



Non-traditional Maritime Security Threats in the Indian Ocean Region

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The Indian Ocean Region (IOR) has emerged as the world's major energy and trade route. The IOR littorals are concerned about the vulnerabilities in the region due to various non-traditional maritime security threats such as piracy, maritime terrorism, climate change, illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, illegal immigration, and smuggling of arms and drugs. This paper analyses various causes and the patterns of the above-mentioned challenges and examines the effects of these threats on the IOR littorals. The paper concludes that multilateral cooperation is essential to combat the non-traditional maritime threats.

Introduction

In the current global security environment, non-traditional threats pose a grave challenge to national and international stability. These threats cannot be instantly mitigated by the traditional defences that states have erected to protect both their

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people and region. The maritime realm, given its vast, diverse, sometimes unregulated nature, is especially vulnerable to these threats.¹

The Indian Ocean Region (IOR) comprises 36 littorals and 14 adjacent hinterland states, populated by over three billion people. It handles about 40% of global trade and half of the world's container traffic traverses this ocean.² The Indian Ocean and its strategic waterways provide the shortest and most economical sea routes linking the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans.³

Since the end of Cold War, the security environment in the IOR has been quite volatile, and therefore, the focus of the regional security paradigm has shifted from state-centric traditional security threats to those posed by non-state entities.⁴ Traditionally, security is defined in terms of the ability of a state to protect its interests such as territorial integrity and sovereignty from external threats.⁵ However, in the international realm, the threat to security is posed not only by nations, but also by non-state actors, adding to the existing state-centric traditional challenges. This is because the traditional security paradigm does not address the rapidly growing non-traditional dimensions of security, like “the struggle for resources embedded in the pursuit of energy, environmental degradation, forced migration, international terrorism, and the propensity of non-state actors to engage in drugs and arms trafficking, money laundering and financial crimes”.⁶ There is a growing need to expand the traditional notion of security to address non-traditional threats, and thereby adopt a more comprehensive approach to security.⁷

Non-traditional security (NTS) threats are defined as challenges to the survival of people and states, which arise primarily from non-state sources.⁸ The non-traditional maritime security threats in the IOR range from various transnational crimes in the region ranging from piracy and terrorism, to various other challenges such as illicit trafficking of drugs and weapons, human trafficking, climate change, natural disasters, illegal migration and food shortages. Apart from being non-military in nature, these challenges are also transnational, and neither purely domestic nor totally inter-state.⁹ Non-traditional challenges can neither be prevented nor mitigated completely, and therefore, coping mechanisms essentially require collective regional and multilateral approaches. Experts are of the view that while hard security challenges in the maritime domain remain a familiar problem, the policymakers have a hard time conceptualizing non-traditional, transnational and human security issues, which do not respect national boundaries and which transcend institutional and policy stovepipes.¹⁰

This paper identifies NTS challenges in the IOR and outlines the primary causes of these threats and the dangers that they entail. This paper also enumerates the causes that intensify these threats, and enunciates the implications by explaining their trends over the years. Disorder at sea is likely to continue, and identifying the diverse causations and implications only makes it easier to formulate ways for able management.

Maritime Piracy

Piracy has been a recurrent maritime threat since the use of the sea. In fact, travel and trade accounts in the Indian Ocean since the 12th century have been rife with piracy. History tells that the Malabar Coast situated on the southwestern border of the Indian peninsula was pirate infested on account of its near-monopoly on the production of black pepper, and also its central role as the hub of transshipment within the monsoon navigation system.¹¹ Malabar's reputation for piracy has also been substantiated in great detail in the travelogues of Marco Polo and Moroccan traveller Ibn Battutah.¹² Portuguese and Arabic sources have also testified the continued involvement of piratical violence in the IOR.¹³ In those days, the immense wealth frequently traversing the sea lanes of the Indian Ocean aboard merchant ships provided a prized opportunity for piracy to thrive in the region.

