



Managing Strategic Security Transactions in the Indian Ocean Region: Moving Away From Zero-Sum Lens

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The Indian Ocean Region (IOR) presents a unique tapestry of correspondences and divergences, positive and negatives, in an era of flux with world order, most likely, on the cusp of a systemic reordering. The geo-strategic salience of this region, as part of a larger global maritime continuum, has also increased. Strategic hedging behaviour by major stakeholders, resident and non-resident alike; besides securitisation of geo-political discourse that focuses on competitive aspects also present distinctive challenges for evolving a cooperative framework tailored to regional needs. The key issues examined for obtaining a pan-regional politico-strategic rapprochement are the tenets of critical geopolitics, game theory, geography, context and the efficacy of existing multilateral mechanisms, especially Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA). The overall aim is to examine the various intertwined threads for formulating an inclusive and multi-sectoral maritime security framework with an IOR contextualisation.

*Research Fellow, National Maritime Foundation. The views contained in this article are those of the author and bear no relation to the official policy and the views of the Indian Navy and the Foundation. A preliminary version of this paper was presented at the Annual Seminar of College of Naval Warfare, Goa on 19–20 Nov 2013.

*The waters of the world form one vast expanse. While land may be enveloped by the sea – and the Continents are so enveloped – the oceans are divided only by artificial boundaries.*¹

Sardar K. M. Panikkar

The aforementioned quote advanced roughly 60 years ago by an eminent Indian historian-diplomat brings out the distinct imperatives of connectivity and inclusiveness of the worlds' oldest commons – the Oceans. The Indian Ocean, in particular, is a complex environment given the diversity of social and cultural norms, governance structures, developmental trajectories, military quotients and the varying perceptions about national and international security architecture. As the third largest perennially navigable oceanic tracts, the Indian Ocean lies sandwiched between the larger Pacific and the Atlantic Oceans, thus serving as a crucial link along the equatorial East–West cycle of maritime commerce.

The peculiar geography of the Indian Ocean facilitates access only through narrow waters characterised by chokepoints, islands and surrounding landmasses. This makes the region susceptible to spill-over/knock-on effects not only from adjoining seascape but also from occurrences with littoral and land-centric causations. The resource rich character, recent economic and societal prosperity, changing dynamics of maritime economics along with the geopolitical imperatives of the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) also invite attention of non-resident stakeholders. Furthermore, increasing securitisation of strategic discourse has led to polarised and bipartisan debates on the maritime security dimension within the IOR.

This paper seeks to examine the possibility of managing the emerging conflictual and destabilising trends within the IOR by adopting a transactional approach through an inclusive and consensual mechanism, as is being undertaken in the political and economic realms. Such an approach, while acknowledging the benign (cooperative) and competitive (adverse) facets of any relationship, aims at managing the divergences in the overall interest of regional stability, as the IOR security dimension has global connotations.

Emerging Global and Indian Ocean Stratscape

The 21st century has been described as the Pacific Century² or the Asia-Pacific Century, depending upon the particular persuasion. Whether these predictions come

to fruition may lie in the realm of future, it can be stated with reasonable confidence that the global architecture is in the midst of a *radical systemic change*. This forecast is supported by correlating current trends with the 16-point logic put forth by the *long cycle school* theorists.³ The metrics for assessing such a change and the current trends to support this logic are placed at [Appendix](#). In a similar vein, novel cartographic imaginations, such as, Greater or an Extended Asia–Pacific,⁴ stretching from India to the Central Pacific, as well as a more recent construct of the Indo-Pacific⁵ that includes the entire Indian Ocean and the Western Pacific, have been postulated as the fulcrums of future geo-strategic salience.

As far as IOR seascape is concerned, this particular region within the larger global dynamics has been described as being witness to a “historically unprecedented and unparalleled maritime dynamism”,⁶ albeit with benign and adverse trends. The maritime economics within the Indian Ocean have also undergone a transformation in the recent past. It no longer serves the sole purpose of resource base for break bulk goods, but has emerged as the origin of value-added, white and capital finished goods. This particular trend has found special mention in the latest United Nations Commission on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) annual report on maritime economics, wherein Asia alone accounted for 39% and 57% of global share in terms of the volume of goods loaded and unloaded respectively.⁷ Additionally, Eastern Africa and Western Oceania form part of the IOR. On a conservative basis, by factoring of half of their maritime trade through the Indian Ocean, and discounting contributions by the North-East Asia, IOR still emerges as the locus of international mercantile activity.

