



International Relations Conference 2016

INDIA AND THE INDIAN OCEAN

-Sustainability, Security and Development-

18- 19 December 2016

Pune | India

Organized by

SYMBIOSIS SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

Symbiosis International University, Pune

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About Symbiosis International University

(SIU)

Padma Bhushan Dr. S.B. Mujumdar established Symbiosis in 1971 on the principles of Vedic thought of "World is One Family". The University offers 107 programmes at Diploma, Undergraduate, Postgraduate and Doctoral levels under the faculties of Law, Management, Computer Studies, Health and Biomedical Sciences, Media, Communication and Design, Humanities and Social Sciences, and Engineering. The University has 29 constituent institutes spread across campuses located in Pune, Nasik, Bengaluru, NOIDA and Hyderabad.

The University has a vibrant, multi – ethnic, multi- cultural environment and state- of- the-art infrastructure that attracts students from all states of India and over 85 countries. It has international collaborations which facilitate student and faculty exchanges, dual degree programs, summer schools, etc. With collaborative networks with several universities from different parts of the world, SIU provides a very conducive, interactive and inspiring environment to create true global citizens.

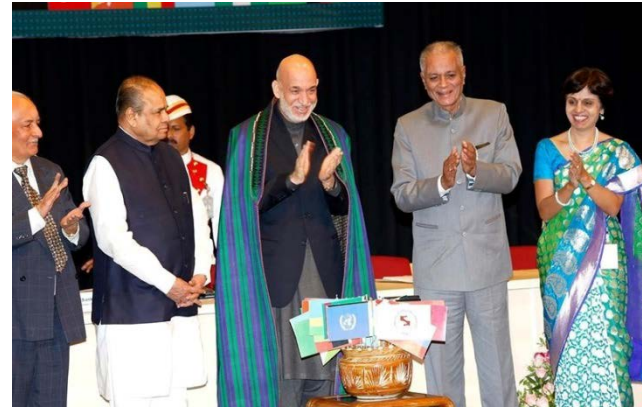


**About Symbiosis School of International Studies
(SSIS)**

In the contemporary scenario, India's interest in the world as well as the world's interest in India is visibly at its highest. Therefore, it becomes imperative that the Indian scholarship on global issues should respond to the opportunities that this presents. To this end, the Symbiosis School of International Studies (SSIS) endeavours to provide a platform for teaching and research in international relations, with an emphasis on India and its role in global affairs. Set up in consonance with the broader vision of Symbiosis Society, which is "to integrate with the world", SSIS strives to constantly engage in scholarly pursuits in an environment of intellectual fellowship, aimed at the academic enrichment of the entire community.

International Relations Conference: some snapshots

The Symbiosis School of International Studies (SSIS) with the support of the Division of Public Diplomacy, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, organized its first edition of the International Relations Conference titled 'India and its Development Partnerships in Asia and Africa: Towards a New Paradigm' in December 2013. The conference was inaugurated by Hon'ble Vice President of India, Mr. Hamid Ansari. The special guest of honour at the event was H.E. Mr. Hamid Karzai, GCMG, Hon'ble President, Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. Eminent members of academia, government officials, ministers, corporate leaders and experts from over 25 countries attended the conference to deliberate on the various tracks that were identified for the conference.



India and the Indian Ocean: Sustainability, Security and Development

In 2014, the theme of the conference focused on the evolving contours of India's foreign policy for the South and Southeast Asian region and was titled 'India's Look East- Act East Policy: A Bridge to the Asian Neighbourhood'. The conference was inaugurated by Hon'ble Minister of Road Transport and Highways, Shri. Nitin Gadkari. Dr. Ram Sharan Mahat, Finance Minister of Nepal; Mr. Anil Wadhwa, Secretary (East), Government of India; Mr. Md. Shahriar Alam, State Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh, were the special guests of honour at the event. Mr. Kiren Rijiju, Hon'ble Minister of State for Home Affairs of India, was the key note speaker at the session on Defence and Security and also held an interactive session with the students.



India and the Indian Ocean: Sustainability, Security and Development

In 2015, the School organized its third edition of the IRC titled 'Link West: India and the Gulf'. The discussions at the conference explored the myriad aspects of India's relations with the Gulf region.