In the 19th century, while piracy declined in the West, the crime bloomed in the Southeast Asian region. Subsequently, the arrival of the Dutch, Portuguese and the English increased the spice trade through the Straits of Malacca providing another lucrative target for the pirates in the region.¹⁴ However, by 1870, piracy in the Indian Ocean had declined with the increase in trade through land routes, and also through counter-piracy successes of the Dutch and British naval forces.¹⁵ The end of the 20th century witnessed an exponential rise in piracy in the IOR which called for a redefinition of the term, and its inclusion in UNCLOS 1982 as a crime against humanity.¹⁶

Though UNCLOS provides a universally accepted definition for piracy enunciating the scope of the jurisdiction of states to tackle piracy, yet this definition restricts piracy only to high seas, and so pirates have often evaded capture by sailing from high seas to territorial seas. This definition also does not offer states the legal basis for actions to be taken against the pirates committing crimes at sea.¹⁷ This gap was filled by the Convention on the Suppression of Unlawful Activities against the Safety of

Maritime Navigation (SUA Convention), which was adopted by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) in 1986.

Causes

Piracy is defined as a low risk criminal activity, which pays well and occurs primarily for one overriding reason that is opportunity.¹⁸ Often poverty is seen as a principal motivator of piracy. Widespread unemployment coupled with poverty and slow economic growth in the South Asian region towards the end of 20th century has been a cause for re-emergence of piracy.¹⁹ A RAND Report on piracy argues that the unprecedented effects of the Asian financial crisis in 1997 acted as a strong pull factor on piracy, drawing more people into maritime crime due to falling wages, higher food prices and job losses. Indonesia, having suffered acutely from the aftermath of the financial crisis and since 1997, has been consistently ranked as one of world's most pirate-prone region.²⁰ Likewise, lingering conflicts and prolonged periods of drought had destabilized the economic situation in Somalia since 2000, which enhanced the financial attractiveness of piracy in the region, making Somalia a hotbed for pirate groups.²¹

The massive increase in maritime traffic in the Indian Ocean that passes through the congested and narrow chokepoints, such as the Straits of Malacca, the Strait of Bab el-Mandeb, the Hormuz Strait is one of the important reasons for high incidence of piracy in the region. The bottlenecks often require ships to reduce speed significantly to ensure safe passage, which heightens their exposure to attacks.²²

The permissive environment, which exists within states and their territorial waters either due to corrupt political practices or under-funded law enforcement, supports the criminal infrastructure for piracy to flourish uninhibitedly.²³ The International Maritime Bureau (IMB) in its annual report of 2013 stated that in Philippines, Indonesia and Thailand, members of the administration and bureaucracy not only provide pirates invaluable information about activities taking place in the maritime commercial market, but also ensure that gangs are kept abreast of actions that law enforcement agencies undertake to counter their activities.²⁴

Trends

The Straits of Malacca and the Hormuz Strait are the most important strategic chokepoint in the IOR as they constitute the major global oil export passage-way.²⁵

The security of these oil arteries is integral to the security of energy supplies for the oil-importing countries. In the year 2000, pirate attacks in the Straits of Malacca reached a record high of 75 incidents.²⁶ The Straits of Malacca was declared the world’s top piracy hotspot by the IMB and placed in the war risk zone by Lloyd’s War Committee.²⁷ Piracy in the Straits of Malacca has, however, seen a decline from 79 attacks in 2005 to 50 in 2006, two attempts in 2008, one in 2009, and “close to zero incident level” in 2012–13, as illustrated in Figure 1.²⁸ The security situation has dramatically improved in the Straits of Malacca in recent years because of increased patrols by Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia and Thailand, and also due to on-board security measures.

