



## THE PERTH CONSENSUS

1. The Second Indian Ocean Dialogue was held in Perth, Australia on 5-7 September 2015. The Dialogue was opened by the Hon Julie Bishop MP, Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs. The Dialogue was hosted by Future Directions International in collaboration with the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, with the support of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) Secretariat. It was co-convened with India's Observer Research Foundation. The Dialogue was attended by 80 officials and representatives from think tanks and civil society, drawn from 17 IORA Member States, four Dialogue Partners, and Observers.
2. This year's Dialogue followed the successful inaugural IOD, convened by the Observer Research Foundation in Kochi, India in September 2014. The Dialogue plays an important role in bringing together representatives of strategic and foreign policy communities and civil society to discuss maritime-related issues as part of the emergence of a vibrant Indian Ocean community engaged in open-ended regionalism.
3. The participants in the Dialogue discussed six key themes: cooperation in combating maritime transnational crime; maritime security and regional defence cooperation; regional cooperation in search and rescue; blue economy as a driver of economic growth; countering illegal fishing; and cooperation in humanitarian and disaster relief. Participants also heard presentations on non-traditional security threats and deliberative dispute resolution.
4. The Dialogue recognised that women have a critical role to play in the sustainable development of the Indian Ocean region. Participants acknowledged the critical need to create an enabling environment to allow women to make a meaningful contribution to economic growth within the region. IORA members recognised the importance of women's empowerment in driving inclusive growth and advancing gender equality, as captured in the IORA Mahé Consensus on 24-25 August 2015 in Seychelles.

5. The participants recognised the adverse impact on the region of maritime transnational crime including drug smuggling, piracy, terrorism, illegal fishing and people trafficking. The Dialogue discussed the critical importance of creating informal and formal networks for information sharing and trust building between governments, navies and coastguards, and experts to cope with these challenges. The Dialogue encouraged the greater use of existing legal frameworks and their development to tackle these challenges, including by providing the necessary legal finish. The Dialogue noted IORA should play a leadership role in this project, including through established regional cooperation mechanisms. Recognising the interconnected nature of transnational crime, participants recommended addressing these issues in a holistic manner.
6. The participants discussed key maritime security issues affecting the Indian Ocean and the prospects of regional defence cooperation in the maritime realm. The Dialogue noted the success of efforts to combat piracy in the Indian Ocean region, and the utility of extending this platform to address other regional security challenges. The participants discussed current gaps in maritime security capabilities and the potential for cooperation in developing capacities including improved port state control measures. The Dialogue noted in particular the need for enhanced civil maritime security cooperation, including between coastguards and equivalent national agencies of IORA Member States.
7. The Dialogue recognised the urgent lifesaving nature of search and rescue operations. The participants discussed potential mechanisms for improving capabilities and cooperation among Indian Ocean states, including the sharing of real-time information, and recognised the confidence building benefits of closer search and rescue cooperation. The Dialogue agreed on the importance of injecting IORA Member State views into international forums, including the International Maritime Organisation and the International Civil Aviation Organization. The Dialogue explored potential measures to operationalise the IORA Memorandum of Understanding on Search and Rescue Cooperation in the Indian Ocean Region, including through capacity building initiatives. The Dialogue encouraged planning for the effective coordination of large-scale multinational search and rescue responses, and bilateral arrangements with neighbouring states on search and rescue operations.
8. The Blue Economy represents a major opportunity for IORA Member States, especially island states whose economies rely heavily on the waters around them. The participants discussed ways in which they could enhance cooperation in the Blue Economy as an important driver of economic growth in the region, recognising the need for growth to be sustainable and inclusive. Participants recognised the particular role of women in the Blue Economy. The Dialogue recognised that effective maritime security

governance, including the provision of good order at sea, is a key prerequisite of developing the blue economy. The Dialogue recommended IORA play an active role in driving improved governance and management of our Indian Ocean resources, particularly as we see more intensive use of these resources. The participants welcomed the adoption of the IORA Blue Economy Declaration at the first IORA Ministerial Blue Economy Conference in Mauritius on 2-3 September 2015, which will provide a platform for closer cooperation and development among IORA countries.

9. The Dialogue acknowledged that global fisheries stocks are being depleted. Illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing is a major concern for IORA Member States, especially island and littoral states that rely on fishing. These activities clearly undermine efforts of regional states to develop the Blue Economy, and form part of a broader maritime transnational crime challenge. The participants discussed ways in which regional states can strengthen cooperation and partnerships in combating IUU fishing, and recognised the important role of IORA in achieving this. The Dialogue recognised the increasing importance of sustainable aquaculture in the Indian Ocean region.
10. The Dialogue noted that the Indian Ocean is a region that is particularly susceptible to natural disasters, including typhoons, tsunamis, coastal flooding and earthquakes. This will make humanitarian assistance and disaster relief an increasingly important issue for the region. The participants discussed lessons to be learned from regional cooperation in humanitarian and disaster relief in South-East Asia and recommended that more work be done through IORA to explore the potential for entering into regional arrangements to build capacity and cooperative arrangements.
11. Participants recognised the importance of the creative exchange of ideas facilitated by the Indian Ocean Dialogue and agreed to meet in 2016.

*7 September 2015*