

# INDIAN OCEAN RIM ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

April-June 2023 2nd issue

## **HIGH LEVEL STRATEGIC DIALOGUE ON IORA'S 25 YEARS: REVIEW, REFLECTION, RENEWAL & THE IORA AFRICAN MEMBER STATES AND THE IORA INDO-PACIFIC OUTLOOK**



*Photo caption: Member State delegates with the co-host - South Africa, Ambassador Anil Sooklal, and the Secretary-General of IORA*

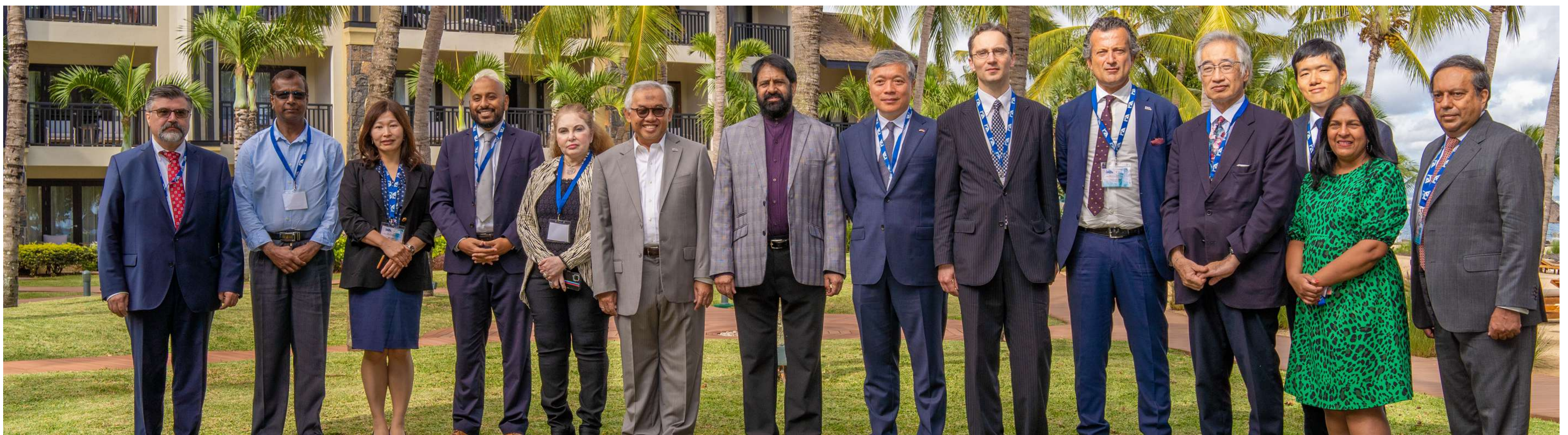
The High-Level Strategic Dialogue on IORA's 25 years: Review, Reflection, Renewal, took place under the theme: IORA Vision 2030 and Beyond, co-hosted by South Africa, Ambassador Anil Sooklal, and the Secretary-General of IORA, Ambassador Salman Al Farisi in Mauritius. The Dialogue was followed by the meeting on "IORA African Member States and the IORA Indo-Pacific Outlook". The aim of the Dialogue was to reflect on the past 25 years of the Association, acknowledge successes, address challenges, and assess implementation of outcomes.

The event was attended by more than 90 senior officials from 20 IORA Member States and 9 Dialogue Partners. Representatives of the Indian Ocean Rim Business Forum (IORBF), the Indian Ocean Rim Academic Group (IORAG), Fisheries Support Unit (FSU) and Regional Centre for Science and Transfer of Technology (RCSTT) also participated in the 2 events.

Participants discussed mutual interests, exchanged insights and identified collaboration opportunities.

The second meeting discussed the perspective of the 10 African Member States of IORA on the implementation of the IORA Indo-Pacific Outlook. The IORA remains steadfast in its commitment to strengthening regional cooperation, sustainable development, and fostering greater engagement among its member states and dialogue partners.

The outcome of the Dialogue is the development of the "IORA Vision 2030 and Beyond" that is expected to be endorsed at the Council of Ministers (COM) meeting in October 2023 in Sri Lanka.



*Photo caption: Dialogue representatives Partners with with the co-host - South Africa, Ambassador Anil Sooklal, and the Secretary-General of IORA*



## **13TH BI-ANNUAL MEETING OF THE IORA COMMITTEE OF SENIOR OFFICIALS (CSO)**



*Photo caption: Delegates of the 23 Member States of IORA at the CSO meeting in Sylhet, Bangladesh*

The IORA Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) Meeting was held in Sylhet, Bangladesh on 13-14 June 2023 under the able chairship of Bangladesh. Senior Officials of Member States of the IORA attended the CSO meeting, whereby decisions have been taken on various matters related to IORA priority areas. During the event, delegates had further the opportunity to discover about the culture and history of Bangladesh through a delightful cultural show at the welcoming dinner.



