

Strategic Outlook for the Indian Ocean 2030: The Role of IORA in Ocean Governance and in Maintaining Regional Maritime Security

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Abstract

By 2030 the Indian Ocean will become the busiest and most important global sea lane of communications which connects the world. Seeing the strategic location of this ocean, many actors force their interests to the region which might lead to clash of interests and increase the number of non-traditional maritime threats in the Indian Ocean. A various background of countries located on different continents, having Indian Ocean as their backyard also influence the dynamic of the region.

The need for ocean governance which is able to maintain regional maritime security is absolute. Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) as the most comprehensive regional organization which aims to address the non-traditional maritime threats and to obtain cooperation among the littoral states of Indian Ocean becomes the most potential organization in contributing to the stability of Indian Ocean. Especially with the establishment of Jakarta Concord that will strengthen the organization by setting clear direction for the future of IORA.

The main aim of this paper will recommend the use of maritime diplomacy on countering maritime threats, and how it may apply to IORA to establish an intraregional-mechanism under the IORA's government. In order to reach that discussion, this paper will evaluate what IORA had achieved in maintaining maritime security in the Indian Ocean as well as projecting what might IORA contribute on the following years. The strategic policies recommendation on countering non-traditional maritime threats by IORA will be analyzed as well as the Indian Ocean littoral states collaboration on socio-economics sectors.

Keywords: Indian Ocean, IORA, Maritime Security, Ocean Governance, Non-traditional maritime threats.

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Introduction

The paper's authors come from Faculty of Defense Management – Indonesia Defense University (IDU). Maritime security issue is part of research concern of the faculty. The researchers found that defense studies could be related into any studies, including maritime security studies, and moreover is region studies. Through IAFOR – Asian Conference on Asian Studies (ACAS) 2017, researchers from Indonesia Defense University are giving of research contributions on maritime security issue within the Asian studies. Here are the short backgrounds of the authors:

RADM Dr. Amarulla Octavian, S.T., M.Sc., D.E.S.D. graduated from the Indonesian Naval Academy in 1988, Admiral Octavian spent most of his career in the Eastern Fleet as Commanding Officer of a number of warships as well as naval bases. His tour of duty also includes posts in the Ministry of Defense and the Indonesian National Defense Forces Headquarters. After receiving his flag officer promotion in 2013, he was appointed as Commander, Sea Battle Group, Western Fleet Command and Chief of Staff, Western Fleet Command. In 2016, he received his two-star promotion and currently holds the position of Dean of Defense Management Faculty, Indonesia Defense University.

Megawati Rosalio Putri, BA.IR was born in Denpasar, Bali on February 8th, 1994. She took International Relations on Strategic and Defense Studies as her Bachelor's at President University. She is currently taking her Master's on Maritime Security Studies at Indonesia Defense University. She is interested in strategic and defense studies, maritime security studies, women and youth empowerment issues, and Asian studies and beyond. Her latest publication was on AEGIS Journal of International Relations Vol.1 No.1 about power balance in Central Asia. She also contributed to the Coordinating Ministry for Maritime Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia's book entitled "Kembali Melaut: Industri dan Jasa Maritim Menuju Poros Maritim Dunia."

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The background of study of this paper comes from the dynamic situation which happening globally, regionally, and nationally – especially looking at the maritime perspective. Asian region has seven out of nine global choke-points and becomes global sea lanes of communications and sea lanes of trade. The clashes between actors are unstoppable in this region – especially the Indian Ocean, a huge water territory which having the most strategic sea lanes in the world. The dynamic of this region has

to be well-maintained because it will affect the global condition as well. Indian Ocean region actually has a regional organization which has the obligation to maintain the stability based on socio-culture approach of the region. Stability of this water territory on the other hand means the condition of free of any threats (non-traditional), which suitable with the approach of non-traditional maritime security. The global goals 2030 also becoming peoples concern with one of the SDGs point comes with statement of 'Living under Water' and has the aim to get global prosperity through maritime resources. Furthermore, this paper will recommend the use of maritime diplomacy on countering maritime threats, and how it may apply to IORA to establish an intraregional-mechanism under the IORA's government. In order to reach that discussion, this paper will evaluate what IORA had achieved in maintaining maritime security in the Indian Ocean as well as projecting what might IORA contribute on the following years.