According to the 2012 IMB report, pirate gangs operated with great impunity off the coast of Somalia, where acts of piracy were at peak in the year 2011.²⁹ Illegal fishing and dumping of toxic and nuclear waste by foreign vessels in the Somali waters had heavily constrained livelihood opportunities of the local fishermen. Thus, the

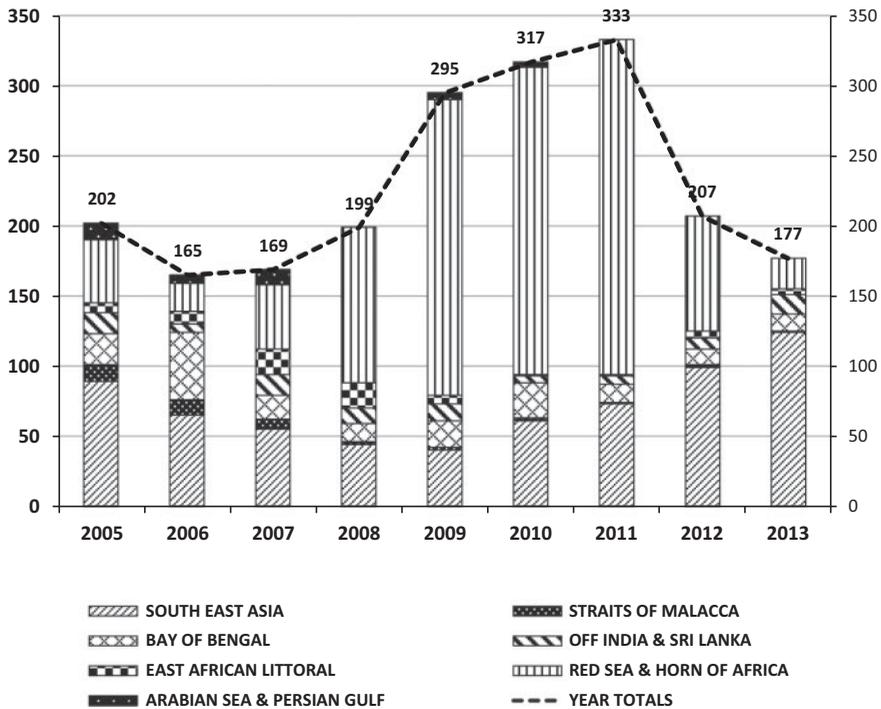


Fig. 1. Incidents of Maritime Piracy. Source: ICC IMB Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships 2013 Annual Report, Author’s Compilation.

financial attractiveness of earning ransom by capturing vessels appeared to be a lucrative business opportunity for them. However, in 2012 and 2013, Somalia witnessed a significant drop in the rate of attacks. This drop was due to active anti-piracy operations and increased presence of private armed guards on board ships.³⁰ The Gulf of Aden, which was considered a hotspot for pirates, has now witnessed a considerable drop in pirate attacks. Yet, vessels are advised to adhere to all precautionary measures and remain vigilant using all available means.³¹ The IMB report of 2014 highlighted that more than 50% of pirate attacks in 2013 had been off Indonesian waters. Most of these attacks are low-level opportunistic thefts and the IMB's Piracy Reporting Centre (PRC) works closely with the Indonesian Marine Police, who have increased maritime patrols and designated safe anchorage areas for vessels to use in some high-risk zones.³²

Maritime Terrorism

Over the past few years, there has been a modest yet a discernible rise in high-profile terrorist attacks at sea. Complicating the maritime threat picture is a growing speculation that a nexus could emerge between piracy and terrorism. It is often argued that pirates are motivated by private ends through financial gains, whereas terrorists are politically motivated, and they aim to influence governments through threat of violence at high seas. Maritime terrorism refers to the “undertaking of terrorist acts and activities within the maritime domain, using or against vessels or fixed platforms at sea or in port, or against any one of their passengers or personnel, against coastal facilities or settlements, including tourist resorts, port areas and port towns or cities”.³³ Maritime terrorism is defined by the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP) as “any illegal act directed against ships, their passengers, cargo or crew, or against sea ports with the intent of directly or indirectly influencing a government or group of individuals”.³⁴

Causes and Growing Nexus

The key vulnerabilities that have aggravated the menace of piracy also apply to terrorism and include inadequate coastal surveillance, lax port security and the overwhelming dependence of trade on passage through chokepoints.³⁵ These gaps and weaknesses provide terrorists with an opportunity to move, hide, and strike in a manner that is not possible on the land.