On the issue of energy dynamics through a historiographical trend analysis, while the Middle East remains as the largest source of global supply, the broader region of Asia-Pacific has emerged as the leading consumer of fossil fuels driven by the impetus of growing economies.⁸ However, constraining effects of adverse transnational threats also coexist with these positives within the IOR. These range from religious extremism, violent terrorism, poverty, inequitable development trajectories, piracy that is currently in decline, besides human, drugs and arms smuggling. It could thus, be averred that the Indian Ocean is reflective of the good and not so good of the contemporary world environment.

Maritime Security Trends in IOR

There is near consensus on the increasing geo-political significance of Asia in military strategic terms and an inevitable resultant overlap of spheres of influence amongst the dominant and rising powers. This in turn, has brought larger than normal focus to the security anxieties. This may seem surprising given that the Indian Ocean has remained largely stable in the 21st century except for the recent rise of piracy besides occasional tensions over the Iranian nuclear issue and those arising out of the difficult Indo-Pak relationship. However, the overflow of adverse effects into maritime domain, as result of the on-going turmoil in the Middle East as well as North Africa and those arising out of post-2014 Afghanistan drawdown scenario, cannot be discounted.

The exponential rise in the economic, politico-diplomatic and military quotients of China can be considered a crucial event of the last two decades. Until recently, its maritime engagements within the IOR had centred on maritime access and resources to sustain the trajectory of economic development. However, the recent articulations by the former and current presidents, namely Hu Jintao and Xi Jinping, provide the evidence of a more focussed reorientation in the Chinese strategic outlook to the oceans.⁹ The significance of these remarks could be framed against the perceptions in some quarters about the reduced capacity of the USA as the major maritime security provider in the Indian Ocean. The reasons for such a scenario have been variously ascribed to the lessened regional engagement post-2014 drawdown in Afghanistan, energy sufficiency arising out of economically viable shale gas/oil extraction technology and, not in the least, by the need to bolster its military posture as enunciated in the *Strategic Rebalance to the Asia-Pacific*.¹⁰ The adverse effects of the sequestration process have served to further magnify such observations. This has led some analysts to posit that the Indian Ocean is likely to see a power transition in the near future and this handing over of the maritime baton may not be as smooth as was the case when the Royal Navy decided to withdraw from west of Suez in early 1970s.¹¹

While such statements apropos IOR may seem surprising in the relative tranquillity mentioned earlier, a recent study of strategic rivalries brings out that such instances have been most enduring and persistent with an Asian-Middle East bias and thus carry a linked Indian Ocean context.¹² To extend the argument further, while public policy statements by the major Indian Ocean stakeholders, i.e. the USA,

China, India, Japan, EU and ASEAN, emphasise the cooperative aspects, the discourse among strategic community tends to be conflictual in its intent and content. China's rise as a peer or a near-peer competitor has been repeatedly described as a strategic challenge by the US analysts with particular reference to the predominantly maritime framework of this bipolar competitive interaction.¹³ US rebalance is being seen as a strategy of *containment* by a large number of Chinese analysts citing the unbroken chain of its military presence from Hawaii–Guam, Japan, South Korea, Philippines, Singapore, extending southward to Australia.¹⁴ A similar prognosis in respect of Sino-Indian rivalry with maritime context has been portrayed by the analysts from both the sides.¹⁵ The expanding Chinese naval presence and more robust maritime engagements in IOR have been attributed to the need for a growing power to find increased operating space under a perceived sense of vulnerabilities especially in the vicinity of critical spaces.¹⁶ The recent Chinese activism in IOR has also been portrayed as a *pretence* under the garb of *diffuse pervasion*.¹⁷ The Japanese, given their resource dependency through imports and the protracted nature of impasse over Senkaku/Diayou islands have raised similar concerns.¹⁸ It would thus be obvious that there is a rising securitisation of strategic discourse, wherein the rising and dominant stakeholders within the Indian Ocean view most developments through a binary “either/or” zero-sum perspective. It is opined that such leanings are neither surprising nor uncommon given the current climate of strategic flux and uncertainty amid global economic downturn. This disconnection between the public policy and analytical articulations has also been assessed as a structural policy framework of “strategic hedging”, wherein the stakeholders are covering bases, to the extent possible, for a nebulous future.¹⁹ This is reflected in the increased military spending within the Asia–Oceania region (see [Figure 1](#) and [Table 2](#) in the [Appendix](#)).

