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EDITORIAL ESSAY

Research agendas for the Indian Ocean Region

1. Introduction

One of the principal commitments of the *Journal of the Indian Ocean Region (JIOR)* is to facilitate a regional voice in the identification, research and analysis of policy issues of common regional concern. This implies the acceptance and encouragement of eclectic frameworks and philosophical predispositions of local, national, regional and global orientations, of multiple agendas, and of a true openness to critical reflection. However, the Journal's central focus on issues of common regional interest and concern, by implication, has as its ultimate outcome, the development of programmes directed towards the betterment of the life chances of Indian Ocean communities and peoples. This necessitates the acquisition of policies aimed at facilitating the creation of just, peaceful and resilient localities, communities and states in the Indian Ocean Region. To ensure this outcome, the Indian Ocean Region is replete with policy questions that necessitate collective state responses.

The aim of this editorial essay is to present the views of some of the members of the *JIOR* international editorial board on what they consider to be important research issues for the Indian Ocean Region. These issues are discussed under six broad interrelated and overlapping headings – geopolitical change, state security, maritime jurisdiction and security, environmental security, literary and cultural studies and regionalism.

2. The changing geopolitical context

In global terms, the Indian Ocean has traditionally been the neglected ocean and one that has been seen to be marginal to global centres of power and conflict. The region and its peoples were perceived by the European powers as being primarily suitable and freely available for colonisation and exploitation and would thus likely remain dependent and underdeveloped for the foreseeable future. Thus, despite the existence of ancient civilisations and a wide array of sophisticated indigenous peoples, it was thought that, since the Indian Ocean Region contained no global power, it would continue to remain peripheral to global geopolitics and geo-economics.

It has been suggested that there are at least five interrelated reasons why Western observers, in particular, have previously tended to underestimate the geostrategic importance of the Indian Ocean Region (Chaturvedi 2009). First, since some commentators see the region as primarily comprising Third World states, then by association the region has been accorded a lower level of significance compared with other oceans, especially the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. Second, the Northern-centric, primarily English-based system of global knowledge has contributed to a generalised level of ignorance about the region and about regional states.

Northern-Western resources were unlikely to support Indian Ocean educational programmes when better economic returns were perceived to exist elsewhere. Some Western scholars have felt a sense of hesitancy about the use of the term 'Indian Ocean', if only because it implies that India is the centre (Pearson 2008, p. 13). Indeed, questions have been raised as to whether the term can even be used as a viable category of inquiry and analysis (Pearson 2008, p. 287).

Third, since the region is a former arena of European colonial competition, to some degree, residual core-periphery values of social, economic and political superiority and security dependency continue to prevail. Fourth, there is a relative paucity of reliable writing from students of international affairs on the geostrategic importance of the Indian Ocean Region and of the geopolitics of regional states. Finally, the geopolitical orientation of many Indian Ocean regional states has tended to be away from the ocean and has been directed internally for reasons of economic and political stability or towards other states and regions of perceived greater geo-economic significance.

From a situation of relative neglect, however, the twenty-first century has seen a global upsurge in interest in the Indian Ocean Region on the part of policy-makers, business people and academics, associated in part with a growing realisation of its enhanced geostrategic importance. The end of the Cold War, increasing globalisation, India's opening up and Look East policy, the end of apartheid in South Africa, Australia's Look West policy and the burgeoning concern over an array of non-traditional security threats, especially in relation to energy security (Rumley and Chaturvedi 2005), place new emphasis on the Indian Ocean environment in its broadest sense and especially the secure and sustainable use and management of that environment both on and in as well as below the ocean itself.

In terms of international trade, the Indian Ocean is now the world's most important route for international maritime long-haul cargo. For example, the Indian Ocean is now the world's most important energy routeway. In 2007, for example, half of global daily oil production was moved by tankers on fixed maritime routes. Since approximately 36% of the world's oil imports derive from the Middle East, secure interregional oil shipments through the Indian Ocean are vital to world prosperity. Oil import security is especially important for Japan (80% of oil imports from the Middle East), China (39%), Europe (21%) and the United States (16%). Furthermore, in 2006, more than 80% of the world's seaborne trade in oil passed through only three Indian Ocean choke points – Strait of Hormuz (40%), Strait of Malacca (35%) and Bab el-Mandab (8%).

