual clarity"*,[84] CBMs that address trans-national or pan-regional interdependencies and offer concrete incentives for cooperation and collaboration can be effective tools to knitting a neighbourhood, sub-region or a region together.

- **Societal CBMs.**

As one moves away from the confines of the Westphalian nation-state and examines the relevance and effectiveness of CBMs amongst collectives or human beings as opposed to nationals or citizens (these are not interchangeable nouns) one encounters sharp increases in the need to retain conceptual coherence on the one hand, and, an equally sharp increase in both, opportunities and challenges, on the other. Dialogues and exchanges between academics, educators (especially if these lead to collaborative or joint production of text books), journalists, and, policy-influencing institutions such as credible thinktanks, offer good examples of potential CBMs. The proactive creation and proliferation of advocacy platforms (conferences, symposia, workshops and

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[81] Katherine Barbieri, "The Liberal Illusion: Does Trade Promote Peace?", University of Michigan Press, 2005 Edition.
See also:
Katherine Barbieri and O Keshk, "Trading Data: Evaluating our Assumptions and Coding Rules", Journal of Conflict Management and Peace Science, Vol 26 (5), 2009
[82] Emiel Awad, "Economic Interdependence, Trade, and War: A Theoretical and Empirical Analysis". Master's Thesis in International Public Management and Public Policy, Erasmus University (Faculty of Social Sciences), Rotterdam, 2013. thesis.eur.nl/pub/15372/Final-Version-29th-of-October-2013.pdf
[83] Vincenzo Bove, Leandro Elia and Petros G Sekeris, "Trade Still Follows the Flag: U.S. Security Strategy and the Value of Bilateral Trade". http://privatewww.essex.ac.uk/~ksg/esrcjsps/Bove.pdf
[84] *Supra 6*, Mason and Matthias, CBMs in Peace Processes

seminars) as also joint-research projects such as this very one, can be effectively leveraged to engender and enhance confidence in past and present actions and future intentions of the States represented, thereby reducing such trust-deficits as might exist.

- **Cultural CBMs.**

Cultural CBMs are surprisingly effective but are seldom exploited with same degree of vigour or persistence as are other types. The disappointingly lacklustre progress of India's *Mausam* initiative is an example of a very low realisation of very large potential.[85]

An important consideration is that while bilateral CBMs are the norm, this is not the sole format for their application. Depending upon the context in which they are sought to be used, they could, on the one hand, involve more than two parties and be devised and executed in a multilateral format. On the other hand, they could also be unilateral, wherein a single State-party tries to assuage the insecurities of another (or others) and by virtue of unilateral CBMs, encourages a diversion from a potentially conflictual trajectory to one marked by mutual comity thereby leading to non-confrontational negotiations. Indeed, it is not always appreciated that even in contemporary times, unilateral CBMs have an especially well-established lineage dating to the GRIT strategy (Graduated Reciprocated Initiatives for Tension-Reduction) of the mid-1960s, which had been developed for the US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency. This CBM is based on one of two potentially-conflicting State-parties making one or more unilateral gesture of goodwill and then waiting for the other to respond, without seeking direct reciprocity for each such goodwill gesture. As the process continues, both potentially-conflicting and gridlocked parties could build trust and shore-up mutual confidence to a point where substantial negotiations can be resumed. Transparency and predictability are crucial elements in all CBMs and the absence of either can prove severely detrimental to success. An example of lack of transparency is the explanation offered by a State for the Indian Ocean deployment (specifically in the Arabian Sea) of its nuclear-powered submarines as being an anti-piracy measure.[86] This sort of lack of transparency tends to reduce confidence in the intentions of the State concerned and this lack of confidence breeds mistrust that then rapidly spreads to all Indian Ocean naval deployments (not limited to submarines alone) of the State in question.

Of course, the utility and the format will depend upon the prevailing context and perception-management will play a very substantive and substantial role. Within the maritime domain in general and the Indian Ocean in particular, perception management is a common feature of naval deployments and missions in support of a given navy's diplomatic role, especially in terms of humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR). The frequent HADR missions of India's Navy within its maritime neighbourhood — involving, *inter alia*, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Seychelles, Madagascar, Mauritius, Comoros, etc. — offer telling examples of unilateral CBMs.

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[85] Pradeep Chauhan, "Geopolitics, Maritime Connectivity and Cultural Heritage" in: *"Roads, Winds, Spices in the Western Indian Ocean"*, Ed Pragya Pandey and Nutan Kapoor Mahawar, Indian Council for World Affairs (ICWA), (New Delhi, Macmillan Publishers India Private Limited, January 2022), 43-53
[86] Lawrence Chung, "China's nuclear sub mission in Gulf of Aden 'could cause unease among neighbours'" in *South China Morning Post*, 27 April 2015. https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy-defence/article/1777792/chinese-nuclear-submarine-completes-anti-piracy-mission

In seeking to the desired mutuality of trust, and the "good order" that arises therefrom, it is evident that the geographical spread across which this to be referenced will play a very significant role. The larger the geographical spread, and the greater the number of State actors (and non-State ones, too) contained within this geographical spread, the greater will be the complexities encountered.

Like any ocean, the Indian Ocean, too, includes its fringing seas. As such, its area of 73.6 million square kilometres[87] may well be comparatively lesser than that of the Pacific and the Atlantic oceans, but it is, in absolute terms, quite formidable. It is separated from the Atlantic Ocean by the meridian of 20° East (south of Africa) and from the Pacific Ocean by the meridian of 147° East. The northernmost extent of the Indian Ocean is the Persian Gulf, at the approximate latitude of 30° North. Extending down to Antarctica at its southernmost reaches, it is practically walled off on three sides by land. The Arabian Peninsula and the east coast of Africa define its western wall. Myanmar, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Timor-Leste, and, the north-west coast of Australia, define the eastern wall. The southern part of Asia forms a roof over its northern extent.[88] The great peninsular landmass of India, jutting out for over a thousand miles, characterises the Indian Ocean, gives it its name, and distinguishes it from the Pacific and the Atlantic, which lie from north to south like great highways without any roof. The waters of the Indian Ocean lap the shores of as many as 38 nation-States (as shown in **Table 1**) with vastly varying territorial boundaries and limits:

Table 1: IOR Littoral States							
West Asian Littoral		**East African Littoral**		**South Asian Littoral**		**South-East Asian & Australian Littoral**	
1	Bahrain	1	Comoros	1	Bangladesh	1	Australia
2	Iran	2	Djibouti	2	India	2	Indonesia
3	Iraq	3	Egypt	3	Maldives	3	Malaysia
4	Israel	4	Eritrea	4	Pakistan	4	Myanmar
5	Jordan	5	France	5	Seychelles	5	Singapore
6	Kuwait	6	Kenya	6	Sri Lanka	6	Thailand
7	Oman	7	Madagascar			7	Timor Leste
8	Qatar	8	Mauritius				
9	Saudi Arabia	9	Mozambique				
10	UAE	10	Somalia				
11	Yemen	11	South Africa				
		12	Sudan				
		13	Tanzania				
		14	UK				

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[87] NASA Sea-viewing Wide Field-of-view Sensor (SeaWiFS) Project. https://seawifs.gsfc.nasa.gov/OCEAN_PLANET/HTML/oceanography_geography_Indian.html

[88] International Hydrographic Organisation (IHO), Special Publication 23, 3rd Edition, 1953. https://epic.awi.de/29772/1/IHO1953a.pdf

Note: In the year 2000, a draft version included the Southern Ocean south of 60° South, but this draft has not been formally adopted.