Certain salient trends, in respect of select countries from a broad analysis of military expenditure since 2000 are as follows (see [Figure 2](#) and [Table 3](#) in the [Appendix](#)):

- The global military expenditure increased by roughly 54% during this period.
- The defence expenditure by the USA is by far the largest, comprising an average 39.2% of the global total. The increase in Americas' region share can be attributed to the US military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. The military expenditure by the US has not been depicted (data included at

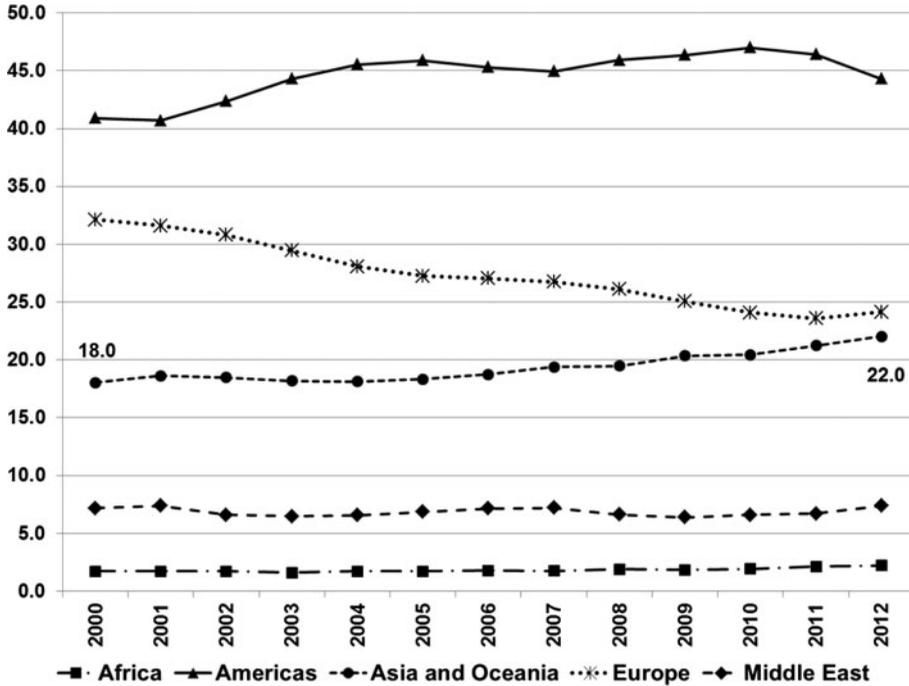


Fig. 1. Regional Military Expenditure in Percentage Terms (2000–2012). [Source: SIPRI Military Expenditure (MILEX) Database, Author’s Compilation].

Appendix C), as it tends to dwarf the defence spending by other countries. For example, the US military spending was more than four times that of China and between 11 and 14 times that of Japan, India and UK.

- Chinese military expenditure expanded by about 4.5 times during this period and its share of global expenditure increased from 3.3% in 2000 to 9.1% in 2012. While the above data may indicate significant military capability accretion by China, its defence expenditure has remained virtually static at around 2% in GDP terms.
- India’s defence expenditure increased by 1.7 times during the period and comprised an average 2.6% of global total.
- Japanese defence expenditure hovered around US\$60 Bn during this period and its global share indicates a steady decline from 5.4% in 2000 to 3.4% in 2012.
- Defence expenditure by France and UK that still retain considerable influence and interest in the region, was in the region of US\$60 Bn.