Experts are of the opinion that though their primary motivation has always been political in nature, maritime terrorism may also be conducted by terrorists to fund their onshore operations. In that sense, terrorists and pirates may have shared interests for using against ships at sea. Neither terrorists nor pirates are completely self-sufficient and both require some form of support in order to achieve their goals and objectives.³⁶ It is plausible that pirates and terrorists could collaborate and provide assistance to each other through money, arms and supplies. Terrorists lack the skills and experience needed to conduct maritime attacks, because unlike land-based operations where the targets are static, ships at sea are continuously moving. Thus, pirates provide them with the required insight.³⁷ Pirates on the other hand would gain monetarily from the terrorists for services rendered. Also, terrorists could provide the pirates with arms and supplies needed to conduct attacks and could help pirates secure a safe passage once on shore as well. Thus, any nexus between the two should be viewed with great concern.³⁸ Both terrorism and piracy are high-risk activities and any relationship formed between their perpetrators will exponentially increase this risk.³⁹

Trends

Interestingly, three of the most successful acts of maritime terrorism have been conducted in the IOR. Three terrorist groups – the Al Qaeda, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam (LTTE) and the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) – have been most active. While the attacks conducted by these groups have ultimately failed, they achieved noticeable tactical success.

The Gulf of Aden has witnessed numerous maritime terror attacks. In 2000, Al-Qaeda launched an unsuccessful attack on the USS Sullivan, and then finally succeeded in bombing the USS Cole, while the ship was refuelling at Aden.⁴⁰ Two years later, the French super tanker Limburg was rammed amidships in the Gulf of Aden by an explosive-laden dinghy. This attack was also believed to have been executed by the Al-Qaeda operatives in Yemen. Similar attacks have also been conducted against the Japanese oil tanker *M Star* in the Strait of Hormuz in July 2010. An armed group linked to Al-Qaeda had claimed responsibility for the attack.⁴¹

The LTTE created a naval arm known as the Sea Tigers, which raised money from amongst expatriate communities overseas, and conducted criminal activities that included drug smuggling. The Sea Tigers had successfully carried out *kamikaze*-style

suicide attacks against the Sri Lanka Navy (SLN). In 1998, *Princess Kash*, a Belize flagged vessel was hijacked by the LTTE. The Sri Lanka Air Force bombed it to prevent the LTTE from seizing the cargo.⁴² In October 2001, it carried out a coordinated suicide attack on the oil tanker *MT Silk Pride*. In 2009 the SLN successfully exploited the split in the Tigers' ranks, and defeated it.⁴³

The most brazen and sophisticated capabilities of maritime terrorism came to the fore when multiple terror attacks were conducted against Mumbai in November 2008. Ten terrorists entered Mumbai through sea route, sailing from Karachi across the Arabian Sea. They hijacked an Indian fishing trawler *Kuber*, murdered its crew and proceeded to Mumbai. Entry through the sea allowed the terrorists to avoid Indian security checkpoints at the frontier or at airports and sailing on an Indian vessel enabled them to avoid arousing the suspicion of the Indian coast guard.⁴⁴ The attack was conducted by the LeT. The Mumbai attacks clearly demonstrated that the terrorists were proficient in navigation techniques using a global positioning system (GPS) and were well trained to operate high-speed inflatable craft.⁴⁵

Organized Crime at Sea

Organized crime at sea such as human trafficking, arms and drugs smuggling is being increasingly linked to global patterns of violence. The sea provides an easy way for international crime syndicates, unscrupulous traders and non-state actors to trade illegally, or to provide belligerents with highly sophisticated weapons. The prevalence of conflicts and insurgencies provides the arms smugglers with a ready market in areas such as the Horn of Africa, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka and Indonesia.⁴⁶ Drugs and arms smuggling is rife in much of the Indian Ocean.⁴⁷

Human Trafficking

Human trafficking is also of primary concern in the IOR. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), there are at least 2.45 million victims of human trafficking, of which 1.36 million were in Asia and the Pacific.⁴⁸ The UN Migrant Smuggling Protocol on migrant smuggling and related conduct is defined as "either procurement of an illegal entry or illegal residence of a person; into or in a country of which that person is not a national or permanent resident; for the purpose of financial or other material benefit".⁴⁹