Amongst the above-listed State-actors are some that have deep-seated and violent political conflictual histories that not only impact almost every sphere of their bilateral engagement, but also strain impact the sub-regional fabric of this major maritime sub-division of the Indo-Pacific, namely, the Indian Ocean. India and Pakistan are, perhaps, the principal exemplars of such hostility-driven States that *"have no confidence in each other* [and] *will often not even talk together, let alone enter serious negotiations or joint problem-solving"*[89] However, a lack of confidence and inadequate trust could be evidenced in several other State-led engagement processes as well, even without the States concerned having experienced State-on-State geopolitical violence or conflict. In a few such cases, the normal course of diplomacy could be significantly hindered or may even be halted. In several such cases, *"Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) can be an effective tool for preparing and deepening peace negotiations and mediation."*[90] However, just as it is self-limiting to believe that CBMs are only relevant in the military domain, it is equally imprudent to consider them to be a panacea for all geopolitical ills or an alternative to the normal applications of diplomacy. Indeed, *"the usefulness of CBMs is often overestimated and this calls for a careful consideration of their limitations."*[91]

Almost all contemporary discussions on means and methods of preventing dangerous (or unsafe) incidents at sea involving, either partially or wholly, naval vessels, are rooted in the "1972 Agreement for the Prevention of Incidents On and Over the High Seas" (INCSEA).[92]

The INCSEA Agreement was a response by the military leaderships of the USA and the erstwhile-USSR to a series of dangerous and potentially-escalatory incidents that occurred in April of 1968, in the Sea of Japan. Both sides correctly assessed the extreme danger of having an essentially tactical show of naval brinkmanship escalate into a strategic (and possibly nuclear) armed conflict between the two superpowers of that period. The apex levels of the respective military (naval) hierarchies involved themselves personally, lending requisite urgency to the process. The agreement was formally signed, in Moscow, on 25 May 1972, by the Secretary of the Navy (for the United States) and by Admiral Sergei Gorshkov, Commander in Chief of the Soviet Navy (for the USSR).[93]

Three aspects offer immediate and overarching lessons for our own contemporary considerations, although present-day analysts do not always give these the importance that they deserve:

(1) The gravity of the situation was understood by the two powers, each of which was politically mature.

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[89] Simon JA Mason and Siegfried Matthias, "Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) in Peace Processes", In: *Managing Peace Processes: Process related Questions. A Handbook for AU Practitioners*, Volume 1, African Union and the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, 2013, 57-77. https://peacemediation.ch/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/AU-Handbook_Confidence-Building-Measures-in-Peace-Processes.pdf

[90] *Supra 7,* CBMs in Peace Processes...A Handbook for AU Practitioners

[91] *Supra 7,* CBMs in Peace Processes...A Handbook for AU Practitioners

[92] Dale Ton, "INCSEA and the Persistence of Dangerous Intercepts", National Security Law Brief, American University, 20 March 2018. https://nationalsecuritylawbrief.com/2018/03/20/incsea-and-the-persistence-of-dangerous-intercepts

For the Text of the INCSEA Agreement, see: "Agreement Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Prevention of Incidents On and Over the High Seas". https://2009-2017.state.gov/t/isn/4791.htm

[93] Vice Admiral WD Crowder, "Chief of Naval Operations OPNAV Instruction 5711.96C", US Department of Defense, Department of the Navy, 10 November 2008

(2)   The danger of extremely rapid escalation from a tactical game of 'Chicken', played by carefully-conditioned assertive and aggressive seagoing commanders, to a potential global nuclear conflict was correctly assessed to be very high.

(3)   This personal involvement of the highest naval leaders of the two countries signalled not only extreme gravity and extreme urgency, but also that civilian bureaucratic delays and obfuscation would not be brooked.

It is important to note that **none** of these impetuses are available in the Indian Ocean. It would also be worth recalling that the 1972 INCSEA Agreement was applicable only to vessels/platforms/units of the US Navy (wherein the prefix 'USS' — United States Ship — is used), as also to the US Marine Corps, the US Coast Guard, the US Air Force, the US Army, and, government-owned ships of the US Military Sealift Command (MSC). A separate Protocol to the 1972 INCSEA Agreement had to be signed (in 1973) which basically stated that *"Ships and aircraft of the Parties shall not make simulated attacks by aiming guns, missile launchers, torpedo tubes and other weapons at non-military ships of the other Party, nor launch nor drop any objects near non-military ships of the other Party in such a manner as to be hazardous to these ships or to constitute a hazard to Navigation."*[94] This was necessary because the MSC has two distinct categories of vessels within it, either of which may be manned by a hybrid mix of uniformed and civilian personnel (the latter are known as 'Civil Service Mariners' [CIVMARs]) or an all-civilian crew. The first category of ships of the MSC consists of US **government-owned** ships. These are US naval auxiliaries and are (quite confusingly for the lay person) given the prefix USNS, an acronym for 'US Naval Ship'. The second category comprises vessels that are simply chartered from trade.[95] While USNS vessels have distinctive and unique blue-and-gold bands on their funnels, the chartered ones are indistinguishable from other merchant vessels.[96] All this is germane to the Indian Ocean because the US Navy — with its ships comprising a mix of warships (with the prefix "USS") and naval auxiliaries (with the prefix "USNS") — routinely operates in this ocean, as do British warships. The latter, too, are a mix of Royal Navy warships with the prefix "HMS" and Royal Fleet Auxiliaries (RFA). The crew of RFA ships are seagoing civilians who, although they have merchant marine insignia and ranks, are employed by the UK Ministry of Defence. Now, when such vessels operate in the EEZ of IOR States, there is some ambiguity as whether or not they ought to be considered warships in the classical sense and whether declarations that had been made by resident States while ratifying the 1982 UNCLOS (Bangladesh, France, India, and Pakistan, are examples of such States) include the activities of ships of the US MSC or British RFAs. This would be an apt case for the introduction of CBMs even though there are no conflictual confrontations between any of the resident IOR-States (other than, perhaps, Iran, Iraq, and Yemen) and the USA or the UK.

In the Indian Ocean, the India-Pakistan relationship might, at a superficial level, appear to mirror at least some elements of the US-Soviet one, giving rise to a feeling that the US-Soviet/Russia INCSEA Agreement can be extrapolated and some variant of the Agreement applied here, as advocated by Professor Monish Tourangbam (albeit

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[94] US Department of State, "Protocol to the Agreement Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Prevention of Incidents on and Over the High Seas Signed May 25, 1972", Wikisource, https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Protocol_to_the_Agreement_on_the_Prevention_of_Incidents_at_Sea

[95] US Military Sealift Command Website, https://sealiftcommand.com/about-msc
[96] OPNAV Instruction 5711.96C

in the Sino-Indian context rather than the India-Pakistan one).[97]   Clearly, the seductiveness of replicating a perceived 'successful' model and applying it to a contemporary context is substantial.   Indeed, this is the very sentiment that underpinned the conclusion of the India-Pakistan Confidence Building Measures between the navies of the two countries, as far back as 06 April 1991.[98] Although this seminal document is rarely studied or cited in India, its relevance can hardly be overstated, if for no other reason than that it failed.   However, in its failure lie important lessons on the limitations that must be placed on one's expectations in extrapolating the INCSEA Agreement as a maritime CBM. Quite apart from its major thrust on providing for advance notice of major exercises so as to preclude exercise-preparations from being mistaken for preparations for an actual armed conflict, this 1991 Agreement contained important preventive elements at a more tactical level involving the two navies, as witness the following extract:

> *"10. The Naval ships and submarines belonging to the other country are not to close less than three Nautical Miles (NMs) from each other so as to avoid any accident while operating in international waters.*
>
> *11. Combat aircraft including fighter, bomber reconnaissance, jet military trainer and armed helicopter aircraft will not fly within ten kms of each other's airspace, including the Air Defence Identification Zones (ADIZ), except when such aircraft are operating form Jammu, Pathankot, Amritsar and Suratgarh air bases on the Indian side, as well as Pasrur, Lahore, Vehari and Rahimyar Khan air bases on the Pakistan side, in which case they will maintain a distance of five kms from each other's airspace. Unarmed transport and logistics aircraft including unarmed helicopters and Air Observation Post (AOP) aircraft will be permitted to operate up to 1000 meters from each other's airspace including the ADIZ.*
>
> *12. Aircraft of either country will refrain from buzzing surface units and platforms of the other country in international waters."*

