



Embassy of Italy  
New Delhi



# ITALY-INDIA MARITIME SECURITY SEMINAR

Co-organised by the Embassy of Italy in India and  
the National Maritime Foundation to commemorate  
the Port-Call by *ITS Francesco Morosini* in Mumbai  
between 11 and 13 August 2023



Date and Time:

Saturday, 12 August 2023,  
1415 to 1900 h IST

Venue:

Agastya Auditorium,  
INHS Asvini, Mumbai

## CONCEPT NOTE

India and Italy are ancient civilizations with rich cultural heritage, that have known and traded with each other for over two millennia, connecting the Indian Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea. Today, 40% of the EU's foreign trade passes through the South China Sea and even more through the Indian Ocean. Soon the Blue-Raman high-speed Submarine Data Cable system will further link India, the Middle East, the Gulf States and Europe. The convergence between India and Italy in the maritime domain is characterised by their healthy bilateral trade (14.9 billion euro in 2022), the bulk of which is carried out over the sea. Consequently, both countries retain an abiding interest in the safety and security of the international shipping routes of the Indo-Pacific in general and the Indian Ocean in particular.

An important step towards ensuring maritime security cooperation between Italy and India was achieved during the State Visit of the Italian President of the Council of Ministers, Ms. Giorgia Meloni, to India in March 2023, when India-Italy bilateral ties were elevated to a 'Strategic Partnership'. A new chapter in defence cooperation was opened and Hon'ble Prime Minister Modi and Hon'ble President Meloni underscored the need to further enhance mutual engagement in this field through the conclusion of an agreement on Defence Cooperation. This agreement will lead the way to co-development and co-production between Italian and Indian defence companies and cooperation between armed forces, including the fight against terrorism.

For both Italy and India maritime security and a rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific represent an international public good which can be achieved only through collective efforts in a multilateral context. If this is a geographical necessity for India, for Italy – whose traditional area of reference is the enlarged Mediterranean - the pivot to the Indo-Pacific is a strategic choice and investment for the future.

In the past few years, Italy has stepped up its commitment in the area, strongly endorsing the seven priority areas of the EU Strategy for Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific (2021) and by participating, as the second largest contributing country, to the naval missions EUNAVFOR Atalanta (Gulf of Aden) and European-Led Maritime Situation Awareness Mission EMASoH (Strait of Hormuz). In March 2023, Italy agreed to take joint lead in the 'Science, Technology, and Academic Cooperation' pillar of the Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI) launched by India and joined the Information Fusion Centre of the Indian Ocean Region in Gurgaon (Haryana). Furthermore, since 2020, Italy is an ASEAN Development Partner and has increasingly geared up security cooperation with countries of the region, such as Japan (strategic partnership since January 2023), Vietnam (strategic partnership since 2013), Indonesia (visited by the Italian Defence Minister Crosetto in December 2022). Finally, and remarkably in this context, in 2023 the Italian government has sent a patrol vessel, ITS *Francesco Morosini*, to the South China Sea and plans to forward others in the region, such as the Italian training vessel *Amerigo Vespucci*, that will be sailing through the Indo-Pacific region in 2024.

India's maritime policy is encapsulated by the acronym 'SAGAR (Security and Growth for all in the region). First-order-specificity to SAGAR is provided by the IPOI which, through its seven deeply-interconnected 'pillars' or 'spokes', identifies the lines of effort that need to be progressed so as to translate SAGAR into tangible outcomes.

As 'Security and Defence' is an essential component of the EU and Indian approach to the Indo-Pacific, it is only fitting that India and Italy should leverage the growing synergy within their bilateral defence ties to jointly strengthen maritime security in the region. A few of the more significant areas in which India and Italy emerge as natural partners are Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) and Technological Research and Development (R&D) involving both public and private entities within the defence industries of both countries. While the former would offer novel perspectives and avenues of collaboration in enhancing the MDA in the Indo-Pacific, the latter would foster discussions on partnerships between leading Indian and Italian defence industries. These new forms of partnership seem conducive both to the thrust towards an *Atmanirbhar* (self-reliant) India in the defence manufacturing sector but also to the EU's pursuit of strategic autonomy, meaning the capacity to act autonomously when and where necessary and with partners wherever possible.

In the above context, three key issues of discussion emerge; (1) possible synergies between the Indian IPOI and the EU's 'Coordinated Maritime Presences' (CMP) concept within the North Western Indian Ocean (NWIO) in contributing to maritime security; (2) exploration of cooperative and collaborative approaches to MDA within the Indo-Pacific; and (3) identification of opportunities for maritime-focused technological R&D.

