



PRESS RELEASE

IORA and ASEAN Sign MoU to Synergize Work on the Implementation of its Indo-Pacific Outlook

Jakarta, 4 September 2023 – His Excellency, Dr. Salman Al Farisi, the Secretary-General of Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) and His Excellency, Dr. Kao Kim Hourn, the Secretary-General of Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the sidelines of 43rd ASEAN Summit and Related Summits held in Jakarta, Indonesia, on 4-7 September 2023.

The Signing Ceremony was witnessed by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Indonesia, as the Chair of ASEAN, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh, as the Chair of IORA. The Ceremony was also attended by the ASEAN Foreign Ministers.

The MoU aims to strengthen cooperation between ASEAN and IORA for the benefit of their Member States. The document set out practical cooperation between ASEAN and IORA to be undertaken by their respective Secretariat on the following areas: (i) Priority areas of cooperation of the ASEAN Outlook on Indo-Pacific (AOIP) and the IORA Outlook on Indo-Pacific, (ii) Blue Economy, (iii) People-to-People Exchanges, and (iv) Digital and Green Economies.

“I welcome the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding which I believe will provide the launching pad for fostering possible avenues of mutually beneficial cooperation between the two regions,” said H.E Dr. A.K. Momen, MP, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh. The Minister moreover added: *“In the spirit of cooperation, we would be happy to see the states join hands in the areas of agriculture, education, air services, blue economy, disaster risk management, culture, promotion and protection of investment and trade cooperation.”*

The Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, H.E Retno L.P Marsudi, said : *“This is an important step to strengthen ASEAN’s relations with Indian & Pacific ocean nations. Indian & Pacific*

ocean countries are part and parcel of the Indo-Pacific region. That's why we must stand shoulder to shoulder to maintain peace, stability & prosperity in the region ”.

ASEAN is an intergovernmental regional organization whose purposes are, among others, to maintain the centrality and proactive role of ASEAN as the primary driving force in its relations and cooperation with its external partners in a regional architecture that is open, transparent, inclusive, resilient, and rules-based. Almost half of ASEAN member countries are members of IORA, namely: Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, and Thailand.

The MoU provides the opportunity for the cooperation between ASEAN and IORA to maintain and enhance peace and prosperity in both regions through the conclusion of mutually beneficial cooperation.

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