

Bhubaneswar Declaration
March 2015

- Historically the Indian Ocean found preeminence in world politics. The resurgence of the IOR was notable given its economic dynamism, huge markets and rich natural resources, most significantly, energy. The growing geostrategic and geo-economic salience of IOR makes it only more than palpable that there should be greater regional collaboration between the stakeholders to jointly address and contest non-traditional security threats such as maritime terrorism and piracy, trans-national crime, environment and natural disasters.
- Requests the Head of States of IORA member states to participate in once in two years Summits like in the APEC. A summit on climate change may urgently be called for. Institutional tie-ups also need to be upgraded and expanded.

History and Culture

- Experts from history and culture may work closely with experts from other streams like trade, technology and investment for practical interpretation for our contemporary challenges. The policy of cultural exchange and interactions should be formulated on trans-national level and beyond boundaries.
- The idea of Cotton Route was discussed at length. The understanding and interpretation should be shared across different member states for possible convergence of way forward. Cotton reaches out cutting across social and economic hierarchy from finesse to the coarse variety and India in the pre-industrial revolution phase is noted to cloth the world.

Cooperation for Energy Security

- Today, the Indian Ocean Region can best be described as a region cooperative complexities, given that emerging security-related challenges have tended to complicate regional economic prosperity. For the Indian Ocean Littoral gaining a new salience amidst the region's role in shaping global economic integration, the changing distribution of power among the major actors, and the increasing political volatility in the littoral has to be carefully analysed and acted upon thereafter.
- The Indian Ocean presents itself as a vital transit route between the Pacific region, Africa and Europe, with vast cargoes passing through the region. The world's most important oil and gas routes traverse the Indian Ocean, with roughly 55 percent of known oil reserves and 40 percent of gas reserves. This only makes it imperative to ensure keeping the SLOCs open and safe in that they are vital to the global economy.
- The aim of such a maritime security framework should be to encourage capacity-building to deal with maritime security threats, most significantly terrorism and piracy, while keeping commercial shipping, marine installations and critical infrastructures safe.
- Process is involved in switching over to renewable energy should be considered on a priority.

Strategic Issues

- The Indian Ocean Region occupies a central position in the global strategic landscape. The changing security environment of the IOR reflects the interrelated geopolitical dynamics of different regional subsystems comprising *the continental-maritime interface* defining the Indian Ocean Rim. These encompass an interregional strategic landscape spanning the rim perimeter from the African and West Asian littorals and hinterland of the western ocean into its eastern rim extending into the Indo-Pacific.
- An understanding of the interactive geopolitical dynamic between the Indian Ocean and the Western Pacific is critical in assessing the strategic future of Asia's maritime spaces. The rapidly growing interface between the Indian Ocean and the Western Pacific, underscores the need for an inherent Indo-

Pacific framework. India has pivotal role and responsibility in this regard along with other regional countries.

- Relationships between seas and human beings is very complex. Calamity, disaster and regulations of human behaviour for preventing them needs attention. Though there is no central narrative on geopolitics however institutional cooperation may facilitate the process. Maritime disputes pose challenges to stability and peace but a legal and technical approach may be reliable for resolution of maritime disputes.. SAR and Disaster Relief may be addressed through strengthening on institutions. Cooperation across IONS and IORA should be considered.
- In the context of terrorism and trans-national crime, Bay of Bengal sub-region needs special attention and time bound action plan for cooperation has to be in place.

Trade and Economic Cooperation

- For nations in the region to facilitate maritime commerce and economic activities at sea, ensuring security and protection of maritime domains comes in as an essential pre-requisite, which calls for effective coordination between regional and extra-regional players at the sub-regional, regional and multinational levels.
- Given the need for greater economic viability, in terms of mobilising resources from the IOR, and enhancing financial credibility of the grouping, a regular Summit Level Dialogue is required. This is primarily because all regional stakeholders can pitch in their capacities whilst a common cooperative framework is formulated for greater economic cooperation and prosperity in the IOR.
- The trade and investment committee of IORA may consider forming a sub-committee on non-tariff barriers, as NBTs have emerged as a major area of concern.
- Policies related to FDI and technology transfers need to be revisited in context of regional cooperation. Majors are required for promoting green field investment.
- For IOR, in an open regional framework, trade facilitation becomes key to B2B contacts. Doing Business Index can be developed for countries in the region with retaining individual country specificities.
- To establish an IORA Chambers of Commerce and Industry to be based at IORA's Secretariat until a permanent home is found.
- Science technology and support for small and medium enterprises should be given due recognition for advancement of Blue Economy, which is getting major priority in the IOR related deliberations. Policy makers may identify key areas like regional value chains, parts and components and other mechanism for promotion of regional integration.
- Special and differential treatment needs to be provided for small, less and least developed countries.
- With trade in knowledge intensive goods and services is gradually expanding, the region needs to work out a comprehensive strategy for intellectual property rights for which a joint committee on science and technology transfer may also be consider

Sectoral Cooperation

- IORA special fund should support key sectoral cooperation projects
- IORA is a biodiversity rich region. Institutional major may be involved for sustainable utilization and in accordance with global agreements like Nagoya Protocol. This would involve conservation and utilization of medicinal plants.
- Energy Security, especially Inventory stockpiling of crude oil as an intervention may be explored whereby India and other countries may share technological strength for storage of Hydrocarbons.
- An IORA regional bank could be studied
- New areas of sectoral cooperation also need further study
- Greater linkages amongst IORA countries and different sectors with an action plan need to be evolved.