The conference was inaugurated by the Hon'ble Vice President of India, Shri. M. Hamid Ansari. During his introductory speech, the Vice President reiterated the importance of the Gulf and the pressing need for peace and stability in this region, and its consequences for India. Hon'ble Governor of Maharashtra, Shri. C. Vidyasagar Rao, and Hon'ble Guardian Minister for Pune, Shri. Girish Bapat also graced the occasion with their presence.

The five sessions titled- Regional Security Scenario, The Gulf Region in India's Energy Security Landscape, India's



Relations with Iran and Iraq, India- GCC: Trade and Investment Ties, and Soft Power: India- Gulf Educational and Cultural Ties provided a platform for lively deliberations. Hon'ble Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas, Shri. Dharmendra Pradhan also delivered a key note address for the session which focused on India's energy security. Members of academia, bureaucrats, ministers, ambassadors and corporate leaders joined the event as its distinguished panellists. The conference was well attended by students, faculty and a large delegation from West Asia.

The International Relations Conferences have proven to be a worthy exercise and have been well received, and were widely covered by local and national media.

International Relations Conference 2016

India and the Indian Ocean: Sustainability, Security and Development

Under the aegis of the Symbiosis International University (SIU), the Symbiosis School of International Studies (SSIS) will be organizing its fourth International Relations Conference (IRC) on 18-19 December, 2016 titled “India and the Indian Ocean: Sustainability, Security and Development”, in Pune. The conference will bring together ministers, bureaucrats, corporate leaders, academics, civil society organizations, NGOs and media professionals from India and abroad, to deliberate on the myriad aspects of India's foreign policy which includes issues like trade and investments, defence and security, blue economy and soft power diplomacy, to name a few, with regard to island nations of the Indian Ocean.

The emerging dynamics of international diplomacy has put the spotlight on the Indian Ocean region (IOR) as it connects the Middle East, Africa, and East Asia with Europe and the Americas thus emerging as the theatre of 21st century geopolitics. The US naval strategist, Rear Admiral Alfred Thayer Mahan had rightly observed, “*Whoever controls the Indian Ocean dominates Asia. This ocean is the key to the seven seas in the twenty-first century, the destiny of the world will be decided in these waters.*” Movement across these waters is both facilitated and potentially constrained by several key choke points– the Mozambique

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Channel, the Bab el Mandeb, the Suez Canal, the Strait of Hormuz, the Malacca Straits, the Sunda Strait, and the Lombok Strait. Stretching eastward from the Horn of Africa to the Indonesian archipelago and beyond, the IOR acts as a vital channel for Western military supplies and the Persian Gulf hydrocarbon resources. Most international commerce flows through this route.

Today, new technologies are opening frontiers of marine resource development from bio-prospecting to mining of seabed mineral resources. The sea also offers vast potential for renewable “blue energy” production from wind, wave, tidal, thermal and biomass sources. Furthermore, Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Mauritius, Seychelles and Sri Lanka last year, and assured these nations of India’s full cooperation in development partnerships for harnessing the blue economy.

The volatile socio-political environment in the region and the rise of India and China as major powers has made this an area of crucial geo-strategic importance. High rates of population growth and youth unemployment coupled with extremism and weak governance add to instability and migration issues. The region, already prone to natural disasters, is predicted to suffer most from climate change when compared globally.

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There are multifarious challenges as well as opportunities facing the IOR, stemming from the interests of the regional and extra regional players. The IOR which is presently a pivot for contemporary geopolitics and geo-economics is at the top of India's foreign policy priorities. Given that 90 percent of India's trade and oil imports are transported by sea, forging regional partnerships is very vital for India to ensure the security of the sea lanes of communication and to attain the larger strategic interests.

This conference intends to discuss and deliberate on how the dynamics of the Indian Ocean region is expected to influence the geopolitical trajectories in the coming decades of the much discussed Asian Century. It is pertinent to explore how these changes will evolve in the coming years and the consequent impact on politics, economy and society of the region and India's relations with other powers. The conference also intends to address the developments that are shaping the internal dynamics apart from mapping challenges and opportunities for India. It will seek to engage with analysis of the IOR from the various aspects of history, economy, geo politics, culture, energy, trade, migration, diaspora, among others.