Causes

In the past decade, the issue of illegal migration through sea has been increasingly linked to organized criminal groups that now largely control the smuggling and trafficking of people. The major reason behind this sudden surge is the fact that people-traffickers and smugglers make high profits while risking relatively short prison sentences in comparison with drug dealers.⁵⁰ They are mostly connected to other transnational criminal networks involved in narcotics, arms trafficking, money laundering and counterfeit documentation.⁵¹

Trends

Many undocumented workers in the IOR states have relied on people-smugglers to enter their final destinations illegally. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Report released in August 2014 revealed that more than 20,000 people risked their lives in irregular sea crossings in South East Asia in the first half of the year.⁵² The June 2012 outbreak of inter-communal violence in Myanmar's Rakhine state led to mass immigration of the Rohingyas through the Bay of Bengal. Thus, the UNHCR since 2013 has been particularly concerned about the incessant increase in the influx of the Rohingyas into Indonesia and Malaysia.⁵³

There has been an increase in irregular migration from Somalia and Djibouti in the Horn of Africa across the Gulf of Aden to Yemen.⁵⁴ The largest numbers of refugees in Yemen are Somali nationals.⁵⁵ Migrants from Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran and Sri Lanka are smuggled by sea to Australia, Malaysia and Indonesia are used as transit countries from where smugglers dispatch migrants on sea journeys to Australia.⁵⁶ Indonesia is one of the countries that smugglers use as points of departure.⁵⁷ Smugglers use small boats, large fishing trawlers and cargo ships for moving people.

Arms Smuggling

The rise of transnational crime including illicit trafficking in firearms or arms smuggling in the IOR seriously threaten political, economic and social well-being of the IOR states. Criminal networks and illicit arms dealers also play important roles in the black markets from which terrorists and drug traffickers procure some of their weapons.

Causes

A heavy influx of arms since the Cold War has also left a legacy of arms smuggling in various sub-regions of the IOR. The conflict in Afghanistan led to a major demand in the illegal arms trade in the IOR, conducted along maritime as well as overland routes.⁵⁸ Internal conflict and instabilities in the IOR have the potential to draw illegal arms; also, the high volume of inter-regional seaborne commerce traversing the IOR and the variable quality of port state controls further complicates the detection of illicit arms shipments.⁵⁹

Trends

The salient trends in arms smuggling are the flows of small arms and light weapons (SALW) from Iran to Yemen and onwards to the Eastern Mediterranean via the Suez Canal, and between the Arabian Peninsula and the Horn of Africa.⁶⁰ Across the IOR, the most common types of weapons that are trafficked fall into the SALW category. Trafficked weapons in this category include anti-aircraft guns, anti-personnel mines, anti-tank guided missiles, anti-tank mines, assault rifles, C-4 plastic explosives, hand grenades, handguns/side arms, sniper rifles and ammunition.⁶¹

Drug Trafficking

Drug trafficking is the most lucrative way of generating funds to fuel terrorist activities and insurgencies around the region.⁶² Opium (poppy) is cultivated in two main areas referred to as the “Golden Triangle”, which incorporates Thailand, Myanmar and Laos; and the area of the “Golden Crescent” that comprises of Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran.⁶³ Afghanistan is the leading producer of heroin in the region and it is estimated that two-thirds of the world’s opium is cultivated in South and Southeast Asia.⁶⁴

Causes

The end of the Afghan War and repatriation of the refugees led to expanded local heroin production.⁶⁵ It received a boost from the increasing potential of opium farming by Central Asian countries like Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, which maintain ethnic links with Afghanistan.⁶⁶ Drug trafficking, and the laundering of drug money in the IOR represent a major challenge for maintaining good order at sea.