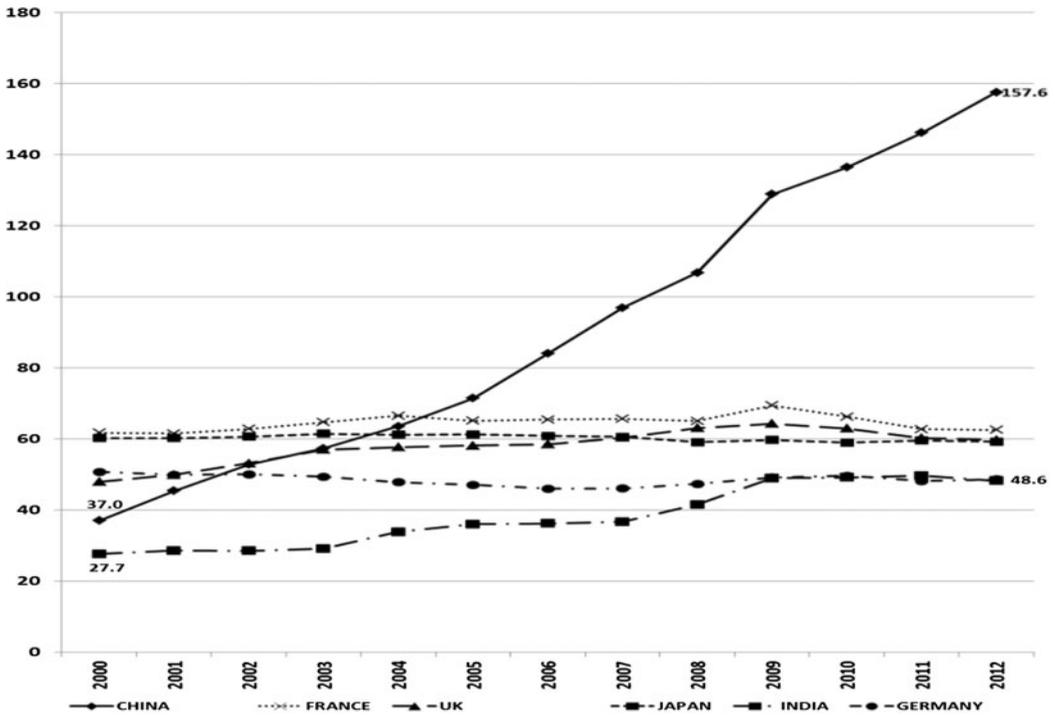


Fig. 2. Military Expenditure of Select Countries: (2000–2012) (Bn US\$, Constant 2011 Dollar Terms). [Source: SIPRI Military Expenditure (MILEX) Database, Author’s Compilation].³⁶

Geopolitical Framework and Theoretical Basis for Strategic Cooperation in the IOR

As would be obvious, most of the conflictual themes about the current strategic environment in the IOR find their basis in the traditional geo-political axiom of “political realism” of dyadic either/or, us/them type discourse. These analyses have also been predicated on pronouncements of eminent theorists like Mahan advocating pre-eminence of seapower, Mackinder’s land-centric Heartland theory and Spykman’s Rimland concept that has general correspondence with Corbett’s views on international geo-politics and strategic underpinnings.²⁰ On the subject of geo-politics, a contemporary scholar of geo-politics makes the case that given the ever-changing strategic environment, the older theories professed during the imperialist and Cold War era may no longer be relevant. Processes such as globalisation, rise of trans- and supra-national actors, the information revolution and climate change that have

intimate relationship with geography and politics besides other factors such as emerging thoughts on political architectures have altered the geo-political context. Therefore, the contemporary geo-politics should focus on a more inclusive and interconnected methodology.²¹ However, it has also been professed that the foundational thoughts of past theorists need not be discarded as such, but should serve as abstracts instead of their usage in traditional purist form.²²

On similar lines, an eminent strategist who has written extensively on the subject avers that significant changes in the global context require appropriate modifications to strategy formulations. This articulation is driven by the hypothesis that geography is an inescapable factor that shapes politics (policy) and strategy.²³ This particular pitch derives that geography has been a universal critical factor, albeit not the only one, to have multiple related dimensions. These include, but are not limited to, society, history, culture, ethics, organisation, information, intelligence and technology; all of which have pervasive strategic geographical connotations. Since all the imperatives have changed in varying measures across the world, both qualitatively and quantitatively, the strategy formulation must address these changes at the national, regional and international levels. The enthusiastic scholarly and public responses for the recent works of a journalist that have their roots in similar themes and contextual framework, besides a readable narrative of historiography, are apt pointers.²⁴ The fundamental takeaway that emerges from the above discussion is the importance of finding a *modus vivendi* for the common good by all the stakeholders given the strategic salience of the IOR.