What this means, among other things, is that the Northern economic powers and the developing world economic powers of China and India (and each of their respective navies) possess a legitimate interest in the security of sea lanes (also sometimes referred to as sea *lines*) of communication (SLOCs) as well as a special concern for the stability and geopolitical orientation of states proximate to the entrances and exits to the ocean. In this regard, apart from the troubled Horn of Africa, at least 11 regional states are critical to the free flow of global sea trade – Australia, India, Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia, Mozambique, Oman, Singapore, South Africa, United Arab Emirates and Yemen. Since these states represent more than half of its membership, then this means that the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC), formed in 1997, is potentially an extremely

important regional grouping for the construction of a cooperative security regime in the Indian Ocean Region. This implies the necessity of broadening the agenda of IOR-ARC, not only to breathe new life into economic cooperation, but, more importantly, into a wide array of potentially mutually beneficial cooperative endeavours (Rumley and Chaturvedi 2004).

The Indo-Pacific Rim: an old and new geopolitical theatre

The Pacific and the Indian Oceans are now bringing about a dynamic coupling as seas of freedom and of prosperity. A 'broader Asia' that broke away geographical boundaries is now beginning to take on a distinct form. Our two countries [Japan and India] have the ability – and the responsibility – to ensure that it broadens yet further and to nurture and enrich these seas to become seas of clearest transparency. (Abe 2007)

In 'Confluence of the Two Seas', Japanese Prime Minister, Shinzo Abe, gave an eloquent speech to the Indian Parliament in August 2007. He advocated the idea that Japan and India, as like-minded maritime democracies, should promote freedom and prosperity in the 'broader Asia'. The Japanese Foreign Ministry had been promoting a value-oriented diplomacy, emphasising universal values such as freedom, democracy, human rights, the rule of law and the market economy, as a new pillar of Japanese foreign policy and envisioned an 'arc of freedom and prosperity' along the outer rim of the Eurasian landmass (MOFA 2007). This 'broader Asia' would be linked with the United States, Australia, and other Pacific states, evolving into an immense network that would allow people, goods, capital, and knowledge to flow freely.

Asia, comprising half the world's population and one-third of the global economy, has the potential to reach an unprecedented level of prosperity and freedom in this century. The term 'broader Asia' may be insufficient for describing the dynamism in this region since Asia faces the two great oceans. Asia's dynamism comes from the seas, and the term 'Indo-Pacific Rim' perhaps reflects it more properly. The offshore island chain in the two oceans creates a series of marginal seas along the Eurasian continent – including the Sea of Okhotsk, the Sea of Japan, the East and South China Seas, the Andaman Sea, the Bay of Bengal, and the Arabian Sea. As the classical American geostrategist Nicholas Spykman pointed out, these marginal seas constitute a 'maritime highway' which has contributed to the development of Eurasian coastal areas by providing easy and cheap sea lines of communication (Spykman 1944, p. 24).

During the Cold War, stability in Asia was maintained by the balance between the sea power of the United States and Japan and the land power of the Soviet Union, China and India. The Indian Ocean, which had been an 'American lake' since the end of World War II, ceased to be so by the 1970s (Bindra 1970, p. 200). In 1950, the Soviet Navy was a 'poor joke', but, by 1970, it became 'the second largest and most modern navy of the world' with new technologies such as anti-ship missiles, electronic warfare and ocean surveillance (Herzfeld 1971). After 1967, the British withdrawal east of Suez drew the Soviet Navy into the Indian Ocean, especially from Vladivostok. An increasing Soviet naval presence in the Indian Ocean threatened the vital oil shipping lanes of key US allies (Lim 2005, p. 109). Thereafter, the US Navy

sought to regard the Pacific and Indian Oceans as ‘a single, strategic entity’ (Hattendorf 2004, p. 9). In fact, the US Seventh Fleet came to cover both the Western Pacific and Indian Oceans.

Robert Kaplan in his *Foreign Affairs* essay emphasised the growing importance of the Indian Ocean but also reminded us of its significance and relevance to the Pacific (Kaplan 2009). Now that the Cold War is over, the balance of power in Asia is being destabilised given the growing sea power of China and India. China, relieved of Soviet pressure across land borders, has shifted its focus to the sea, pressing on the vital straits connecting the Indian and Pacific Oceans (Lim 2005, pp. 140–141). The United States feels that it needs to contain Chinese maritime ambitions in the Western Pacific. However, the fact that the Western Pacific and the Western Indian Oceans, in which the US Navy maintains major combat power, are piracy hot spots implies that the United States cannot maintain dominance in both oceans.

