INDIAN OCEAN DIALOGUE 2014

STEERING COMMITTEE

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CONVENOR AND CHAIR

Dr. C RAJA MOHAN
Head, Strategic Studies and Distinguished Fellow
Observer Research Foundation
FRIDAY
05 September, 2014

International Participants Arrive, Welcome Dinner

DAY TWO

SATURDAY
06 September, 2014

INAUGURAL ADDRESS
Foreign Secretary
Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India

SESSION 1
IOR – Growing Geostrategic Salience

The Indian Ocean region has always been an important geostrategic area in the world. The ocean washes the shores of 31 littoral states, provides vital sea transport linkages for around 50% of all international shipping and is a vast, resource rich region. It is also home to some of the most politically ‘alive’ and unstable areas in the world and is considered the ‘arc of instability’ by some. Amidst rapidly evolving great power relations and emerging regional capabilities the significance of IOR will continue to grow.

KEY DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

• What are the current contours of the geopolitics in the region?
• What are the prime drivers of “political turbulence” in the region?
• What are the hindrances in enhancing cooperation within IOR?
SESSION 2
MARITIME SECURITY CHALLENGES IN THE IOR

The dramatic growth of maritime trade in IOR has been accompanied by a slew of maritime challenges. The rise of the non-state actors and asymmetric threats such as maritime piracy are threatening the free flow of goods across the IOR.

KEY DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:
- What are the maritime threats affecting IOR?
- What are the peculiarities of piracy related to the IOR?
- What are the strategies applicable to overcome these challenges?

SESSION 3
ENHANCING REGIONAL COOPERATION IN IOR

The amorphous nature of evolving threats combined with their large area of coverage has invariably stretched resource constrained maritime agencies in the region. No country is in a position to deal with the threats. The undeniable imperative is for regional cooperation.

KEY DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:
- What are the hurdles in enhancing maritime cooperation in the region?
- How can national priorities be synergized for sustainable cooperation?
- How can effective regional mechanisms be developed?
DAY THREE

SUNDAY
07 September, 2014

SESSION 4
INFORMATION SHARING

One of the best ways to overcome the complex challenges that face the region is through information sharing. This is especially relevant to the threat of piracy in which information gathering, collation and sharing forms the key to overcoming this problem. ReCAAP for instance has done stellar work in South East Asia in this context. An interlinked regional information sharing centre for the dissemination and coordination of anti-piracy activities in the IOR is an urgent need.

KEY DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- What are the lessons learnt from such information sharing experiences in overcoming maritime threats?
- Is a ReCAAP like organization feasible for IOR?
- Can the example of ReCAAP and its information sharing centre be duplicated with a network in IOR?

SESSION 5
MARITIME CAPACITY BUILDING FOR HADR AND DISASTER MANAGEMENT

The IORA has articulated the need for “sharing experiences and best practices” in fighting natural and manmade disasters. The region is vulnerable to frequent natural disasters and there are a number of littoral states without the wherewithal to rapidly respond to natural disasters. Hence there is an urgent need to develop capabilities across the region for effective disaster management and humanitarian relief.
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KEY DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:
• What are the areas for capacity building to overcome such challenges?
• What are the hindrances in effective disaster management in the IOR?
• What are the best forms for regional cooperation in HADR?

SESSION 6
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE INTEGRATION

The last two decades have seen rapid economic growth in many parts of the Indian Ocean Region. Yet the region lags behind others in promoting regional integration, trade facilitation and creation of a vibrant economic community.

KEY DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:
• What are the various opportunities for instituting preferential trade agreements?
• What are the inherent competitive advantages of member states that can become levers for economic growth and inclusive development?
• How can the member states coordinate closely, to ensure sustainability of economic ties, and ensure human development benefits?

08 September, 2014
DEPARTURES CONCLUDE
For more information, please contact

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