There were several eminently predictable reasons why this local variant of the 1972 INCSEA Agreement was never going to work.   It is just that the seductiveness of replicating its perceived success was so great as to blind the concerned protagonists was not extrapolatable to the India-Pakistan framework.   In 1991, neither country was a declared nuclear power (even though India had conducted a successful nuclear test in 1974), nor was, by any stretch of imagination, a superpower.   The prevailing assessment was that a bilateral military would be unlikely to involve other countries of even the Indian Ocean alone, far less the world as a whole.   Finally, the CBM-document of 1991 was signed not by the two apex-level military leaders but, instead, by two very senior and experienced diplomats — the Foreign Secretary of each country.   This might seem adequate in a normal case, but within a military as politically powerful as that of Pakistan, the sheer weight of a document signed by the senior-most military officer far exceeds that of a civilian bureaucrat, no matter how important-sounding his title.   Moreover, the agreement was subject to ratification — a process that is convoluted enough in both countries and one that was almost impossible to attain in the supercharged atmosphere of the period in which Pakistani interference in the Indian State of Jammu and Kashmir had

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[97] Monish Tourangbam, "Avoiding Incidents at Sea between India and China", The Stimson Center, (Research, Asia), Washington DC, 26 April 2018, https://www.stimson.org/2018/avoiding-incidents-sea-between-india-and-china/

[98] Rear Admiral Ravi Vohra and Rear Admiral Hasan Ansari, "Confidence Building Measures at Sea: Opportunities for India and Pakistan", (Appendix A), Cooperative Monitoring Center Occasional Paper/33, Sandia National Laboratories, December 2003, https://www.sandia.gov/cooperative-monitoring-center/_assets/documents/sand2004-0102.pdf

reached a decadal peak. In any case, Pakistan's Navy chose to ignore the provisions altogether and regular and dangerous 'buzzing' of Indian warships by Pakistani Air Force aircraft has continued apace. For example:

> *"... in August 1995, Pakistan Navy (PN) Alouettes flew dangerously low over an Indian Navy (IN) ship participating in the International Fleet Review in the port of Tanjung Priok, Indonesia. In 1996, there was a near collision between a PN Alouette helicopter and an IN Sea King helicopter shadowing the PN's annual SEA SPARK exercise in the Arabian Sea. The downing of the Pakistani Naval Atlantique by the Indian Air Force on August 12, 1999, is perhaps ... the most disastrous of these incidents..."* [99]

There is little evidence even in more contemporary times, that the 1991 CBMs are even marginally effective beyond the mere provision-of-notice of major exercises. In July of 2011, for instance, there was a major incident involving an Indian and a Pakistani warship (the INS *Godavari* and the PNS *Babur*), both of which were engaged in what ought to have been a cooperative escort of a merchant vessel (the MV *Suez*) through a piracy-prone area, manoeuvring so aggressively as to end-up physically grazing and damaging each other.[100]

It is important to note that outside of the significantly-vitiated India-Pakistan relationship, the Indian Ocean region has been largely law-abiding, with warships or other maritime-security vessels adhering to established international conventions that govern unplanned or unexpected encounters at sea. Taken in aggregate, these conventions, rules, regulations, and traditional courtesies, cover the entire gamut of ship/vessel-based maritime intercourse, and constitute what is called a "rules-based order" at sea. While the 1982 Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)[101] is, arguably, the best known of these conventions, and while an overwhelming number of IOR States have, indeed, signed and ratified this convention,[102] the 1982 UNCLOS is not the sole determinant of predictable and lawful behaviour of seagoing entities. For instance, the 1988 SUA Convention (Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation)[103] and the 1988 SUA Protocol (Protocol for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Against the Safety of Fixed Platforms Located on the Continental Shelf),[104] relating to maritime safety of ships and offshore platforms from hijacking, terrorism, etc., address some gaps in the 1982 UNCLOS. Of even greater relevance to this approach-paper are the determinants of 'day-to-day' predictability and lawful behaviour at sea. These are quite comprehensively covered by the International Maritime Organisation (IMO). Not every enthusiastic proponent of CBMs in the maritime reaches of the Indian Ocean appears to appreciate that the IMO, as a body of human representatives of nation-States and multinational entities, draws its legal strength from the 1948 IMO Convention (which came into force in 1958) and is a full-fledged international convention in its own right that was *"prepared and opened for signature and acceptance by the United Nations Maritime Conference convened by the*

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[99] Commander Rajesh Pendharkar, "The Lahore Declaration and Beyond: Maritime Confidence-Building Measures in South Asia", Occasional Paper No. 51, The Henry L Stimson Center, Washington DC, February 2003, https://www.stimson.org/wp-content/files/file-attachments/MaritimeCBMs.PDF

[100] "India, Pakistan in War of Words as Warships Collide", The Economic Times E-Paper, 19 June 2011, https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/india-pakistan-in-war-of-words-as-warships-collide/articleshow/8909179.cms

[101] UN Office of Legal Affairs: Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, "United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea", 10 December 1982, https://www.un.org/depts/los/convention_agreements/texts/unclos/UNCLOS-TOC.htm

[102] *Amongst 38 littoral resident States of the IOR, Eritrea, Iran, Israel, and UAE are yet to ratify the 1982 UNCLOS.*

[103] Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation, 1988, www.un.org/en/sc/ctc/docs/conventions/Conv8.pdf

[104] Protocol for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Against the Safety of Fixed Platforms Located on the Continental Shelf, 1988, www.un.org/en/sc/ctc/docs/conventions/Conv9.pdf

Secretary-General of the United Nations pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 35 (IV)".[105] It has been ratified by all littoral States of the IOR. The IMO (as a body, drawing its legal authority from the IMO Convention) has successfully sponsored a number of seminal conventions, rules and procedures, which put together, regulate the behaviour of all seagoing maritime entities.   A major one is the 1972 Convention (and its subsequent updates) on the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea (COLREGS)[106] also known as the "Rules of the Road" (ROR). This, too, is a full-fledged international convention and has been ratified by all littoral States of the Indian Ocean. The COLREGS Convention stipulates mandatory rules that govern patterns of movement, speed, and behaviour required for watercraft of all kinds so as to prevent close-quarter and other dangerous situations from arising. It includes the display of shapes and lights and the generation of specific sound signals that signal the purpose and intentions of vessels in varying conditions of visibility (including vessels that are not in sight on one another). Likewise, the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) is the United Nations specialised agency for information and communication technologies (ICTs).[107] *"The legal framework of ITU comprises the basic instruments of the Union, which have treaty status and are binding on ITU Member States"[108]* The ITU's Radio Regulations and their associated "Rules of Procedure", *inter alia*, specify radio-frequencies that are to be used — including those for unplanned encounters of ships (including warships and naval auxiliaries). In the event that one or more vessels that are encountering one another are without radio communication, the communication-processes and procedures to be employed are mandated by the IMO's "International Code of Signals".[109] Linguistic incompatibility amongst vessels at sea is addressed by mandatory adherence to the IMO's "Standard Communication Phrases (SCP)".[110] Behaviour of ships at sea is further regulated by the mandatory provisions of the "Safety of Life at Sea" (SOLAS) Convention, 1974[111] (updated to 2020 and which, too, has been ratified by all littoral States of the Indian Ocean), and, the "International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, 1973" (MARPOL).[112] Even where 'hostile intent' is concerned, the provisions of the "San Remo Handbook on Rules of Engagement" (Article 4.4 of Appendix 4 to Annex A) provide adequate guidelines in respect of seagoing vessels.[113]

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[105] International Maritime Organization, "IMO in the United Nations: Convention on the International Maritime Organization Geneva, 6 March 1948", https://www.imo.org/en/KnowledgeCentre/Pages/IMOinUN-default.aspx

[106] International Maritime Organization, "Convention on the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea, 1972" (COLREGS) https://www.imo.org/en/OurWork/Safety/Pages/Preventing-Collisions.aspx
For full text, see: https://treaties.un.org/doc/publication/unts/volume%201050/volume-1050-i-15824-english.pdf