Global Goals in 2030

These days global society are facing fluctuate dynamic in any forms and dimensions. All countries and stakeholders are cooperating under a program of United Nations called Sustainable Development Goals (SDS) 2030 which aimed to free the human race from the tyranny of poverty and want and to heal and secure earth. The 17 SDGs points has 168 targets are applied to achieve global sustainability goals that have not achieved on the previous program (Millennium Development Goals). Specifically, SDGs number 14 focuses to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development.

Former UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon has mentioned the significant of the water territory as the sources of living of people. "Our planet's lands and oceans are already stretched to meet the demands of 7 billion people. The human population continues to grow. The search for sustainable solutions is an economic and a moral imperative if we are to create the future we want" Ban Ki Moon said. As mention on United Natins Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development page 28, within the Sustainable Development Goals number 14 global society is prepared to achieved several numbers of *goals*, such as:

- To prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land-based activities, including debris and nutrient pollution;
- To achieve sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems to avoid significant adverse impacts, including by strengthening their resilience, and take action for their restoration in order to achieve healthy and productive oceans;
- To minimize and address the impacts of ocean acidification, including through enhanced scientific cooperation at all levels;
- To effectively regulate harvesting and end overfishing, illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing and destructive fishing practices and implement science-based management plans;
- To conserve at least 10% of coastal and marine areas, consistent with national and international law and based on the best available scientific information;

- To increase the economic benefits to small island developing States and least developed countries from the sustainable use of marine resources;

On the case of Indian Ocean region, SDGs movements also applied by Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) on putting them the priority as well as mentioned on the Jakarta Concord document. IORA not only guide the region of Indian Ocean to maintain the regional prosperity by the water territory but also protecting and combating any maritime threats within the region which could inhibit goals achievement.

Indian Ocean Geography and Geostrategy

Discussing about an area means that we need to understand the geography and geopolitics of that are first. Geopolitics seen as a value of that geographic area, how importance the location is towards the state(s). By theory of geopolitics, we can see how the geography area can be seen very strategic for a (or some) state(s). A place / location can be considered as strategic one if it can give a significance value toward its surround. The value could be as the tool to achieve the state national interest, the value itself automatically will attract and binding the states to keep its eyes to keep the existing of control on the strategic location. If the strategic environment has significant value and attractiveness to the interested parties, then the interested parties' strategy to have a control of that strategic environment called as the concept of Geostrategy.