### **UNITING PEOPLE THROUGH IORA OUTREACH PROGRAMS**



#### **▶ IORA SUPPORTED THE 2ND KYOKUSHIN WORLD FEDERATION (KWF) INDIAN OCEAN INTERNATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP 2023**

On the 29 April 2023, the 2nd KWF Indian Ocean International Championship 2023 was held at the Cote d'Or Stadium, Mauritius. Some IORA's Member States and Dialogue Partners namely La Réunion/France, Mauritius and the Kingdom Saudi Arabia have participated. IORA extended its support for this event. This event is in line with IORA's objective to strengthen people to people contact.



*Photo caption: Participants during the match at Cote d'Or Stadium, Mauritius (left) & group photo of IORA team (right)*

#### **▶ THE IORA SECRETARIAT HOSTED A NETWORKING ACTIVITY WITH THE NGO, PRÉVENTION INFORMATION LUTTE CONTRE LE SIDA (PILS) IN PORT-LOUIS, MAURITIUS.**

On the 26 April 2023, IORA conducted a networking activity with the aim of interacting with the NGO's staff and beneficiaries over breakfast, offered by IORA. It has been a wonderful and positive experience for IORA's secretariat to get to know the work being done at PILS for vulnerable communities in Mauritius.



*Photo caption: Group photo of IORA team with PILS Team in Port-Louis*



## WORKSHOP ON NATURE-BASED TOURISM AND LESSONS LEARNED FROM COVID-19 HELD IN MAURITIUS



*Photo caption: Members States & Dialogue Partners at the Maritim Resort & Spa, Balaclava, Mauritius*

The Ministry of Tourism in collaboration with the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) hosted a Workshop on Nature-Based Tourism and Lessons Learned from COVID-19 from 03 to 05 May 2023 at Maritim Resort & Spa, Balaclava in Mauritius. The workshop brought together policy-makers and tourism stakeholders from the Indian Ocean Rim and explored different themes such as the impact of COVID-19 on the tourism industry & understanding how nature-based tourism can be viewed as a solution for recovery building on sustainability and resilience; Tools and Mechanisms for the Sustainable Development of Nature-Based Tourism; Understanding Types of Nature-Based Tourism & Effective Marketing; Visitor Management for Nature-Based Tourism; and Lessons Learned from COVID-19 & Road to Recovery.

The workshop was attended by 14 IORA Member States (Bangladesh, France/Reunion, Iran, Kenya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, UAE) and three Dialogue partners (China, Italy and Türkiye).

## NINTH IORA INDIAN OCEAN DIALOGUE ON INNOVATION IN BLUE ECONOMY AND ITS ROLE IN GDP CONTRIBUTION



*Photo caption: More than 150 participants, including from 14 Member States and 5 Dialogue Partners, attended the 9th IOD.*

H.E. Hon. Othman Masoud Othman, First Vice President of Zanzibar opened the IORA's 9th IORA Indian Ocean Dialogue (IOD), which was held in Zanzibar, Tanzania, on 22-23 May 2023. The IOD was attended by around 150 participants, including from 14 Member States and 5 Dialogue Partners. The Dialogue saw the participation of government, academics, think-tank, and international organizations from throughout Indian ocean region, who were all gathered on the same platform to explore opportunities for advancing blue growth in the Indian Ocean region.

The 9th IOD adopted the Zanzibar Consensus, which contains a set of policy recommendations to advance blue economy sector in the Indian Ocean region. The document was built from the key takeaways of each session and inputs from the IORA Member States. The Consensus serves as a reference for the Governments and various stakeholders in the Indian Ocean Region to bring Blue Economy to the next level.