[107] International Telecommunication Union, "About International Telecommunication Union (ITU)", https://www.itu.int/en/about/Pages/default.aspx

[108] International Telecommunication Union, "Regulatory Publications", https://www.itu.int/pub/R-REG

[109] International Maritime Organization, "International Code of Signals for Visual, Sound, and Radio Communications", https://www.dco.uscg.mil/Portals/9/NMC/pdfs/examinations/01_international_code_of_signals_pub_102_2005_ed.pdf

[110] International Maritime Organization, "Resolution A 918(22)", 29 November 2001, IMO Standard Marine Communication Phrases", https://dokumen.tips/download/link/imo-standard-marine-communication-phrases-a91822

[111] International Maritime Organization, "International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974", https://treaties.un.org/doc/publication/unts/volume%201184/volume-1184-i-18961-english.pdf

[112] International Maritime Organization, "International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, 1973", https://treaties.un.org/doc/Publication/UNTS/Volume%201340/volume-1340-A-22484-English.pdf

[113] "Guidance on Hostile Intent", Appendix 4 to Annex A, San Remo Handbook on Rules of Engagement, International Institute of Humanitarian Law, San Remo, http://iihl.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/ROE-HANDBOOK-ENGLISH.pdf

Conclusion

What all this implies is that the pursuit of some fresh CUES-type of document (CUES is an acronym for "Code for Unplanned Encounters at Sea") is probably unnecessary for the sustenance of "good order at sea". Indian Ocean States ought not, perhaps, to expend undue energy in advocating a Code of Conduct that re-stipulates the existing conventions, treaties, rules and regulations, to which they are already publicly committed as ratifying parties. An undue insistence upon any additional 'signed commitment' or a pledge that promises predictable and lawful 'good behaviour' is unlikely to be more than chasing a chimaera and runs the very real risk of confusing 'activity' with 'accomplishment'. An international code of conduct already exists that transcends any given oceanic space. If a country is set on ignoring it, then concerted international pressure by way of deliberate and concerted social- (rather than economic-) 'ostracization', along with a 'collective' leveraging of extant legal arbitral mechanisms, are probably more likely to produce the desired behavioural change, if for no other reason than the fact that nations, like individuals, simply *want* to be liked by their peers.[114]

Insofar as the ongoing Indian Ocean initiatives led by Sri Lanka's Pathfinder Foundation — and fully supported by India's National Maritime Foundation — is concerned, a far more productive and promising approach might well be to jointly prepare a properly cross-indexed "Guide for Seagoing Officers" that acts as a compendium or ready-reckoner, while also providing diplomats and officials ashore with the requisite information with which to engage their counterparts from other littoral-States of the Indian Ocean as well as extra-regional States and collective entities operating within the Indian Ocean. This is not, however, to undervalue in any way the enormous importance of non-military Confidence Building Measures in their several dimensions — political, economic, environmental, societal, and cultural. Indeed, in cases where a trust-deficit is felt to exist even in the absence of a state of confrontation, conflict, or actual hostilities, it is such CBMs, rather than ones aimed at seagoing entities that are likely to produce the most meaningful results.

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[114] Pradeep Chauhan, "Address at the 12th South China Sea International Conference "Maintaining Peace and Cooperation through Times of Turbulance", https://scsc12.dav.edu.vn/

Discussion

Necessity and relevance of maritime "Confidence Building Measures" (CBMs)

During the process of enhancing CBMs in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR), it is imperative to be mindful of the fact that the Indian Ocean, being a part of global commons, is open to all States, both intra-regional and extra-regional without exception, in keeping with the Convention on the Law of the Sea and other relevant international agreements.

Transparency and predictability are important elements in all CBMs, and the absence of either can hamper their success.

Due to the high number of State and non-State actors frequenting the Indian Ocean region, inevitable challenges are caused to the pursuit of mutual trust, the achievement of which is necessary for the establishment of "good order" at sea.

Certain state actors have politically motivated conflictual histories that impact their bilateral relations, as well as the security of the sub-regions of the Indian Ocean, for example, the Indo-Pakistan relationship.

Conventions, rules, regulations and traditional courtesies, cover the entire gamut of ship/vessel-based maritime interaction and contribute to a "rules-based order" at sea, while routine, predictable and lawful behaviour at sea is comprehensively covered by the International Maritime Organisation (IMO).

Although CBMs are predominant within the military domain, they also exist in non-military environments. They are usually effective in a bilateral context. However, depending on the context in which CBMs are used, they could also function in unilateral or multilateral formats.

Non-military Confidence Building Measures (CBMs)

Political CBMs

Political CBMs are important in addressing trust-deficits even in the absence of inter-State armed conflict, as long as a trust deficit is evident or perceived by at least one State-party. While it is possible for confidence to be generated solely through dialogue, the risks of misinterpretation and misunderstanding may bring negative results. Actions, too, can be misconstrued or misinterpreted, particularly in an already hostile atmosphere. In situations where conflict is absent, but a trust deficit is deemed to exist by one state-party, political CBMs can be adopted as the leading approach.

Economic CBMs

Although conventional wisdom holds that economic interdependence would foster fruitful relationships between States, research has shown that increased trade interdependence of a bilateral nature could lead to inter-state disputes, even though it may not escalate into outright conflict. On the other hand, according to Indian Ocean Region academics, it

can hardly be contested that economic tie between nations are deeply affected by the quality of their bilateral relations, and, economics and politics are inextricably intertwined.

Environmental CBMs

Environmental CBMs include a combination of joint or coordinated planning and training to deal with regional or sub-regional, natural and man-made disasters. The advantage of environmental CBMs is that they are perceived as shared solutions to common threats. CBMs that address trans-national or pan-regional interdependencies and offer concrete incentives for cooperation can be practical tools for bringing a sub-region or a region together.

Societal CBMs

In examining the relevance and effectiveness of CBMs amongst collectives or human beings, as opposed to individuals or nationals, it is necessary to retain consistency on the one hand and an increase in both opportunities and challenges on the other.

Dialogues and exchanges between academics and similar categories generate good examples of potential CBMs. Advocacy platforms and research projects such as the Pathfinder Indian Ocean Security Conference (PFIOSC) can effectively enhance confidence in past and present actions as well as future intentions of the States represented, thereby reducing trust-deficits.

Cultural CBMs

Cultural CBMs are effective, but they are seldom exploited with the same degree of vigour or persistence as other CBMs. The lacklustre progress of such initiatives is an example of inadequate comprehension of their potential.

Measures for Confidence Building in the IOR

For building trust, concerns and interests of both large and small states must be considered. Trust can be built through bilateral and multilateral mechanisms leading to a rules-based order.

The introduction and implementation of new CBMs or the expansion of the existing ones should be done through practical measures. There are different layers of CBMs and the necessity of integrating CBMs. Challenges may arise when applying historical examples to current situations as such examples may or may not fit the requirements of current situations. Therefore, a comprehensive study should be made before deciding on historical examples.

Due to the diversity in the IOR, comprising 38 geopolitically asymmetrical states, each having its own dynamics, one general remedy to improve CBM would not be adequate and suitable. It has to change according to the State's interests and circumstances.

Trust plays a vital role in building CBM. Therefore, trust-building should commence /progress in the region, assuming that there are no spheres of influence. Trust can be created through bilateral, mini-lateral and multilateral efforts.

At the same time, it must be noted that, as all states are independent, they have their own concerns and stakes; they could also be intra-regional or extra-regional.

It is not necessary to create new mechanisms, and those in place appear to be adequate; what is lacking is adherence. The observance of existing rules, frameworks, etc., would contribute to meeting the objective of enhancing CBMs. If there are gaps in the process, modifications should be made to close such gaps.

Closing Session

Closing Remarks by H.E. Mizukoshi Hideaki
Ambassador of Japan to Sri Lanka

Ambassador Bernard Goonetilleke, Chairman of Pathfinder Foundation and Co-Chair of PFIOSC, Ambassador Shivshankar Menon, Co-Chair of PFIOSC, Ambassador Geetha De Silva, Secretary General of PFIOSC, Distinguished Panelists and Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen.