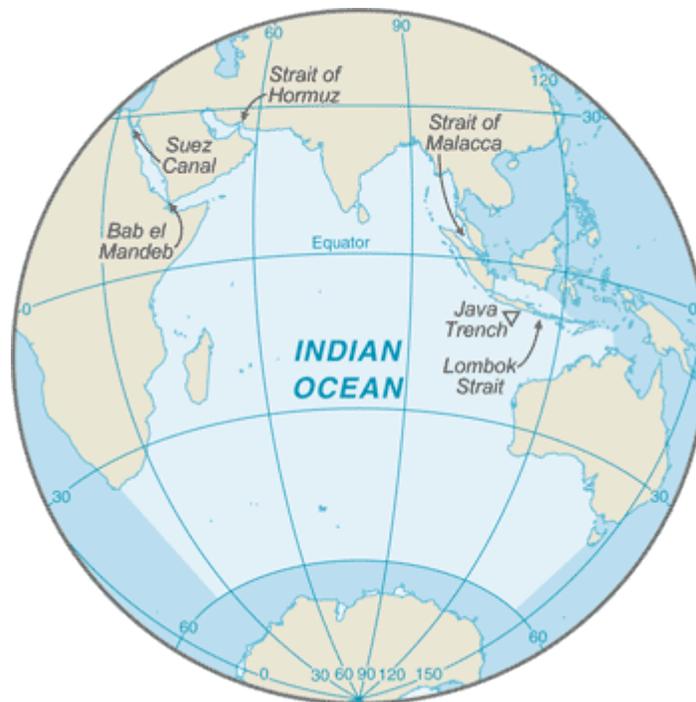


Figure 1. Indian Ocean Region

As the third largest ocean in the world, Indian Ocean is an area of both relative insecurity and strategic stability and the world's third largest ocean (Desker, 2011). Indian Ocean has numbers of significant benefits of area. As the global oil shipping line Indian Ocean is face to face with Persian Gulf which surrounded by Middle Eastern oil-producing countries such as Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Iraq, Qatar, and Iran. The Persian Gulf becomes an important water territory with most of the world's oil supply will cross to the whole world comes from. Beside the Persian Gulf, Indian Ocean also has some of the largest choke points of global oil shipping lanes. It is about millions of barrels of world's oil pass through these choke points to the European region, America region, and Asia region. It can be deduced that the distribution of the world's energy actually depends entirely on the stable or absence of Indian Ocean itself.

Beside the significant of the Indian Ocean geography, it also has the value of geostrategy. For instance, India and China know that their interests must be maintained in the Indian Ocean. Especially in case of global oil supply, this ocean becomes an access to passage of energy distribution. Some choke-points are located in Indian Ocean, it can be considered as a resource for countries directly adjacent to it. There are three elements to be considered in this case, which are physical characteristics, usefulness, and access of the choke-point (Rodrigue, 2004). Therefore, some countries like China and India want to secure their interests and ensure that oil shipping lanes to their areas remain safe and controllable.

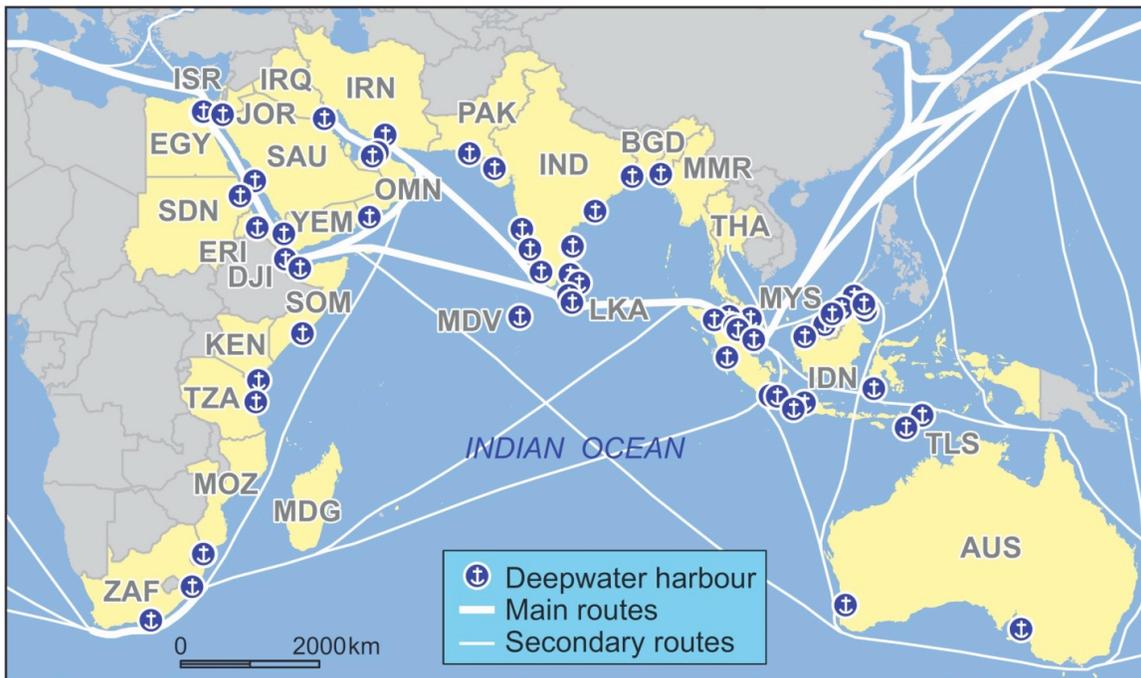


Figure 2. Sea Lanes of Communications and Trade within the Indian Ocean Region

Indian Ocean contains on 25 marginal seas includes straits and gulf, surrounded by 38 littoral states (Australia, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Comoros, Djibouti, East Timor, Egypt, Eritrea, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritius, Mozambique, Myanmar, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar,