In short, Asia faces two great oceans, and energy and commodities move between them. The narrow Straits of Malacca and Singapore do not separate but link the two oceans, and the sea power balance in both oceans influence each other. This is a geopolitical situation, and a key task for today’s strategic researchers in the Indo-Pacific Rim is to develop geostrategy that reflects the fact that the United States needs to seek, as Kaplan argued, ‘indispensability’, rather than dominance (Kaplan 2009).

3. Basic dimensions of Indian Ocean state security

It is no coincidence that, in the Brundtland Report, which was published in the final stages of the Cold War period, the global implications of the interdependence of society, economy, politics and environment were explicitly enunciated for the first time, and the centrality of a multidimensional post-realist concept of security was affirmed (Brundtland 1990). Thus, for example, ecologically sustainable development was seen to be necessary in order to maintain *environmental security*. Second, economic participation needed to be maximised to guarantee *economic security*. Economic inequalities would likely lead to social *insecurity*. Third, representation and participation ought to be maximised in order to ensure *political security*. Clearly, while environmental movements can have an impact on political security, government policies will influence the extent of environmental security. In sum, the degree of stability and security, and thus peace and conflict among and within states, are determined by this set of interrelationships (Rumley 1998).

Later in this essay, a research agenda for environmental security will be outlined. It is contended here that there is also considerable scope for the analysis of other more traditional (but nonetheless related) security issues directed at both peace and conflict questions. Research directed at monitoring various security elements over time and towards the critical analysis of Indian Ocean state security policies could potentially contribute to greater regional stability. For the sake of brevity, five basic dimensions of state security are considered here – traditional military security; the ‘success’ of the state as measured by the failed state index; human development; human rights; and economic security.

Traditional military security

The Indian Ocean is once again becoming an arena for geostrategic rivalry among great powers reinforced by the ‘great base race’ around the Region. The result is an ‘Indian-Oceanic arc of militarisation’ stretching from Egypt to Indonesia and Australia’ (Chaturvedi 2009, p. 346). In 2008, the Indian Ocean Region contained two of the world’s top military spenders – Saudi Arabia and India (Freeman *et al.* 2009). Furthermore, almost half of Indian Ocean states possess armed forces in excess of 100,000 and or military expenditure levels in excess of 3% of GDP (see Table 1).

Six states have armed forces in excess of 400,000 – in order, India, Pakistan, Vietnam, Iran, Burma and Egypt. However, the size of the armed forces is not a good predictor of the degree of state militarisation (that is, the size of the armed forces as a percentage of state population). Five other Indian Ocean states have militarisation levels above 1% – in order, Brunei, Singapore, Oman, Bahrain and Djibouti (see Table 1). Of all 11 states, six have military expenditures greater than 3% of GDP – Pakistan, Brunei, Singapore, Oman, Bahrain and Djibouti. However, four other regional states have similar military expenditure priorities – Saudi Arabia, Burundi, Sudan and Kuwait (see Table 1). In short, on one measure or another, approximately one-third of all Indian Ocean states place a relatively high expenditure priority on

Table 1. Traditional security indicators in the Indian Ocean Region (states with >100,000 armed forces and/or 3%+ GDP military expenditure).

State	Size of armed forces 2003	Militarisation (force as % pop)	Military expenditure (% GDP 2008)
Bahrain	11,000	1.38	3.4
Bangladesh	126,000	0.08	1.1
Botswana	9,000	0.46	3.0
Brunei	7,000	1.75	3.6
Burma	439,000	0.89	1.3
Burundi	45,000	0.54	4.9
Djibouti	10,000	1.11	4.1
Egypt	423,000	0.51	2.5
Ethiopia	163,000	0.20	2.1
India	1,200,000	0.10	2.5
Indonesia	302,000	0.13	1.2
Iran	440,000	0.59	2.9
Kuwait	16,000	0.53	3.9
Malaysia	104,000	0.41	2.1
Oman	42,000	1.50	10.7
Pakistan	610,000	0.34	3.1
Philippines	106,000	0.12	0.9
Saudi Arabia	106,000	0.41	9.3
Singapore	73,000	1.55	4.1
Sri Lanka	152,000	0.75	2.8
Sudan	105,000	0.25	4.4
Thailand	314,000	0.46	1.3
Vietnam	484,000	0.71	2.1
Yemen	67,000	0.28	5.1

Source: FIRST 3.0 (2010)

traditional military security. Critically evaluating the relevance of this priority in the context of alternative human developmental and other priorities aimed at creating peaceful and sustainable regional communities is a complex and challenging research task.