First of all, I am grateful to every one of you for very substantial discussions and making insightful presentations in each session. I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation to the Pathfinder Foundation and the Secretariat for organizing this successful conference. The fruitful deliberations were the manifestation of everyone's interest in the Indian Ocean region, and I learned quite a lot through the Conference.

COVID-19 has come as a sudden external shock, which has the potential to reshape the economic and diplomatic relationships around the globe. Having experienced serious disruptions of supply chains, the importance of Indian Ocean sea-lanes, where Sri Lanka is located at the heart, has been rapidly increasing.

In this context, all of the themes covered today were very timely and necessary, also closely related to the vision of a Free and Open Indo-Pacific, which Japan has been actively promoting. We believe the Indo-Pacific Oceans should be "Global Commons" or "international public goods", which would benefit all countries, littoral and non-littoral. To this end, we would like to continue to work together with all countries which share common values and principles, to realize a Free and Open Indo-Pacific through strengthening the rule of law and freedom of navigation; enhancing connectivity through "quality infrastructure"; and maintaining maritime peace and security.

Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA), one of the main themes of the conference, especially, forges and demonstrates our commitment to peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region. Through a Japanese supplementary budget, UNODC has provided a variety of MDA related equipment to Sri Lanka, which consists of a maritime radar, a maritime thermal imaging camera and an information fusion system. The equipment was installed at Sri Lanka Navy's facilities and at major ports in the country where it is playing an essential role in the early detection of illicit activity at sea by international drug and human traffickers, which is one of the major maritime security challenges Sri Lanka is facing today. Reaffirming the geostrategic significance of Sri Lanka in the Indian Ocean, I truly believe Japan's continued engagement and cooperation with this island nation is crucial to contributing towards ensuring the safety and security of the Indian Ocean region.

Regarding the Security Architecture and Confidence Building, every state, including Sri Lanka, which abides by international rules and norms, can play an invaluable role in establishing a stable and prosperous regional order. I believe our inclusive concept, Free and Open Indo Pacific, can contribute to those efforts. I am very much convinced that today's conference will lay a precious foundation for a common understanding on the way forward. Japan will continue to play its leading role for the promotion of peace and stability of the region.

Upon concluding my remarks, Japan, as a long-time partner, would like to express again our sincere gratitude to the Pathfinder Foundation, the International Advisory Group and the Secretariat for organizing the Conference.

Thank you.

Closing Remarks by Ambassador (Retd.) Shivshankar Menon
Co-Chair, Pathfinder Indian Ocean Security Conference

Thank you, Secretary General, for giving me the floor.

I would like to point out how impressed I was by what we have accomplished today. I believe it mainly starts with the quality of the papers, and for the paper writers really, I do not think any amount of praise is enough. If we have good papers, we can have a good discussion. What we have done in a compressed conference, in a very short time, has been very educative.

My takeaways from the conference are that, for one, it seems to me that we appear to be agreed that it is not the security situation, the maritime security situation in the Indian Ocean region, that is critical today, but it is the realization that our definition of security is expanded, that we have to look at it as more than just a military problem.

Moreover, the speakers in various ways pointed to the emerging nature of our concerns, which include issues such as climate change, fisheries, the human aspects of security, and the pandemic. For me, the most impressive was the demilitarization of our thinking. In fact, we had former Admiral Chauhan stating that we need to consider about politics, the need to go beyond traditional issues like culture, during this process. I found those comments very useful.

I found the discussion on security models also very useful because it made us aware that the geography, the diversity and the sheer size of the Indian Ocean region mean that we have to be flexible in our way of thinking, therefore, we need to be free, open and inclusive, in the way we think of the Indian Ocean region and the larger Indo Pacific.

The other factor that was brought to my attention was the emphasis on our common heritage, therefore, on the provision of public goods. We were talking of a rules-based order, providing for good order at sea, but it should also be applicable to areas around the Indian Ocean, in the littoral as well. That is where I believe a lot of the issues arise because presently, whether we like it or not, geopolitics is complicating our life. We heard some of it, hints of it, in the discussion, but I am not certain that we have actually grappled with that problem yet.

This leads to my last point, which is, the conference was very useful, and we have followed up on Phase I Conference very successfully, but I do think we will have to have another phase, in the near future I am certain that we need to continue this conversation and carry it forward.

I like to express my appreciation to all those at Pathfinder Foundation who took part in preparing and organizing this conference. I look forward to staying in touch and continue to work on these issues in the future. Thank you very much.

Thank you to all the participants, but especially to the panelists and the paper presenters because the quality of your work was remarkable.

Thank you.

Closing Remarks by Ambassador (Retd.) Bernard Goonetilleke
Co-Chair, Pathfinder Indian Ocean Security Conference and Chairman, Pathfinder Foundation

If I may also share a few words with the participants about the proceedings today. We had a productive discussion on three interrelated subjects. The moderators and panelists did an excellent job discussing the papers submitted by the presenters.

The main focus was on the theme 'A New Security Architecture for the Indian Ocean Region', which is topical given the emerging great power rivalry in the Indian Ocean.

The other two focus areas covered were, Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA), and by his own admission, a somewhat reckless, but very useful presentation on Confidence Building Measures (CBM) by Vice Admiral Chauhan, both of which relate to the first theme.

Of the world's three major oceans, Indian Ocean currently presents considerable concern due to the naval activities of interested states. The East China Sea and the South China Sea in the Pacific are the other areas of concern beyond the Indian Ocean. Over the centuries the Indian Ocean maintained and remained the busiest naval highway for international commerce, which status it continues to enjoy even today.

Way back in 1989, In in a seminar held in Sochi, then USSR, on the Indian Ocean Zone of Peace, one of the significant subjects discussed was Confidence Building Measures. Prof. S.D. Muni, in his paper 'Peace through Confidence Building: Prospects in the Indian Ocean" stated that it is a truism to say that peace cannot be built without generating mutual confidence and trust. However, he added, "CBMs as a concept also as a practical measure, stand as the lowest rung of a peace process in any given region.

However, it is generally recognized that CBMs do have a role to play in peace making and maintaining security, as we have discussed today. For example, prior notification of naval activities and observation of such action, exchange of information and greater openness concerning naval matters could help avoiding suspicion and promote peace and stability in the region. Transparency measures too could help the CBM process. Visits by naval units to other nations' naval bases; sharing of general information on doctrine, regular exchange of personnel and facilities to observe military and naval exercises; could also help build confidence. Of course, here I am speaking of military CBMs, whereas earlier we were speaking of political, cultural and economic CBMs.

During the first session, we examined whether there are opportunities for developing a new security architecture for the Indian Ocean. As I said earlier in the day, we are revisiting this subject after a lapse of fifty years. If there is willingness on the part of all participants concerned, they need to consider how such a mechanism can be developed, adopted and implemented. The UN system perhaps has some mechanism through which this issue could be addressed. There are also affiliated institutions such as International Maritime Oragnisation (IMO) and regional institutions like IORA or IORA Plus, as stated earlier.

To capture wider participation, the 1971 experience tells us that it should be a cooperative effort with clear objectives in mind and from which none should feel excluded. To ascertain if this a matter that should receive the attention of the United Nations, we can ask interested countries who wish to see the Indian Ocean free of conflict and military confrontation, to ponder over the matter.

Once again, I would like to highlight Pathfinder Foundation's new digital experience, 'Pathfinder Digital Insights'. It is an ongoing process and we have just begun incorporating it into our work. Therefore, we would greatly appreciate any feedback you would like to give us. You can reach out to us through the official website pathfinderfoundation.org or our social media, including our Facebook page.

During our discussion today we spoke about the 'Indo-pacific'. Having seen one of Vice Admiral Chauhan's slides in his presentation, if you turn that particular slide up upside down, a wide expanse of ocean can be seen connecting the Indian Ocean with the Pacific, with Australia being the only major obstruction. Given the geographical connections and the wide expanse of ocean, I believe there is a reason for us to look at the Indo Pacific in a different sense.