The conference will seek to engage policy makers and practitioners, academics, defence experts, businessmen, media and students in serious deliberations on the following tracks and indicative sub-

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themes. The outcome of the conference is expected to provide specific recommendations with a view to offer a broad policy direction for Indian policy makers by identifying key takeaways from the deliberations.

The proposed key areas for discussion could be:

1. Trade, Investment and Economic Growth

The Indian Ocean provides critical sea trade routes that connect the Middle East, Africa, and South Asia with the broader Asian continent to the east and Europe to the west. It transports one half of world's container shipments, one-third of the bulk cargo traffic, two-thirds of the oil shipments and more than 50 percent of the world's maritime oil trade. Indian Ocean Rim (IOR) represents a large market with around 2 billion population (one-third of the world) and producing goods and services worth US\$1 trillion (around 8 per cent of world production).

The shift of global economic gravity towards Asia over the past decade has resulted in significant growth for regional and global trade as well as cross-border investment flows in the IOR which experiences a high degree of trade complementarity among the economies. While reforms in economic policies along with infrastructure development have driven FDI inflows to the region, some of the IOR countries have also emerged as potential sources of outward investment flows. The existing trade potential can be further tapped through sectoral cooperation initiatives in areas such as tourism, fisheries, food processing, ICT, SMEs, regional value chain and so on.

Furthermore, the recently held 'Maritime Summit' in Mumbai has highlighted the urgent need for Port-led development in the Indian Ocean region. This could positively impact the economic growth of the weaker states in India's coastal region, as well as of the littoral states of the Indian Ocean.

The growth prospects of the IOR countries would certainly be improved by more regional cooperation and adoption of various trade facilitation measures for improved trade linkages. This calls for effective deliberations to review policy and institutional framework for enhancing regional trade and investment climate. The track could address the following:

- a. Aid, projects and investment of the ASEAN, EU and other powers (USA/ Japan/ China etc.) in India
 - India's engagement with Sri Lanka, Maldives and Mauritius
 - India's engagement with regional/sub-regional groupings such as ASEAN, BIMSTEC, IORA
 - India's engagement with Iran, Oman, Mozambique, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Australia, South Africa, Kenya, Tanzania
- b. Greenfield Investments
- c. Regional Value Chains
- d. Connectivity

- e. Tourism
- f. Mapping opportunities, risk and challenges for joint venture, investment etc.
 - Opportunities for the Make in India programme
- g. Trade facilitation

2. Defence and Security

India's maritime strategic outlook is influenced by the presence of extra-regional players and unresolved border issues. Unlike the Pacific Ocean, the Indian Ocean has a roof above its head which only allows entrance via straits or choke points. Therefore, any nation which wants to economically engage from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean has to transit through the choke points in the Indian Ocean which are increasingly becoming points of vulnerability. The extraordinary expansion of global trade with the advent of globalization has prioritized the concerns with regard to maritime security in the Indo-Pacific. Today, maritime security branches out to include human security, climate change, and security of livelihoods.

Furthermore, the arms race which is responsible for transfer of sophisticated armaments to the countries in the Indo-Pacific is a matter of much concern in an already uncertain and volatile region. In recent years, the U.S. and China have adopted positions with regard to the whole region. On one hand, the US is strengthening its hold on the region via its 'rebalancing' or 'pivot' strategy while on the other hand China is asserting its claims on the islands in the South China Sea via reclamation of the sea or through movement of oil rigs near the islands. With dim possibility of a formal adoption of a

'Code of Conduct' at sea, India has time and again affirmed its position in favour of full freedom for navigation as prescribed by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea UNCLOS. Moreover, traditional and non-traditional threats such as natural disasters, piracy, and terrorism also pose a challenge. To this end, the track could address the following:

- a. Global and regional power dynamics:
 - Strategy and role of extra- regional/ regional powers in the Indian Ocean region- China, France, Germany, Australia, U.S. and South Korea
 - Role of small littoral states such as Malaysia, Maldives, Seychelles, Singapore, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Indonesia
- b. Traditional and non-traditional threats to maritime security such as disruptions of energy supplies, cyber- security, piracy and terrorism etc.
- c. Governing the seas
 - Sea Lanes of Communication and Freedom of Navigation
 - Maritime disputes and Intergovernmental negotiations
 - Challenges and way ahead
- d. The Indian Ocean Zone of Peace Declaration (IOZP) proposal and outcomes for India