Saudi Arabia, Seychelles, Singapore, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Tanzania, Thailand, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen) which come from 3 different continents, and it covers for about 20% the earth's sea surface. From the previous research and literatures predict that in 2030 Indian Ocean region will be inhabited by more than 3.2 billion people. It will emerge the military, commercial, environment, and technological trends – and these divergent background will lead into economic, socio-culture, natural resources, security, and climate changes issues within the Indian Ocean as a region and for those states which have any interest on it.

Identify Non-traditional Maritime Threats in IOR

“Maritime Security is one of the latest buzzwords of international relations. It is a term that draws attention to new challenge and rallies support for tackling those challenges (Bueger).” One of maritime security scholars, Christian Bueger, classify what are included into maritime security circle with the maritime threats which might happening. Bueger describes the subject of the concept of maritime Security which is also regarded as influential dimensions in maritime Security. He combines these dimensions in a matrix, the dimensions in question are seapower, marine safety, blue economy, and human resilience. Each of these dimensions has its own scope of discussion related to what is happening in the maritime region. The maritime security matrix introduced by Bueger can be described as follows:

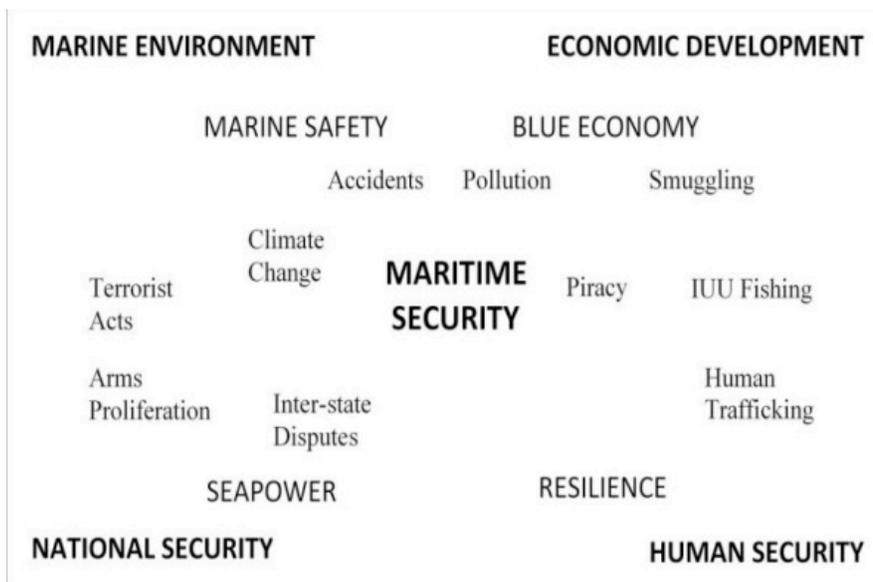


Figure 3. Maritime Security Approach by Christian Bueger

As Bueger mention, maritime security studies cover four big groups which are marine environment, economic development, national security, and human security. Those four elements furthermore classify maritime threats both traditional and non-traditional. To handle those issues, the use of maritime diplomacy could be the best option to meet a common end of all the Indian Ocean littoral states. IORA as an organization focuses on socio-economy approach within its ocean governance

contributed in maintaining the Indian Ocean region from non-traditional maritime threats.

Multiple sources of insecurity afflict many of the countries that rim the Indian Ocean. As trends that have particularly disquiet regional security implications continue to evolve, it is conceivable that the high pressure and clash lead into conflict, terrorism, political insecurity, and piracy will exceed the international and regional communities' capability to effectively respond to those issues (Burns, 2012). That is why the need of ocean governance and intra-regional mechanism is significant in the Indian Ocean region because the government need to be adaptable in managing those challenges.