Proposed Methodology

At first glance, the cross-cutting wide divergence among national quotients and perceptions among the resident and quasi-resident stakeholders in the IOR does not provide for a suitable aggregate for cooperative endeavours. Furthermore, the geographical spread of the IOR extending from South Africa, the littorals of the East Africa, Red Sea, Persian Gulf, South and South East Asia to Australia could also be considered too large a spatial construct for devising an overarching cooperative framework. However, some of the established regional mechanisms like ASEAN and its linked offshoots and working group aggregates like East Asia Summit (EAS), ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting (ADMM) and ADMM Plus that have overcome similar dilemmas can be cited as apt examples.

The suggested methodology for devising a strategic security framework for IOR is based on certain assumptions and these are:

- *Cooperative–Competitive–Conflictual Framework.* As has been recently suggested, the coexistence of cooperation, competition and conflict are inevitable in strategic interactions. Furthermore, pure cooperation even amongst the tightly interwoven formal alliances and a complete conflict (divergence) in the most adversarial of relationships, on a complete range of issues, are quite unlikely possibilities (Figure 3). Thus, the competitive part would tend to dominate the relationship continuum and it has been argued that “Competition implies that the contestants have much in common as well as things that divide them.”²⁵ It is thus assumed that the aforementioned postulation would drive the strategic underpinnings of the IOR stakeholders in the current globalised era.
- *Belief in Win–Win Game Theory Dynamics.* While deconstructing strategy apropos international relations in game theory terms, it has been suggested that inter-state behaviour essentially rested on rational behaviour as well as the three pillars of bargaining, mutual accommodation and avoidance of mutually damaging behaviour. The rationale was summarised by stating that:

In the terminology of game theory, most interesting international conflicts are not “constant-sum games” but “variable-sum games”: the sum of the gains of the participants involved is not fixed so that more for one inexorably means less for the

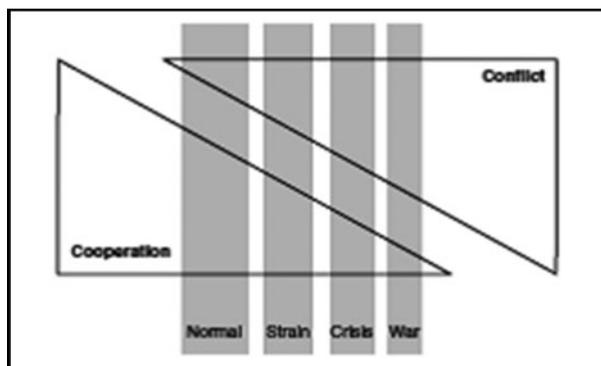


Fig. 3. Conflict/Cooperation Spectrum. [Source: Geoffrey Till, *Seapower: A Guide for the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Routledge, 2009), p. 19].

*other. There is a common interest in reaching outcomes that are mutually advantageous.*²⁶

If the key phrase “interesting times” from the above quote is juxtaposed with previously mentioned trends of an impending systemic change, strategic flux and uncertainty, preponderance of hedging behaviour, increasing intermeshing amidst economic turmoil, it can safely be assumed that most of the states would be amenable to a non-zero sum rational behaviour. This is not to say that conflicts with use of force with an internal and external locus would not occur, nonetheless these would remain few, besides being limited in their intensity and geography. Furthermore, aberrant behaviour by some states cannot be discounted, but these would be more in exception than the norm.

Considering the above assumptions to be true, it is feasible to formulate the broad contours for an overarching security framework for IOR. First and foremost, it would require a top down approach by arriving at a *grand rapprochement* among IOR stakeholders at the politico-strategic level. Undeniably, the strategic framework would require adaption and calibration to address the specific environmental imperatives of the Indian Ocean. The Indian Ocean by its diverse character also contains a veritable “noodle soup” of regional and sub-regional cooperative mechanisms, which vary from the African Union (AU) that addresses the whole range of issues related to the entire African continent to the recent formulation of BCIM (Bangladesh, China, India, Myanmar) with a sub-regional economic focus. This is not to say that such organisations are irrelevant or unnecessary but to emphasise that the notion of a collective Indian Ocean identity would have to be created. These regional/sub-regional constructs could even be accorded membership or dialogue partner status to enhance the participative nature of IOR security architecture.