## SECRETARY GENERAL OF IORA AT THE EU INDO-PACIFIC MINISTERIAL FORUM 2023



Photo caption: Group photo - SG of IORA with Ministers of Foreign Affairs of EU countries & Indo-Pacific region in Stockholm, Sweden



Photo caption: SG of IORA delivering his remarks to the press

IORA Secretary General, H.E Salman Al Farisi was invited by the High Representative and Vice President of EU Joseph Borrell Fontelles, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden Tobias Billström to attend the EU Indo-Pacific Ministerial Forum. H.E Salman Al Farisi joined the roundtable discussion on "Building more sustainable and inclusive prosperity together". IORA's Outlook on the Indo-Pacific was adopted in 2022 in the quest to guide IORA's engagement and cooperation in the Indo-Pacific Region including with other regional organisations

## LOCAL DIPLOMATIC MISSION MEETING

On the 19th of May 2023, IORA Secretariat had a meeting with Diplomatic Missions of IORA Member States namely the High Commission of Australia, High Commission of India, High Commission of South Africa and Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mauritius. The meeting included Dialogue Partners namely the Embassy of China, Embassy of Egypt, Embassy of Japan, Embassy of Russian Federation, British High Commission and U.S Embassy. The meeting was held at IORA Secretariat with the objective to reinforce the relation between IORA and the diplomatic missions of Member States and Dialogue Partners. The event was an opportunity for attendees to share about the latest developments in the IOR region and their views as to how they wish to work with the organization, in advancing IORA priority areas.



Photo caption: Diplomatic Missions of IORA Member States and Dialogue Partners at the IORA Secretariat

## THIRD MEETING OF THE IORA FUNCTIONAL BODIES' CHAIRS AND THE COORDINATING COUNTRIES (FBC-CC)

On the 29th of May 2023, the IORA Chair, Bangladesh hosted the third meeting of the IORA Functional Bodies' Chairs and Coordinating Countries virtually. Rear Admiral (Retd.) Md. Khurshed Alam, Secretary, Maritime Affairs Unit of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bangladesh chaired the meeting. During this meeting, the Chairs of the 10 Functional Bodies of the IORA presented reports on their respective Functional Bodies' activities covered over the last six months. It is to be noted that IORA has 8 Working Groups, with each focusing on one of the priority areas of IORA namely Maritime Safety & Security, Disaster Risk Management, Fisheries Management, Blue Economy, Trade & Investment Facilitation, Women's Economic Empowerment, Academic, Science & Technology Cooperation, Business Forum, and Tourism & Cultural Exchanges.