There are many cases of non-traditional maritime threats happening in this region. Piracy, armed robbery at sea, people smuggling and trafficking, IUU fishing, climate change, narcotics trafficking, illegal weapon trafficking, and water territory dispute between countries are the examples of the threats. The intensity of piracy attacks in Indian Ocean classified as high especially surrounds Somali water territory. Water territory surround the Horn of Africa becomes the highest illicit trafficking by sea (Burns, 2012). The diversity within the Indian Ocean littoral states somehow becomes obstacles to counter those maritime threats. This reason also become the background why single act done by regional organization is exactly needed.

IORA and Maritime Security in IOR

Although sharing the same ocean, the Indian Ocean region displays tremendous diversity and contrasts in the littoral states' policies, culture, economics, and environment. Indian Ocean region littoral states common threats cover unstable regional security condition, maritime security threats (piracy, armed robbery at sea, people smuggling and trafficking, climate change, and water territory dispute and IUU Fishing issues), inconducive sea lanes of communications and sea lanes of threats, disintegrate ocean governance, inequity states' condition. Meanwhile, Indian Ocean region littoral states common interest include peaceful, stable, and prosperous Indian Ocean, secure and safety sea lanes of communication and sea lanes of trade.

Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) has 7 main objectives which all of them have the ends to meet a sustainable region of Indian Ocean – one of the organization's priority is focusing on maritime safety and security as the ways to meet the regional's ends. IORA member states also agreed to create a secure and peaceful Indian Ocean including honoring UNCLOS 1982 (United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea) that has been the constitution to regulate the sea.

Following IORA performance until today, the existence of the organization still meet some questions. Before IORA legalize the Jakarta Concord (on March 2017) they do not have any legally binding documents or at least a concord. The previous IORA meetings do not attended by the Chief of State only state's representative or the highest representative position was Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It makes any result of IORA meeting will not have significant power to be implemented back to the littoral

states. IORA itself seems like has no significant movement for the past 19 year, this becomes one of the main reasons why IORA considered insignificant as a regional organization. Indian Ocean littoral states hard to find the significant of IORA role to maintain the ocean governance in the region. Last but not least, there are number of smaller groups or communities in Indian Ocean region considered ways more effective to maintain the partial states' interests.

To maintain regional maritime diplomacy, IORA as a regional platform to meet a common end need to build confidence-building measurements (CBMs) to reduce suspicion and fear, and the possibility of attracts from two parties (or more) in a situation, both physical and non-physical. CBMs and coalitions are important to be built in the beginning because it raises the maritime awareness along the member countries on diplomatic forum about their common threats and common interests.

Strategic Policies Recommendation

When this research was begun to write in the middle of 2016, the authors have believed that IORA need to produce document to clearly show what IORA's interests in the region are. Indian Ocean Rim Association member states have signed a document named Jakarta Concord. Jakarta Concord signed in March 2017 which giving a clear statement of IORA vision to promote regional cooperation for a peaceful, stable, and prosperous Indian Ocean. During the Leaders' Summit of the 20th anniversary of the IORA in Jakarta, Indonesia 21 head of states or the representatives of the government commit on several points in order to promote maritime safety in the region, to promote sustainable fisheries management and development, to enhance trade and investment cooperation in the region, to empower women in the economy, to foster tourism and cultural exchange, to maintain blue economy, and to enhance disaster management in the region, strengthening academic, science, and technology cooperation.

The significant of IORA as the only regional organization focuses on the stability of the region by socio-economy approach in Indian Ocean has to be maximizing though the governance itself. This paper offers numbers of policies recommendation in order to maintain maritime security in the region of Indian Ocean and on the same way achieving the global goals 2030 which also becoming IORA concern as the regional organization. Maintaining maritime security within the region is important because a stable condition and good governance within the region will support the common achievements, global goals 2030. IORA need to be a platform to manage the unequal capacity and capability of Indian Ocean littoral states in managing the maritime resources and in countering maritime challenges.