The most appropriate organisation that has the requisite geographical spread and an adequate representation from virtually all the important stakeholders is the IOR-ARC (Indian Ocean Region Association for Regional Cooperation), recently rechristened as the IORA (Indian Ocean Rim Association). This regional organisation was established in March 1997 with an econo-commercial focus based on the principles of open and inclusive regionalism. The number of constituent members and dialogue partners has increased to 26 in November 2012, with Comoros and the USA being admitted as a member and dialogue partner, respectively. The idea of

expanding the IORA mandate to include maritime security was first mentioned in the communiqué released after the 15 November 2011 Council of Ministers (COM) meeting at Bengaluru.²⁷ The importance of the freedom of navigation as well as safety and security of sea lines of communication were again highlighted in the next two COM of IORA.²⁸ Some may question the suitability of IORA, since the regional construct has often attracted negative comments. In 2004, Kenneth McPherson had described IORA in “ugly duckling” and “sad history” terms.²⁹ Furthermore, during the 2007 meeting at Teheran, a decade since its formation, the South African Deputy Minister had stated “We do not have the luxury of allowing our association to die naturally or unnaturally.”³⁰

The suitability of IORA as an organisation to address the complex maritime security environment emerges not only from its open inclusive architecture but more importantly from the geographical spread and the strategic heft of the members and dialogue members, which to a large extent, is truly representative of IOR stakeholder community. The recent organisational vigour under the chair of India also indicates a renewed impetus, which by all estimates is likely to be sustained by Australia and Indonesia as the future chairpersons. Towards this end, a track 1.5 initiative “Indian Ocean Dialogue” was scheduled on 22–23 November 2013 with maritime security and enhanced oceanic linkages as the central theme.³¹ The outcomes and policy recommendations from this meeting would have been crucial to the evolution and progress of an Indian Ocean security structure concept. An important point that needs emphasis at this stage, is the need to move away from assertions such as extra-regional, if the oceans are not only defined but are to be understood as the world’s oldest commons so incisively brought out in Sardar Panikkar’s quote mentioned at the beginning of this paper.

IOR-ARC (IORA) and IONS Connection

One of the sub-themes that has gained quite a bit of traction is the feasibility of a connection between the IORA and Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) for addressing the regional maritime security challenges. The 35-member IONS is a voluntary military-to-military (M2M) initiative founded by the Indian Navy in February 2008 to develop greater mutual understanding and enhancing cooperative mechanisms with an Indian Ocean focus. At first glance, the commonality of member community between the two multilateral mechanisms and general correspondence of

purpose may indicate a tailor-made solution. However, M2M constructs are unique in certain aspects and these distinctive characteristics need to be understood in the correct perspective. First, the definition of “security” as such has changed radically and in its current framework is much more inclusive from the traditional politico-military bias, where military and non-military dimensions of national security were considered coterminous. The new definition of security includes military, economic, societal and environmental elements.³² This paradigm has been further extended through an area-sectoral conceptualisation to address the distinct security challenges through regional cooperative mechanisms.³³ Furthermore, M2M operates at the functional levels that addresses low-level, non-traditional and uncontroversial issues. While the symbolic content of such collaborations is high and some issues of contemporary salience are discussed at higher echelons, the primary aim is to foster service-to-service connection. For the kind of strategic purpose that is meant to be addressed in the instant case, a more holistic political–diplomatic–military milieu would be a more suitable mix. Therefore, IORA would need to evolve a different model, somewhat akin to ASEAN–ARF framework, that addresses the Indian Ocean security challenges at a higher strategy–policy plane. IONS, however, could remain associated with the IOR-ARC as a functional adjunct especially in the maritime security domain. On similar lines, smaller working groups, both formal and informal, engaged in various facets of maritime security like the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP) and Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP), could be linked and their mandate extended for addressing similar issues on a pan-Indian Ocean scale. The scope and possibilities of regional cooperative engagements in the Indian Ocean with the aim of delivering common public good span the entire range under the ambit of the new definition of security. An exhaustive study has already been carried out to explore and arrive at a broad integrated framework under the umbrella concept of the Indian Ocean Global Ocean Observing System (IOGOOS) Regional Alliance.³⁴ In this cross-cutting and multidimensional study, the security imperatives have been addressed in a comprehensive manner and these range from organisational, commercial, economic, non-military and military dimensions of maritime security, coastal–high seas environment management, to name a few. The crux lies in arriving at a larger consensus among the IOR stakeholders that a mandatory need exists for an overarching strategic purpose. Once this cardinal decision point has been reached, the

related intricacies are more of resources, administration and execution that could evolve as the process moves along.