Trends

Although the favoured trafficking routes from South Asia to Europe lie overland through Central Asia, Russia and the Baltic States, narcotics are smuggled into Pakistan and India, from where these are shipped or airlifted to other destinations.⁶⁷ According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNDOC), a review of drug seizures indicated an increase in the trafficking of heroin from Pakistan, Thailand and India to the east African countries. Increased seizures of heroin with Nigerian connections bound for Uganda, Tanzania and Kenya through Ethiopia have also been noted as well.⁶⁸ In January 2014, the Canadian warship HMCS *Toronto*, intercepted a vessel carrying 280 kilograms of heroin about 40 nautical miles off the coast of Tanzania.⁶⁹ In the first half of 2014, several boats carrying drugs have been intercepted by the ships of Combined Task Force (CTF) 150 operating under the Combined Maritime Forces (CMF).⁷⁰

Climate Change: A Threat to Environmental Security

The IOR is a reminder of the fact that the international community is still struggling to develop a suitable response to the threat of global warming and sea level rise.⁷¹ The Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report released in March 2014 set off warning bells across the world, particularly in the IOR countries that are vulnerable to sea level rise. The Report clearly states that if left unchecked, soaring carbon emissions will magnify the risk of conflict, hunger, floods, drought and water-related food shortages. It clearly states that the impact of climate change would not only be severe but also irreversible.⁷² Several studies reveal that climate change is likely to aggravate “inter-state” and “intra-state” competition in the region over natural resources, especially fresh water.⁷³ As around 40% of Asia’s four billion inhabitants live within 100 km of the coastline, the effect of sea-level rise is likely to hit this region the hardest.⁷⁴

Sea temperatures in the Indian Ocean are rising more rapidly than elsewhere in the world. The increasing pace of melting of glaciers and mountain snows has added to the rise in sea levels, and also begun to adversely impact the river water flow and consequently, the generation on hydropower. The IPCC Report also reveals that coastal regions and low-lying areas would increasingly experience submergence, coastal erosion and coastal flooding.⁷⁵ For countries like Maldives, Kiribati and Tuvalu, which face the serious risk of submergence, climate change has become an existential

threat.⁷⁶ Projected sea-level rise could affect millions of people living in low lying areas of Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, India, Vietnam, Myanmar and Indonesia.⁷⁷ This also poses a threat of coastal erosion to the ecologically sensitive areas such as beaches, mangroves and coastal wetlands.

According to an Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) Report of 1995, around 50% of global natural disasters occur in the IOR which is now termed the “World’s Hazard Belt”.⁷⁸ Cyclones, floods, tsunamis and earthquakes are the most devastating natural hazards that hit the region frequently. Climate change accompanied with environmental degradation and increasing competition for natural resources will be accompanied by major security implications for the IOR littoral countries.⁷⁹

Rising Threat to Fish Stocks

Fish stocks in the IOR continue to be adversely affected by illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing, especially in the important tuna-rich waters of countries like Seychelles, Madagascar, Mauritius and Comoros.⁸⁰ As of 2007, the Western Indian Ocean was amongst the major fishing areas with the highest proportion (71–80%) of exploited marine fishery resources.⁸¹ In the South-West Indian Ocean and Southern Ocean, sophisticated IUU fishing operators have decimated Patagonian tooth fish stocks.⁸² In addition to depletion of several fish species with broader consequences for food supply, the problem of overfishing in the IOR is closely tied to the loss of economic benefits and livelihood of the island states. IUU fishing in the IOR also occurs in the exclusive economic zones (EEZs) of coastal states that lack capacity and governance to check the crime.⁸³ The culprits are often seasoned and sophisticated foreign flagged operators decimate ocean resources and venture into coastal waters where they compete with local subsistence fishermen for depleted resources.⁸⁴ At times, local fishermen also use illegal fishing gear or employ incorrect fishing methods, as they are more lucrative than the traditional methods.