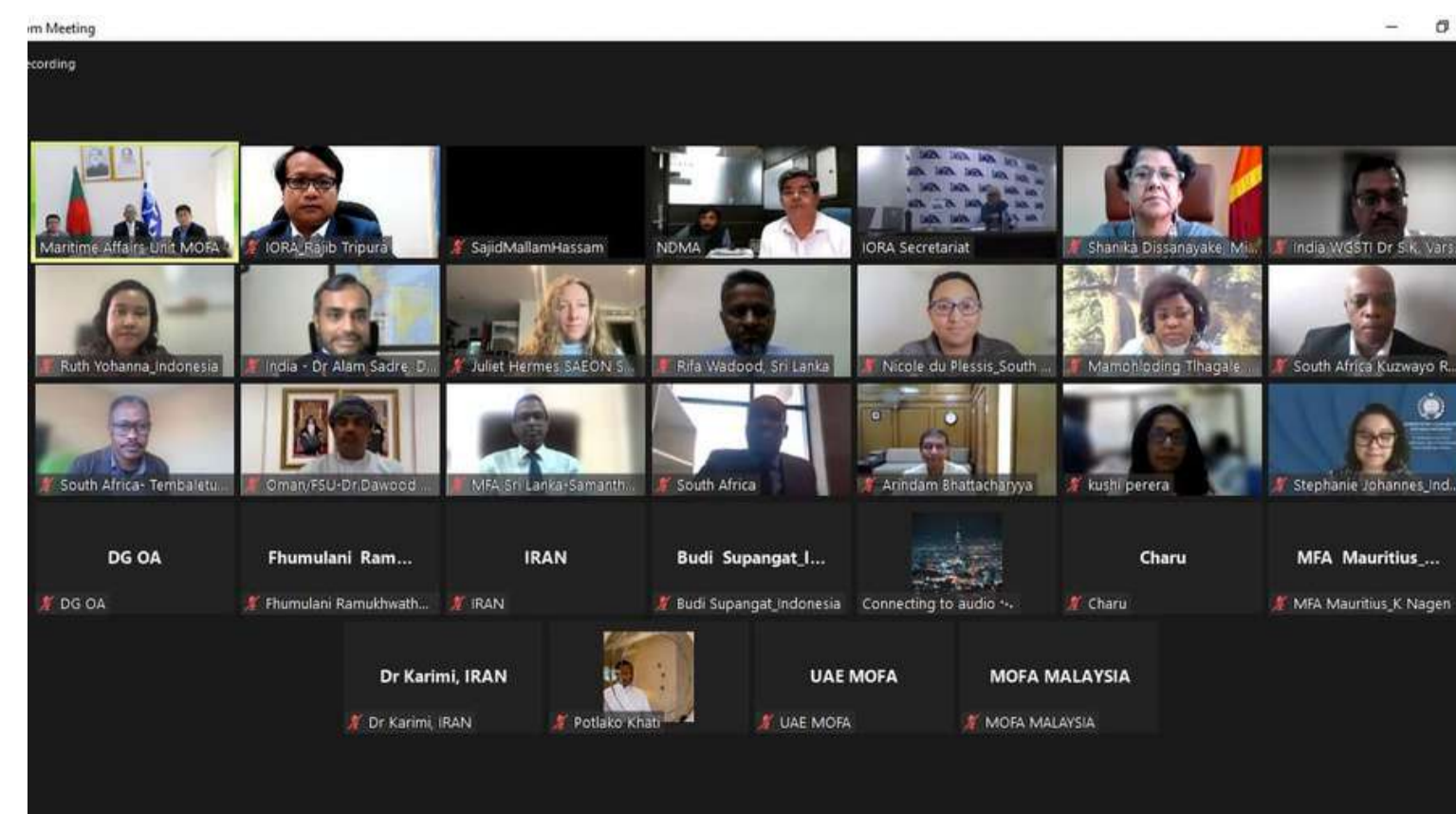


Photo caption: Chairs of IORA Functional Bodies at the FBC-CC meeting





Photo caption: US Deputy Secretary, Richard Verma & IORA's SG, H.E. Salman Al-Farisi at IORA Secretariat

## ➤ US DEPUTY SECRETARY PAID A VISIT TO IORA SECRETARY-GENERAL

The US Deputy Secretary Richard Verma met the Secretary General of Indian Ocean Rim Association, Dr Salman Al-Farisi, at the IORA Secretariat on 31 May 2023 and reaffirmed the strong partnership between IORA and the US.

## ➤ 7TH MEETING OF THE WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT (WGWEE)

The Seventh Meeting of the Women's Economic Empowerment (WGWEE) was held on 22-23 May in Tehran, Iran, under the chairship of the Vice-presidency for Women and Family Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Coordinating Country of the Women's Economic Empowerment. A total of 22 delegates from 12 Member States, IORA Regional Centre for Science and Technology Transfer (RCSTT) and IORA Secretariat attended the meeting. Delegates included the State Minister, Ministry of Gender, Family, and Social Services of Maldives. During this event, delegates exchanged the good practices in their respective countries with regard to women empowerment policies and programmes being implemented and discussed of potential collaboration among Member States. Further, delegates had the opportunity to discuss of the role of women in the fight against corruption in the region. Finally, delegates had the chance to discover the culture of Iran through site visits to an all-girl university, Iranian palaces and watch the Water show at Iran Mall.



Photo caption: Delegates of the IORA Member States at the WGWEE meeting in Tehran



Photo caption: Visit of IORA delegates at the IORA Secretariat in Ebene, Mauritius

## ➤ VISIT OF IORA SECRETARIAT BY MEMBER STATES

On the 22nd of June 2023, Member States, which attended the High-Level Strategic Dialogue in Mauritius, had the opportunity to visit the premise of the IORA Secretariat. Member States included delegates from India, Maldives, Islamic State of Iran, Singapore, South Africa and the Research Centre for Science and Technology Transfer (RCSTT). The visit was followed by discussions with the Secretary-General at the IORA conference room. Suggestions were made by Member States for improvements in the working area of the IORA Secretariat.



## ➤ REAFFIRMING PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN IORA AND THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

The Secretary General of Indian Ocean Rim Association, Dr Salman Al-Farisi, met H.E Zhu Liying, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the People's Republic of China to the Republic of Mauritius and reaffirmed the strong partnership and support of the People's Republic of China to IORA.