Now let me conclude by expressing the hope that we get to meet each other in the near future. Generally, we tend to have the PFIOSC every two years, so hopefully, by 2024 we should be gathering once again, if not earlier to have another discussion on matters relating to the Indian Ocean in the Indo-Pacific.

Thank you very much.

Closing Remarks by Ambassador (Retd.) Geetha de Silva
Secretary General, Pathfinder Indian Ocean Security Conference (PFIOSC)

We have come to the end of the conference deliberations and it is my pleasant task to offer closing remarks.

As you observed, we planned this conference giving priority to three themes and the sessions of the conference were based on position papers prepared by eminent experts on the three themes which they presented today. We appreciate very much the rich and vibrant panel discussions on the three topics and the views brought up by panelists as well as the participants of the conference.

At the end of the day, we are pleased that today's effort is a success.

As it is my task to express appreciation to all those who joined us in making today's conference a success, let me begin by extending my profound thanks to the speakers of the opening and closing sessions.

I wish to place on record my sincere thanks to Ambassador Bernard Goonetileke, Co-Chair of the Pathfinder Indian Ocean Conference and Chairperson of the Pathfinder Foundation. We appreciate you for your guidance and words of sound advice all the way, during the lead up to the conference and for the very valuable contribution you made to the conference in your interventions.

Ambassador Shivashankar Menon, you have been a tower of strength to us, as always. Your continued guidance and support helped us, particularly the Secretariat, in no uncertain terms. In addition to this, your remarks at the conference made their mark. We are deeply grateful to you, Ambassador Menon.

Thank you, Ambassador Julie Chung of the USA, for your participation in today's conference, despite your heavy schedule of responsibilities and delivering opening remarks. My sincere thanks are extended to you.

I thank you Ambassador Mizukoshi Hideaki, Ambassador of Japan to Sri Lanka for joining us today, notwithstanding your numerous responsibilities and sharing with us ~~his~~ your views on Indian Ocean security.

Thank you, Mr. Iwamoto Keiichi, Deputy Director General at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Japan, for your contribution to the conference ~~in his~~ through your opening remarks.

Next, it is my pleasure to thank Vice Admiral Pradeep Chauhan, Director General of the National Maritime Foundation in India for the opening remarks. Thank you very much.

I take a moment now to direct my address to the members of the International Advisory Group of the Pathfinder Indian Ocean Security Conference. They were extremely cooperative and helpful, particularly during the preparatory stages of the conference. My sincere thanks go to them all.

The paper writers who conducted extensive research and prepared excellent papers that they presented today; the moderators who conducted discussions effectively and efficiently; and the panelists who contributed to the discussions; as well as all the participants of the conference deserve our deep appreciation.

I thank the Executive director and staff of the Pathfinder Foundation for their support. I particularly refer to Ameera, Gayathri and Ganidhu who worked long hours and tirelessly to make the conference a success. My thanks are also extended to the technical team that handled all the technical aspects of the Zoom Conference.

I would invite everyone to keep in contact with us through the Pathfinder Foundation website and other social media channels. We are always open to suggestions.

With that I will bring the conference to a conclusion.

I wish you well and all the best.

Goodbye.

Biographies of Conference Speakers

H.E. Ambassador Salman Al Farisi

**Secretary General of the Indian Ocean Rim Association**

Ambassador Salman Al Farisi was appointed to the position of Secretary General of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) by the IORA Council of Ministers on 17th November 2021. Prior to his current position, he served as the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Indonesia to the Republic of South Africa, Kingdom of Eswatini, Republic of Botswana and Kingdom of Lesotho since 2018.

In addition, he has held several positions in his distinguished career including, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Indonesia to the United Arab Emirates Senior Advisor to the Minister of Foreign Affairs for Institutional Relations and Acting Director General for Multilateral Affairs.

Ambassador Al Farisi holds a Master Degree in International Relations Tufts University, USA and a Bachelor's Degree in Economy and Development Studies University of Gadjah Mada, Indonesia. He is currently a Doctoral Student for Policy Studies at University of Gadjah Mada, Indonesia,

Mr. Samuel Bashfield

PhD Candidate and Research Officer, National Security College, Australian National University, Australia
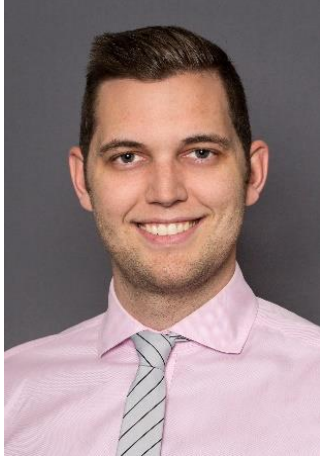
Samuel Bashfield is research officer and PhD candidate at the ANU National Security College in Canberra, Australia. His research engages with Indian Ocean security issues, with a particular focus on the past, present and future of the British Indian Ocean Territory (Chagos Archipelago). He contributes to the NSC's Indo-Pacific Strategy: Undersea Deterrence Project and the Indo-Pacific Strategy: Indian Ocean Project. Sam completed his Master of National Security Policy degree, during which time he received an ANU Professional Staff Scholarship and the National Security College Award. He previously worked for the Australian Government and now publishes academic articles and op-eds in a variety of outlets on Indian Ocean and Australian security issues. He tweets @SamuelBashfield.

Mr. Zhou Bo

Senior Col (Retd.) & Senior Fellow, Center for International Security and Strategy, China

Senior Colonel Zhou Bo (retired) started his military service in 1979. He served in different posts in Guangzhou Air Force Regional Command. From 1993 he worked successively as staff officer, Deputy Director General of West Asia and Africa Bureau and then Deputy Director General of General Planning Bureau of the Foreign Affairs Office of the Ministry of National Defense of China, Chinese Defense Attaché to the Republic of Namibia and Director of the Centre for Security Cooperation in the Office for International Military Cooperation, Ministry of National Defense. He is now a senior fellow of Center for International Security and Strategy Tsinghua University and a China Forum expert.

Zhou Bo has published more than 100 essays and opinions in English which include Foreign Affairs, Foreign Policy, Financial Times, The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, the Australian, South China Morning Post, The Diplomat, Strait Times, China~US Focus and China Daily, etc. He had interviews with BBC, NBC, Time, Euronews, Channel NewsAsia (Singapore), NHK, Russia Today, CNBC, Al Jazeera, Arte and CGTN. He spoke as a PLA delegate at Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore and at Munich Security conference. He is supervisor to foreign post-graduate officers at PLA National Defense University.

Zhou Bo is an under-graduate of Air Force Engineering College and a postgraduate of St Edmund College of Cambridge University (Mphill in International Relations). He was a visiting fellow to the Land Warfare Studies Centre of the Australian Army in 1999. He has attended various courses in Harvard University, Westminster University, PLA National Defense University, PLA University of Science and Technology for the National Defense and PLA Army Command College (Shijiazhuang).

Professor Christian Bueger

Department of Political Science, University of Copenhagen, Denmark

Christian Bueger is Professor of International Relations at the University of Copenhagen, honorary professor at the University of Seychelles and a Research Fellow at the University of Stellenbosch. He is also one of the directors of the SafeSeas network on maritime security. He holds a PhD from the European University Institute, Florence and a MA from the Goethe University Frankfurt.

Professor Bueger is widely known for his research on maritime security, crime, piracy, maritime strategies and maritime domain awareness. His most recent publications address the concept of blue crime (in Marine Policy 2020) and the relation of different ocean governance paradigms (forthcoming 2022).

Vice Admiral Pradeep Chauhan (Retd.)

Director General, National Maritime Foundation, India

An alumnus of the National Defence Academy, the Defence Services Staff College, the Naval War College, and the National Defence College, with BSc, MSc and MPhil degrees under his belt, Vice Admiral Pradeep Chauhan, AVSM & Bar, VSM, is currently the Director-General of the National Maritime Foundation, New Delhi, which is India's foremost resource centre for the development and advocacy of strategies for the promotion and protection of India's maritime interests.