Conclusion

To summarise, while the strategic salience of the Indian Ocean has increased in the global geo-strategic matrix, the regional security environment comes with its own peculiar dynamics. Indian Ocean, despite its rising significance has been recently described by an eminent historian as a “known and ignored, dismissed and described”³⁵ entity. The geographical imperatives, socio-cultural norms, economic-commercial dynamics, governance models, diverse national quotients, besides perceptual differences, provide for a complex mix of challenges. These complexities are further accentuated by the general uncertainty that has led the majority of stakeholders to adopt an attitude of hedging with conflictual themes occupying centre stage in strategic discourse. A deeper insight into the imperatives of globalisation, emerging geo-political thought and novel strategic theorems do provide for a grand strategic rapprochement for correspondence of interests, especially in the oceanic commons. However, to arrive at this win–win situation, a tack away from the prevailing zero-sum perspective is needed. Recent evidence of a reinvigorated IORA that has the appropriate geographical spread and representative membership content provides a suitable platform for evolving strategic security architecture to address Indian Ocean challenges. A handshake between IOR-ARC and IONS, seemingly a quick fix solution, may not be the optimal solution that requires a wider politico-diplomatic–military construct. As a final summation, it may appear that the seemingly intractable Indian Ocean security milieu, the so-called “wicked problems” and the suggested methodology that borders on idealism may not gel, but in a lyrical Shakespearean twist, it may be appropriate to conclude by stating “’Tis better to have [attempted] and failed than never to have [attempted] at all.”

Notes

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Appendix

Table 1. Measuring Systemic Change – Metrics and Indicators.

| Indicators | Supporting events |
|---|--|
| Ascending challenger(s) | Rise of China considered by many as peer or near peer competitor to the USA in near future |
| Declining leader | Perceived relative decline of the US- and Euro-centric strategic discourse |
| Parity | Meteoric rise of China and its emergence as a peer or near peer competitor to the USA |
| Territorial disputes and war joining possibilities | East and South China disputes, Indo-Pak mistrust and long-standing Sino-Indian land boundary question |
| Threat perception and realpolitik syndrome | Iranian and North Korean nuclear imbroglios, Syrian and Ukrainian crisis, Arab spring marked by increasing violence |
| Multiple rivalry “ripening” | Sino-Japanese standoff, simmering South China sea disputes, Indo-Pak rivalry, Sino-Indian mistrust, EU–US disconnection with Russia/China on Syria |
| Global-regional dis-synchronisation | Inter- as well as intra-state conflicts and crises situations largely concentrated in the Middle East and Asia; relative peace and stability in Europe and Latin America |
| System phase time | Shifting gravitational pulls of technological and economic–military developments in the Indo-Pacific |
| Bipolarisation | Dominant Sino-US (G2) bipolar discourse |
| Destabilizing innovation wave (K-wave) | The current 50 years Kondratieff Wave redistribution that started in post-Second World War scenario (the last major global armed conflict) during the mid-1950s seems to be coming to an end |
| Shifts in geographical focus of greatest productivity | Universally accepted shift to the Asia-Pacific |
| Commercial rivalry | Between the declining western led alliance and the emerging Asian powerhouses |
| Energy transitions | Shifting pattern of energy consumption to Asia-Pacific as opposed to hitherto Western slant; discovery of shale oil deposits in North America |

Table 1 (Continued)

| Indicators | Supporting events |
|--|---|
| Decaying world order architecture | Waning influence of UK, France and Russia, all permanent members of UN Security Council, in the global affairs |
| Leadership decline in international organisation participation | Exemplified by pre-emption in Iraq, Afghanistan and Libya |
| Relatively weak Kantian dynamics | Dominance of rivalry, increasing militarisation – resource competition – serial crises – misperceptions in Asia-Pacific which are in opposition to two of the Kantian trinity of conflict-suppressing factors of democratic peace, and the authority of international governmental organisations; economic interdependence, on the other hand, is deepening |