Photo caption: Secretary-General of IORA and the Ambassador of the People's Republic of China at IORA Secretariat

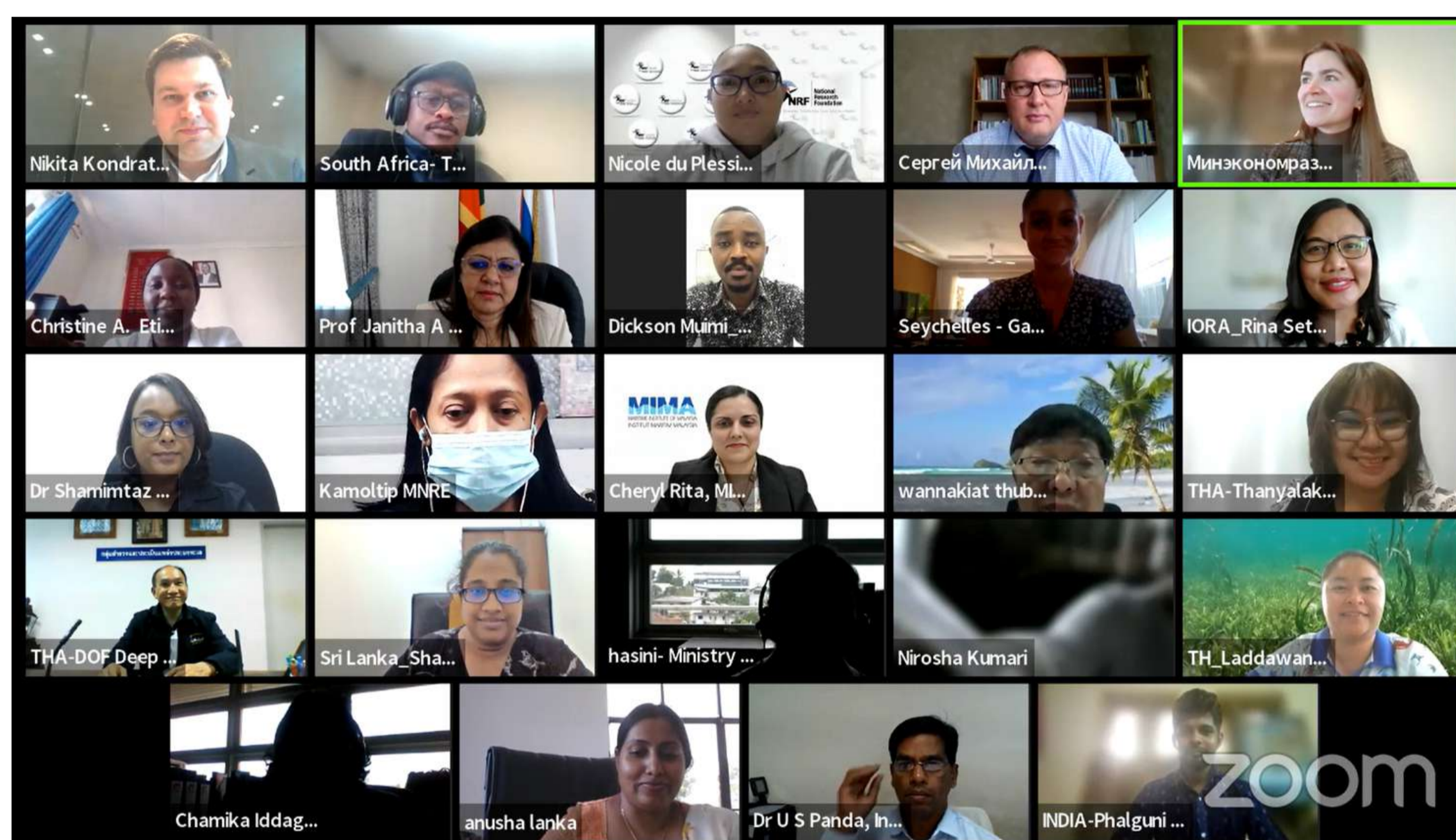


Photo caption: Participants from 18 Members of IORA for the online workshop

## ➤ ONLINE WORKSHOP ON BLUE ECONOMY ORGANIZED BY RUSSIA

Online Workshop on "Blue Economy: Modern Challenges and Perspectives for the Indian Ocean Region" organized by Russia on 8 June 2023. The Workshop was attended by 18 Members of IORA and discussed a wide range of issues to advance the development of blue economy in the region.

## ➤ MEETING WITH REPUBLIC OF KOREA, 22 JUNE 2023

The Secretary General of IORA met the Director for Asian and Pacific Regional Cooperation Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea (RoK), Ms. Park Mijo, in Mauritius, on 22 June 2023, to explore collaboration between IORA and RoK.



Photo caption: IORA Secretary-General with the Director for Asian and Pacific Regional Cooperation Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea



**More than 80% of the world's global trade is transported through international shipping.** As the most affordable and efficient form of transportation for goods, maritime activity continues to be a vital part of the world's trade industry.

In recognition of the fact that a safe and secure Indian Ocean is important for socio economic development,

**IORA assigned Maritime Safety and Security (MSS) as the top priority area of focus in 2011.**