Response to NTS Threats in IOR

The NTS threats cause varying impact on the impact on the IOR nations. For instance, the Western Indian Ocean has witnessed a significant reduction in pirate attacks since 2013, and the incidents involving the use of sophisticated weapons by pirates have also decreased from 43 in 2011 to three in 2013.⁸⁵ This decline is

primarily a result of effective implementation, by owners and crews, of the “Best Management Practices” (BMP).⁸⁶ These measures mostly include increasing the speed of the ship, learning escape and avoidance manoeuvres; raising of ships’ freeboard; use of barbed and electric wires over-hanging on the outboard of the ships, water cannons or projected nets; use of debilitating loudspeakers and flares; development of “strongholds” (safe areas for the crew); use of radars and cameras; keeping sailors constantly alert; reporting entries in risk areas; and sending daily reports to authorities.⁸⁷ The UNODC’s Counter Piracy Programme has been actively assisting states in the IOR to enhance their legal capacity to prosecute pirates, training law enforcement and judicial personnel, and refurbishing and upgrading courts and prisons.⁸⁸

Terrorist groups have become increasingly motivated to generate funds through criminal activity to sustain organizational capabilities. As the single largest source of illicit opium and heroin worldwide, the narcotics trade is both a major cause and consequence of criminality and insecurity in Afghanistan; furthermore, it is a major source of income for the Taliban.⁸⁹ The rampant trafficking of illegal drugs and smuggling of arms in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Myanmar and Thailand provides nourishment to insurgency and terrorism in India. It is a well-known fact that the insurgents operating in India’s north-eastern states obtain arms and explosives via fishing boats across the Andaman Sea.⁹⁰

The extreme weather conditions in the IOR seriously affect most states in the region. Besides worsening droughts, and increasing fires and flooding in Australia and New Zealand, there are apprehensions that global warming could threaten ecologically sensitive areas such as the Great Barrier Reef and the sub-Antarctic islands.⁹¹ Saltwater incursion already threatens the Sunderbans National Park along the Bay of Bengal.⁹² India is already home to millions of illegal Bangladeshi immigrants, and is likely to face further increased levels of refugee influx from Bangladesh in future as it is already losing land to coastal erosion.⁹³ Spill-over effects from the massive scale of such displacements would likely enhance socio-political instabilities such as resource competition, ethnic tensions and infrastructural pressures.⁹⁴

The Way Ahead

Unfortunately, despite a shared heritage of colonial subjugation, common maritime threats and an increasing dependence on seaborne trade for their existence, the IOR

has witnessed minimal maritime bonding amongst its littorals. While these commonalities and drivers should have encouraged a strong sense of supra-regional cohesion and identity, issues about the sea have regrettably not been given the importance they deserve.⁹⁵ The IOR is noted for its complex sub-regional geopolitical and geostrategic associations, each with its own vested interest. Cooperation occurs mostly in the spheres of economy and trade, rather than in security, and is largely hampered by distrust and lack of interaction. The task of ensuring the security of waterways, especially of strategic chokepoints in the IOR, is beyond the capacity of a single littoral state.

Until lately, maritime security was not included within the agenda of IORARC (now IORA). However, it is promising that under the chairmanship of India from 2011 to 2012, this major void was filled. Much is gained from cooperative regional approach that promotes consultation, not confrontation; reassurance, not deterrence; transparency, not confidentiality; and interdependence, not unilateralism.⁹⁶ In such circumstances, navies can contribute towards enhancing maritime security, managing disasters, providing humanitarian assistance and limiting environmental security challenges. Regional cooperation can therefore be a force multiplier and is desirable in the vast and relatively poorly policed Indian Ocean. To work together, these nations, who have vested interest in maritime security, would need to defeat these threats and challenges. The Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) and Milan are consultative and cooperative efforts, which can be used to find commonality regarding the growing asymmetric threat.⁹⁷ Multilateral naval exercises such as the “Komodo 2014” should bolster future efforts of IOR nations to counter the challenge of climate change.⁹⁸ It is imperative to continue combined international efforts to tackle the NTS challenges at sea. The fight against these challenges is a multilateral endeavour that requires global cooperation and resolve.

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 - b) any act of voluntary participation in the operation of a ship or of an aircraft with knowledge of facts making it a pirate ship or aircraft, and any act of inciting or of intentionally facilitating an act described before" (December 1982).
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