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- e. Emerging security architecture of the Indian Ocean region in the context of:
 - Indian Navy as the net security provider
 - Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief
- f. Growing influence of China in the Indian Ocean Region, and the One Belt and One Road (OBOR) and Maritime Silk Road Initiatives

3. Civilizational Linkages and Soft Power Diplomacy

India's historic and ethnic ties with the littoral states of the Indian Ocean region are its biggest asset which has also helped in shaping the present cultural and civilizational linkages in the region. However, India has not been able to leverage these ties for its own interests to the extent desirable. The commonalities that the shared Indic culture present such as art, literature, music and cuisine is India's biggest strength and should be nurtured and honed continuously in order to counter balance the growing powers of other regional players in the IOR. The track could address the following:

- a. People-to-people contact
 - Diaspora
 - Citizen diplomacy
 - Partnerships in higher education
- b. Cultural diplomacy
 - Gastronomy
 - Cultural Centres
 - Media and cinema
- c. Wellness tourism
 - Yoga and Ayurveda
 - Naturopathy

4. Development Cooperation

Development Cooperation was earlier taken to be coterminous with financial aid. But with the heightened engagement of countries and organisations in global development, the ways in which development support is provided, has transcended financial transfers to also include technical and technological cooperation.

While majority of the IOR countries depend on foreign assistance for supplementing their social and economic needs, a few of them have also come to offer development support to other countries within and outside the region. The volume of resources flowing from the regional donors in IOR is on a steady rise over the past decade.

While India has provided development assistance since the late 1940s, the volume of its foreign assistance has grown rapidly since the late 1990s, increasing seven-fold between 2000 and 2015. India today is already a significant development partner and recognizes development cooperation as a key

intervention strategy for bridging development gaps and undertaking measures for capacity building and skill development in the region.

China with its focus on infrastructure investments is a close competitor as a donor in the region. Whether the competition can change into a collaboration between the two rising giants, remains to be seen. To this end, the track could address the following:

a. Natural Resources and Environment

- Resource competition and management: Cooperative programmes on Coastal Management System which includes marine ecosystem, coral reefs, mangroves etc.
- Renewables
- Disaster preparedness and relief work: humanitarian assistance/ disaster response
- Managing “smart” coastal cities

b. Promoting Cooperation

- Harnessing the region’s human resource potential
- Tackling migration
- Cooperation in Education, Science and Technology
- Framework for development cooperation—North South/ South-South perspectives

5. Blue Economy

The Indian Ocean is extremely vital in the backdrop of global trade and commerce, maritime security, and as significant source of food and energy for one fourth of the world's population. However, as the nations which encompass the world's third largest water body continue to develop rapidly, concerns of damage brought on by human activities on ocean ecosystems is gaining traction at the highest levels of policymaking. To address this, the 'Blue Economy' approach was first lead at the Rio +20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD) by Costal and Island developing countries. The approach constitutes of a sustainable development framework for determining "equity in access to, development of and the sharing of benefits from marine resources" in order to fuel "blue growth". This framework holds immense promise for the Indian Ocean region and the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) has identified 8 priority areas for cooperation in the Blue Economy:

- a. Fisheries and Aquaculture
- b. Renewable Ocean Energy
- c. Seaports and Shipping
- d. Seabed Exploration and Minerals
- e. Marine Biotechnology, Research and Development
- f. Tourism
- g. Ocean Knowledge Clusters
- h. SIDS and LDCs

Expected outcomes

India's involvement as a predominant player in the Indian Ocean region is crucial from the point of view of not only collaborative growth in Southeast and East Asia but it is also necessary for re-shaping India's role as a leader in the emerging architecture of this region. For this to become a reality, discussions and dialogues are necessary between relevant stakeholders, including policy makers, across borders.

The key takeaways that will emerge from the deliberations will provide meaningful insights which could potentially inform the Indian government's foreign policy outlook for this region. The outcomes could serve as a basis for developing research agendas by scholars, students and academics around the key elements of this important area of India's foreign policy

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Venue: Symbiosis International University, Lavale, Pune

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Work Hours: Monday to Saturday, 10 AM- 4 PM
(Please note, office is closed on public holidays, Sundays and second and fourth Saturdays)

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