On the occasion of the port-call in Mumbai by ITS *Francesco Morosini*, this seminar aims at addressing those key issues through the participation of senior officers of the two navies, subject matter experts, academics, and representatives from the defence industry, as well as selected members of the media. Specific recommendations emerging from the discussion will contribute to provide greater impetus to the growing India-Italy defence relations.

# PROGRAMME

12<sup>th</sup> August 2023, 1415-1900 h IST

**Venue: Agastya Auditorium, INHS Asvini, Mumbai**

Time (IST)	Event	Speaker/Presenter
<b>OPENING REMARKS</b> <b>1415-1430 h (15 mins)</b>		
1415-1420 h (5 mins)	Opening Remarks	<b>H.E. Vincenzo de Luca</b> , Ambassador of Italy to India
1420-1425 h (5 mins)	Opening Remarks	<b>Vice Admiral Sanjay Bhalla</b> , NM Chief of Staff, Headquarters Western Naval Command, Indian Navy
1425-1430 h (5 mins)	Opening Remarks	<b>Commander Giovanni Monno</b> Commanding Officer <i>ITS Francesco Morosini</i>
<b>BRIEFING PRESENTATIONS</b> <b>1430-1515 h (45 mins)</b>		
1430-1445 h (15 mins)	Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI): What it is, what it is not, and why it is crucial	<b>Vice Admiral Pradeep Chauhan</b> , AVSM & Bar, VSM (Retd) Director-General, NMF, New Delhi
1445-1500 h (15 mins)	The EU's perspective of enhancing the Indo-Pacific security network in the maritime domain.	<b>Rear Admiral Giovanni Galoforo</b> , Deputy Commander of Operation Atalanta
1500-1515 h (15 mins)	<b>Audience Interaction</b>	
<b>Break</b> <b>1515-1530 h (15 mins)</b>		
<b>PANEL DISCUSSION 1</b> <b>1530-1645 h (75 mins)</b>		
<b>“GENERATING MARITIME SYNERGY FOR SECURITY IN THE INDO-PACIFIC — COOPERATIVE, COLLABORATIVE MARITIME DOMAIN AWARENESS (MDA)”</b>		
1530 – 1620 h	<b>Roundtable Participants:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Rear Admiral Rahul Shankar</b>, Assistant Chief of the Naval Staff (Communications, Space, and Network-Centric Operations [CSNCO]), Integrated Headquarters of the Ministry of Defence (Navy), New Delhi</li> <li>• <b>Rear Admiral Giuseppe Schiavardi</b>, Director of the Center for Studies at the Venice Institute of Maritime Military Studies, Italian Navy</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Captain RS Sawan</b>, Research Fellow, NMF, New Delhi</li> </ul> <p><b>Moderator: Ms Manjeet Kripalani</b>, Co-founder, Gateway House, Mumbai</p>	
1620-1645 h (25 mins)	<b>Audience Interaction and Moderator's summation</b>	
<b>Tea/Coffee Break</b> <b>1645-1715 h (30 mins)</b>		
<b>PANEL DISCUSSION 2</b> <b>1715-1845 h (90 mins)</b>		
<b>"TECHNOLOGICAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT FOR SECURITY IN THE INDO-PACIFIC"</b>		
1715-1815 h	<p><b>Roundtable participants:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Ms. Aurora Buzzo</b>, Project and Negotiation Manager, Fincantieri S.p.A.</li> <li>• <b>Mr. Alberto Pietra</b>, Chief Commercial Office, International Marketing and Strategic Campaigns, SVP Asia and Far East &amp; SVP Oceania, p Leonardo S.p.A.</li> <li>• <b>Mr Pankaj Chadha</b>, Vice President Submarines and Underwater Platforms, Larsen &amp; Toubro Defence Independent Company</li> <li>• <b>Mr Roberto Simonetti Spallotta</b>, Chief Representative Office India, Elettronica S.p.A.</li> </ul> <p><b>Moderator: Commodore Debesh Lahiri</b>, Executive Director, NMF, New Delhi</p>	
1815-1845 h (30 mins)	<b>Audience Interaction and Moderator's Summation</b>	
<b>CLOSING REMARKS</b> <b>1845-1900 h (15 mins)</b>		
1845-1850 h (05 mins)	Closing Remarks	<b>Rear Admiral AN Pramod</b> Flag Officer Commanding Maharashtra Naval Area, Indian Navy
1850-1855 h (05 min)	Closing Remarks	<b>H.E. Vincenzo de Luca</b> , Ambassador of Italy to India
1855-1900 h (05 mins)	Vote of Thanks	<b>Ms Saaz Lahiri</b> Jr Research Associate, NMF
<b>END OF SEMINAR</b>		