The admiral retired on 30 November 2013 after an illustrious, rich, and varied four-decade-long career in the Executive Branch of the Indian Navy. This included a stint in Antarctica, as also a three-year deputation to the Government of Mauritius, where he set up and commanded the Mauritius National Coast Guard. His sea-going service incorporates as many as four command-appointments. After doing the 42nd NDC, he was the Principal Director of Naval Operations and thereafter went on to command the Indian Navy's sole aircraft carrier of that period, the *Viraat*. As a Rear Admiral, he was the Navy's first Assistant Chief of the Naval Staff (Foreign Cooperation & Intelligence), where he conceptualised and executed the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS). As a Vice Admiral, he has been Chief of Staff of the Western Naval Command; and was, in his last naval appointment before retirement, the Commandant of the Indian Naval Academy (Ezhimala). He has been commended three times by the President of India for sustained distinguished service. Not one to rest on past laurels, he has remained active even after retirement and is a much sought-after thought-leader and leadership mentor. Apart from being on the visiting faculty of the higher-command establishments of all three of India's defence services, as also tri-Service establishments such as the College of Defence Management, Hyderabad and the National Defence College, New Delhi, he has also been advising the government through his interaction with the Integrated Headquarters of the Ministry of Defence (Navy), the Ministry of External Affairs, and the National Security Council Secretariat. He is, in addition, a prolific writer with over **95** published professional articles and papers, and, a respected Adviser and Fellow of several important think-tanks.

H.E Julie Chung

Ambassador of the United States of America to Sri Lanka

Ambassador Julie Chung arrived in Colombo as the U.S. Ambassador to Sri Lanka in February 2022. A career member of the Senior Foreign Service with the rank of Minister-Counselor, Ms. Chung has served in senior positions throughout the Indo-Pacific and Western Hemisphere.

Ms. Chung most recently served as the Acting Assistant Secretary in the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs. She also has extensive experience in the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, including as the Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for Japan, Deputy Chief of Mission in Cambodia, and Economic Counselor in Thailand. In addition, she has served at the U.S. embassies in Iraq, Colombia, Vietnam, and Japan, and the U.S. Consulate in Guangzhou, China. She also served as an advisor on nonproliferation discussions of the Agreed Framework with North Korea while working in the Office of Korean Affairs in Washington.

Ms. Chung is from Huntington Beach, California and joined the Foreign Service in 1996 in the first cohort of the Thomas R. Pickering Fellowship program. She received a B.A. in Political Science from the University of California San Diego and an M.A. in International Affairs from Columbia University. Ms. Chung has been the recipient of numerous awards, including the Secretary's Distinguished Honor Award, and speaks Korean, Japanese, Spanish, and Khmer.

(Retd.) Geetha de Silva

Secretary Ambassador General, Pathfinder Indian Ocean Security Conference

Ambassador (Retd.) Geetha de Silva is the Executive Director of the South Asia Policy and Research Institute (SAPRI) based in Colombo. She was a member of the Sri Lanka Foreign Service and her last diplomatic assignment was as High Commissioner of Sri Lanka to Canada.

During her Foreign Service career spanning over 25 years, she served as Deputy Chief of Mission with Ambassador rank at the Sri Lanka Embassy in Washington D.C., Counselor at the Sri Lanka Embassy in Japan, Deputy Permanent Delegate of Sri Lanka to UNESCO, and Counselor, Sri Lanka Embassy, Paris, amongst other assignments. At the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, she held the positions of Additional Foreign Secretary/Political Affairs; Director General /South Asia and SAARC; and Director, United Nations/Human Rights; in addition to others.

She has participated in and contributed to international and regional conferences while she was at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and after retirement from the Ministry, during her tenures at the Regional Centre for Strategic Studies (RCSS), Sri Lanka, as Associate Director (2007-2010), at One Text Initiative (OTI), Sri Lanka, as Director (2010-2012) and during her present assignment (2012 onward).

A graduate of the University of Colombo, she holds a Master's degree in Conflict and Peace Studies from the University of Colombo and a Diploma in International Relations of the Bandaranaike Centre for International Studies. She is an alumna of the Harvard, Kennedy School, USA and the Near East & South Asia Centre for Strategic Studies (NESA) of the National Defense University of USA.

Ambassador (Retd.) Bernard Goonetilleke

Co-Chair, PFIOSC and Chairman, Pathfinder Foundation

A graduate in History and postgraduate in International Relations, Mr. Bernard Goonetilleke spent nearly four decades promoting Sri Lanka's tourism, trade and investment abroad as an officer of the Sri Lanka Foreign Service. He took over the post of chairmanship of Sri Lanka Institute of Tourism and Hotel Management in August 2008 and later was appointed as Chairman of Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority and Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau with effect from November and December 2008, respectively until February 2010.

His career as a Foreign Service officer began in 1970 and has included postings to Sri Lanka diplomatic missions in Kuala Lumpur, New York, Bangkok, Washington D.C., Geneva and Beijing. He has held several positions in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs ending as Director General (Multilateral Affairs) (1997-2000), and Secretary Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2003-2004).

During his career, he served as Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka to the UN in Geneva (1992-1997), during which period he was concurrently accredited to the Holy See and as Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka to the United Nations in Vienna. Later he served as Sri Lanka's Ambassador to the People's Republic of China (2000-2003), during which assignment he was concurrently accredited as Ambassador to the People's Republic of Mongolia and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. He also served as Acting Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka to the UN in New York (2004-2005) and ended his diplomatic career as Ambassador to the United States of America (2005-2008).

Following the Signing of the Ceasefire Agreement in 2002, he was appointed as Director-General of the Secretariat for Coordinating the Peace Process (SCOPP) and functioned as a member of the government negotiating team. Since May 2010 he functions as director of several companies associated with Mercantile Merchant Bank (MMBL), and Chairperson of Pathfinder Foundation

Mr. Iwamoto Keiichi

Deputy Director-General, Southeast and Southwest Asian Affairs Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan

Mr. IWAMOTO Keiichi is the Deputy Director-General, Southeast and Southwest Asian Affairs Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. He was the Minister, Embassy of Japan in the Lao PDR in 2019 and Director, First China and Mongolia Division, Asia and Oceania Affairs Bureau in 2017. In addition, he served as the Director, Economic Partnership Division, Economic Affairs Bureau and Negotiator, TPP Headquarters, Cabinet Secretariat in 2015. He served as Counsellor, Embassy of Japan in the People's Republic of China in 2010.

Mr. IWAMOTO followed Bachelors of Arts Degree for Chinese Studies at Tokyo University of Foreign Studies in 1988 and he joined with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1990. In addition, he studied at Taiwan Normal University in 1992 and Studied International Politics at Beijing University in 1992. He followed Masters of Arts Degree for Regional Studies at the Graduated from Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Harvard University in 1995.

Professor Roger Kangas

Academic Dean, Near East South Asia (NESA) Centre, National Defence University, US; Associate Fellow, IISS, UK

Dr. Roger Kangas is the Academic Dean of the Near East South Asia Center for Strategic Studies of the U.S. Department of Defense, located in Washington, DC. Prior to becoming a faculty member at the NESA Center in 2007, Dr. Kangas served as a Professor of Central Asian Studies at the George C. Marshall Center for European Security in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany; Deputy Director of the Central Asian Institute at the Johns Hopkins University's Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) in Washington, DC; Research Analyst on Central Asian Affairs for the Open Media Research Institute (OMRI) in Prague, Czech Republic; and Assistant Professor of Political Science at the University of Mississippi.

Dr. Kangas has been a consultant to the U.S. Department of Defense Combatant Commands, NATO, the US Air Force Special Operations School, U.S. Department of State, and other US government agencies, as well as several non-governmental organizations on issues relating to Central and South Asia, Russia, and the South Caucasus. He is also an Adjunct Professor at Georgetown University, an Associate Fellow at the International Institute for Strategic Studies (UK), and on the Advisory Boards of the Caspian Policy Center (Washington, DC) and the Near East Policy Forum (Canberra, Australia).