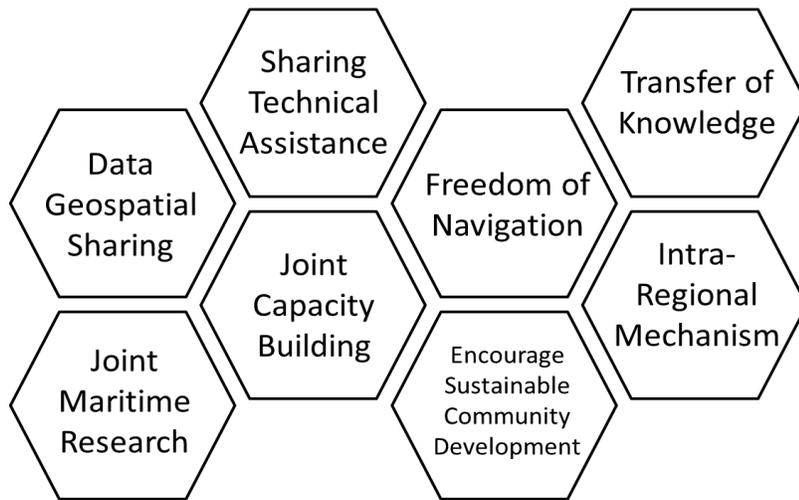


Figure 4. Points of Recommendation

Joint Maritime Research – As well as mentioned in Jakarta Concord IORA, strengthening academic, science, and technology cooperation is important to support community’s vision. Joint research also includes data geospatial sharing, technical assistance, exercise of freedom of navigation, and joint capacity building.

Data Geospatial Sharing – The huge area of Indian Ocean has abundant natural resources and strategic sea lanes for global shipping. Studies of geospatial is needed to determine maritime boundary of the littoral states, to map the water area (of the ocean), to create a marine map for the sake of navigation and shipping, and to know the potential of maritime resources in order to explore and exploit for the sake of regional prosperity. Because not all of the member states of IORA have a certain technology and capability on geospatial research, IORA need to be a motor to conduct joint marine research and sharing Indian Ocean geospatial data for the member states.

Sharing Technical Assistance – The background of sharing technical assistance approximately same as the significant of data geospatial sharing. Assistance in this case means sharing knowledge in capacity building to the member states, especially to promote the sustainable and responsible fisheries management and development in the Indian Ocean. This action will support the achievement of global goals 2030 to make sure that no one left behind to meet global prosperity.

Freedom of Navigation – Even though IORA is focusing on socio-economy approach in the Indian Ocean region, but still UNCLOS 1982 becomes the constitution of the seas (and oceans as well) about the law on the sea. Every activities on the water territory in Indian Ocean need to refer back or subject to applicable law which clearly regulated on UNCLOS 1982. Including apply freedom of navigation and exercise it to all of the member states so they can contribute in maintaining maritime safety and security if the region.

Encourage Sustainable Community Development and Intra-regional Mechanism – Sustainable community development boosts people to people interaction and builds

connectivity. It supports intra-regional mechanism to increase the regional trade and investment cooperation because the better intra-IORA flow in economy form it will faster the prosperity among all member states. Several examples could be promote public and private infrastructure development, empowering small-medium economy communities, end recognize the significant of this approach to regional economic growth and skill developments and increasing participation in global value chains. Participation is one of maritime diplomacy principles.

Conclusion

As the strategic global sea lanes Indian Ocean predicted to become the busiest and most important world's water territory in 2030. The importance to maintain the security and stability of this region need to be achieved by all of the littoral states which also the member states of IORA. IORA as a regional organization focuses on maintaining Indian Ocean region security and stability by socio-economy approach must playing important role to maintain ocean governance within the region. IORA must be a bridge to manage unequal capacity and capability of maritime knowledge include the seapower among the littoral states. Maritime diplomacy need to be considered in order to maximize IORA potential on developing and utilizing maritime territory in Indian Ocean (for booth managing natural resources and global sea lanes). By the following years, IORA must do some extra works to make sure the achievement of global goals 203 within the Indian Ocean littoral states to meet common interest, prosperity, and security by taking principle of no one (member state) left behind on achieving global goals.

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