Table 2. Regional Military Expenditure (2000–2012) (Bn US\$, in Constant 2011 Dollar Terms).

| | | Year | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Region | | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 |
| Global Defence Expenditure (Bn US\$) | | 1120 | 1146 | 1215 | 1289 | 1362 | 1420 | 1468 | 1525 | 1605 | 1711 | 1739 | 1741 | 1733 |
| Africa | (Bn US\$) | 19.3 | 19.6 | 21.0 | 20.7 | 23.2 | 24.2 | 25.9 | 26.6 | 30.3 | 31.6 | 33.6 | 37.1 | 38.3 |
| | (% age global total) | 1.7 | 1.7 | 1.7 | 1.6 | 1.7 | 1.7 | 1.8 | 1.7 | 1.9 | 1.8 | 1.9 | 2.1 | 2.2 |
| Americas | (Bn US\$) | 458 | 466 | 515 | 571 | 620 | 652 | 665 | 685 | 737 | 793 | 817 | 808 | 768 |
| | (% age global total) | 40.9 | 40.7 | 42.4 | 44.3 | 45.5 | 45.9 | 45.3 | 44.9 | 45.9 | 46.4 | 47.0 | 46.4 | 44.3 |
| Asia and Oceania | (Bn US\$) | 202 | 213 | 224 | 234 | 247 | 260 | 275 | 296 | 312 | 348 | 355 | 369 | 382 |
| | (% age global total) | 18.0 | 18.6 | 18.5 | 18.2 | 18.1 | 18.3 | 18.7 | 19.4 | 19.5 | 20.4 | 20.4 | 21.2 | 22.0 |
| Europe | (Bn US\$) | 360 | 362 | 374 | 380 | 383 | 387 | 397 | 408 | 419 | 428 | 419 | 411 | 419 |
| | (% age global total) | 32.1 | 31.6 | 30.8 | 29.5 | 28.1 | 27.3 | 27.1 | 26.7 | 26.1 | 25.0 | 24.1 | 23.6 | 24.2 |
| Middle East | (Bn US\$) | 80.4 | 84.7 | 80.2 | 83.6 | 89.4 | 97.5 | 105 | 110 | 106 | 109 | 115 | 117 | 128 |
| | (% age global total) | 7.2 | 7.4 | 6.6 | 6.5 | 6.6 | 6.9 | 7.1 | 7.2 | 6.6 | 6.4 | 6.6 | 6.7 | 7.4 |

Source: SIPRI Military Expenditure (MILEX) Database, author's compilation.

Table 3. Military Expenditure-Select Countries (2000–2012) (Bn US\$, Constant 2011 Dollar Terms).

| | | Year | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------|--|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Country | | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 |
| USA | | 394.2 | 397.3 | 446.1 | 507.8 | 553.4 | 579.8 | 588.8 | 604.3 | 649.0 | 701.1 | 720.4 | 711.4 | 668.8 |
| China | | 37.0 | 45.4 | 52.8 | 57.4 | 63.6 | 71.5 | 84.0 | 96.9 | 106.8 | 128.9 | 136.5 | 146.2 | 157.6 |
| France | | 61.8 | 61.6 | 62.8 | 64.7 | 66.5 | 65.1 | 65.5 | 65.7 | 65.0 | 69.4 | 66.3 | 62.7 | 62.6 |
| UK | | 48.0 | 49.9 | 53.2 | 57.0 | 57.7 | 58.2 | 58.5 | 60.4 | 63.1 | 64.3 | 62.9 | 60.3 | 59.8 |
| Japan | | 60.3 | 60.3 | 60.7 | 61.5 | 61.2 | 61.3 | 60.9 | 60.6 | 59.1 | 59.7 | 59.0 | 59.6 | 59.2 |
| S Arabia | | 27.3 | 29.1 | 25.6 | 25.8 | 28.6 | 34.5 | 39.3 | 45.3 | 44.4 | 45.7 | 47.5 | 48.5 | 54.2 |
| India | | 27.7 | 28.6 | 28.5 | 29.2 | 33.9 | 36.1 | 36.2 | 36.7 | 41.6 | 49.0 | 49.2 | 49.6 | 48.3 |

Source: SIPRI Military Expenditure (MILEX) Database, author's compilation.