Dr. Kangas holds a Bachelor of Science in Foreign Service degree in Comparative Politics from the Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University and a Doctorate degree in Political Science from Indiana University.

Dr. Alexey Kupriyanov

Head, South Asia and Indian Ocean, Primakov Institute of World Economy and International Relations of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Russia

Alexey Kupriyanov. PhD (History), Head of Group on South Asia and Indian Ocean, Center for Asia Pacific Studies, Primakov National Research Institute of World Economy and International Relations, Russian Academy of Sciences (IMEMO RAS).

Born on July 12, 1979 in Moscow. Dr Kupriyanov studied the Anglo-Saxon History at the Department of History of the Moscow City Teacher Training University and English language and literature in Ireland. He has a master's degree in IR after graduating from the Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia.

Author of over 30 articles on international politics and military strategy. Research interests: history and modernity of the countries of South, Southeast and East Asia, Indian external policy, Indo-Pacific region, Indo-Chinese relations, IR theory, naval history and strategy.

Ambassador (Retd.) Shivshankar Menon

Co-Chair, Pathfinder Indian Ocean Security Conference

Ambassador Shivshankar Menon is currently a Visiting Professor at Ashoka University, India; Chairman, Advisory Board, Institute of Chinese Studies, New Delhi; Distinguished Fellow of Brookings India; Distinguished Visiting Research Fellow at the National University of Singapore; Member, Board of Trustees, International Crisis Group; and, a Distinguished Fellow, Asia Society Policy Institute, New York.

He was previously National Security Advisor to the Prime Minister of India, Jan 2010-May 2014; Foreign Secretary of India, October 2006-July 2009; and has served as the Indian Ambassador or High Commissioner to China, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Israel.

In 2016 he published Choices; Inside the Making of Indian Foreign Policy (Brookings & Penguin Random House, 2016).

He has been a Fisher Family Fellow at the Kennedy School, Harvard University, 2015 and Richard Wil-helm Fellow at MIT in 2015. He was chosen one of the "Top 100 Global Thinkers" by Foreign Policy mag-azine in 2010.

H.E. Mizukoshi Hideaki

Ambassador of Japan to Sri Lanka

Ambassador MIZUKOSHI Hideaki handed over his credential and started to serve as the Japanese Ambassador to Sri Lanka since 16 November 2021. He served as the Director-General, Intelligence and Analysis Service, at Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan in 2019.

H.E. MIZUKOSHI followed the Bachelor of Arts Degree at the Faculty of Law, University of Tokyo. He started his career in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1985 soon after his graduation. H.E. Mizukoshi worked as Assistant Vice-Minister, Minister's Secretariat and Global Issues Cooperation Division in 2014. In addition, he served as the Minister in Embassy of Japan in USA in 2011, Embassy of Japan in Republic of Korea in 2010 and Embassy of Japan in France in 1999.

Ms. Nilanthi Samaranayake

Director Strategy and Policy Analysis, Centre for Naval Analysis, USA

Nilanthi Samaranayake is Director of the Strategy and Policy Analysis Program at CNA, a nonprofit research organization in the Washington area. She is the author of publications on Indian Ocean security issues and small states in international affairs, including China's Engagement with Smaller South Asian Countries (2019) and Raging Waters: China, India, Bangladesh and Brahmaputra River Politics (2018). Samaranayake's analysis has been featured in the Journal of Indo-Pacific Affairs, Hindustan Times, and East Asian Forum, among other outlets. She has appeared in media such as Al Jazeera, New York Times, South China Morning Post, and Nikkei Asian Review. Prior to joining CNA in 2010, Samaranayake completed a fellowship at the National Bureau of Asian Research (NBR) in Seattle and analyzed public opinion for a decade at Pew Research Center in Washington, D.C. She holds an MSc in International Relations from the London School of Economics and Political Science.

Ambassador (Retd.) Hemant Singh

Director General, Delhi Policy Group, India

Ambassador Hemant Krishan Singh served in the Indian Foreign Service from 1974-2010 and is a distinguished former career diplomat with extensive experience of geo-strategic and geo-economic issues as well as multilateral institutions which underpin international law and commerce.

He has been India's longest serving Ambassador to Japan (2006-2010), Ambassador to Indonesia and Timor Leste (2003-2006), Ambassador to Colombia, Ecuador and Costa Rica (1999-2002), and India's Deputy Permanent Representative to the UN in Geneva (1995-1999). He has held several significant assignments during his career, dealing with the United States, West Europe and the European Union and India's immediate neighbours.

Ambassador Singh has contributed to the forging of the India-Japan strategic and global partnership, the intensification of India's relations with Indonesia and ASEAN, the evolution of India's revitalised Look East Policy and the shaping of India's policy towards key neighbours and strategic partners.

From 2011-2016, Ambassador Singh was Professor for Strategic Studies at ICRIER, a leading think tank in New Delhi. In June 2016, Ambassador Singh assumed responsibilities as Director General, Delhi Policy Group, which is among India's oldest independent think tanks focused on strategic issues of critical national interest. He has been associated with several public policy initiatives and Track II / Track 1.5 strategic dialogues involving major think tanks of India, US, Russia, Japan and Asia. He has written and worked extensively on the ongoing transformation of India's foreign policy and relations with the United States and Japan and their growing convergences in shaping Asia's emerging economic and security architecture.

An alumnus of St. Stephen's College, Delhi, where he studied (1967-72) and later taught (1972-74), Ambassador Singh holds an M.A. degree from the University of Delhi. His varied interests include civilisation and culture, the natural environment and sports.

Dr. Isabelle Saint-Mezard

Assistant Professor, French Institute of Geopolitics, The University of Paris VIII, France

Dr Isabelle Saint-Mezard is Assistant Professor at the French Institute of Geopolitics, the University of Paris 8. She is also an Associate Research Fellow at the Centre for Asian Studies, IFRI (French Institute of International Relations), Paris, and a member of the scientific council of the Franco-German Observatory on the Indo-Pacific led by CERI (Paris) and GIGA (Hamburg).

Dr Saint-Mezard's research focuses on India's foreign and defense policies, as well as the geopolitics of the Indian Ocean. Her current research project centers on India's approach to the Indo-Pacific. She also conducts research on the French strategy in the Indian Ocean and Indo-Pacific.

She has authored many academic articles and book chapters including for the *Journal of Indian Ocean Region* and for volumes edited by S. Ganguly et alii (*India's foreign policy,* OUP, 2015*; The Oxford Handbook of India's National Security*, OUP, 2018). Her forthcoming publications include: "India-Pakistan relations during the UPA rule, 2004-2014" in R.K. Laskar (ed.) *Forging New Partnerships, Breaching New Frontiers: India's Diplomacy during the UPA rule 2004-14* (OUP, 2022) as well as a co-authored paper with F. Nicolas, "India-East Africa: A Not So Healthy Relationship?", *Asia.Visions*, 2022.

Dr Saint-Mezard received her PhD from the Institute of Political Studies (Sciences Po), Paris. She previously worked for the University of Hong Kong and for the French Ministry of Defense (Directorate General for International Relations and Strategy).

Mr. Hideshi Tokuchi

President, Research Institute for Peace and Security, Tokyo, Japan

Professor Hideshi TOKUCHI joined the Defense Agency (the predecessor of the Ministry of Defense) of Japan in 1979, and served as the nation's first-ever Vice-Minister of Defense for International Affairs from 2014 to 2015 after completing several senior assignments including the Director-General of Finance and Equipment Bureau and of Defense Policy Bureau.

He is the President of Research Institute for Peace and Security (RIPS), the oldest independent think-tank dedicated to security studies in Japan. He teaches international security studies as a visiting professor at National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies (GRIPS).

His academic focus is on the Japan-US Alliance, maritime security, and defense-related legislation of Japan.

Professor Tokuchi was born in 1955. He received his Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of Tokyo in 1979, and his Master of Arts in Law and Diplomacy (M.A.L.D.) degree from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy in 1986.