Nonetheless, such priorities clearly represent a response to either perceived intra-regional threat and/or to a desire to assert state territorial control over actual or potential intra-state conflict. This is important from the perspective of regional stability since, in 2008, the Indian Ocean Region contained more than half of the world's major armed conflicts, all of which were intrastate – so-called “‘one sided’ violence against civilians’. Furthermore, most of the world's ‘least peaceful states’ were located in the Indian Ocean Region in 2009 (Stepanova 2009).

State ‘success’

As already indicated, one of the common characteristics of the Indian Ocean Region is that it has enjoyed a significant degree of conflict for control of resources and territory from the European colonial powers, the legacy of which endures to this day. The well-known violence and yet not fully chronicled atrocities against indigenous peoples and the colonial imposition of centralised states with boundaries incorporating and/or bisecting nations inevitably created a dislocation with the state. As Sugata Bose has put it so eloquently: ‘The Indian Ocean realm experienced a sea change in the concept of sovereignty in the age of high imperialism, which has lingered as colonialism’s most poisoned legacy’ (2006, p. 26). It therefore comes as no surprise that the Indian Ocean Region contains close to half the number of states that fall into the first global quartile of the failed state index. The failed state index is a composite measure of 12 indicators of state vulnerability – demographic pressures, refugees/ internally displaced persons (IDPs), group grievance, human flight, uneven development, economic decline, delegitimation of the state, public services, human rights, security apparatus, factionalised elites, and external intervention.

For 2008, 177 states were rank ordered on the sum of the total scores for each indicator with the latter ratings placed on a scale of 0 (most stable) to 10 (least stable) (Foreign Policy 2009). In the Indian Ocean Region, 40% of states (a total of 20 states) were located in the upper quartile on this index. On the other hand, only six regional states were in the most stable or ‘successful’ group, five of which are IOR-ARC members – Australia, Mauritius, Oman, Singapore and UAE (see Table 2).

As has been pointed out, weak states pose a threat to regional and global stability since they are sources of conflict and abuses of human rights and are potential breeding grounds for terrorism that can have local, regional and international impacts. It has been argued that the creation of policies designed to strengthen these states could well be central to future global stability (Fukuyama 2004, p. 120). Contributing to the design of such policies is thus potentially of global significance.

Human development

For a long time, the concept of development seemed to be synonymous with *economic* development. However, since 1990, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has produced annual reports that aim to place *people* at the centre of development through the exploration of issues associated with poverty,

Table 2. The failed state index: Indian Ocean states 2008.

Indian Ocean State	Failed State Index	Global Rank
Somalia	114.7	1
Zimbabwe	114.0	2
Sudan	112.4	3
Iraq	108.6	6
Afghanistan	108.2	7
Pakistan	104.1	10
Burma	101.5	13
Kenya*	101.4	14
Ethiopia	98.9	16
Yemen*	98.1	18
Bangladesh*	98.1	19
Uganda	96.9	21
Sri Lanka*	96.7	22
Burundi	95.7	24
Nepal	95.4	25
Malawi	93.8	28
Iran*	90.0	38
Egypt	89.0	43
Laos	89.0	44
Rwanda	89.0	45
	global quartile	
Bhutan	87.3	48
Cambodia	87.3	49
Comoros	86.3	52
Philippines	85.8	53
Zambia	84.2	60
Indonesia*	84.1	62
Swaziland	82.4	65
Lesotho	81.8	67
Madagascar*	81.6	68
Tanzania*	81.1	70
Mozambique*	80.7	72
Djibouti	80.6	74
Thailand*	79.2	79
Maldives	78.8	81
India*	77.8	87
Saudi Arabia	77.5	89
	global quartile	
Vietnam	76.9	94
Malaysia*	68.9	115
Botswana	68.8	116
Brunei Darussalam	68.1	118
Seychelles	67.7	120
South Africa*	67.4	122
Kuwait	63.4	125
Bahrain	59.0	133

Table 2 (Continued)

Indian Ocean State	Failed State Index	Global Rank
	global quartile	
Qatar	51.9	138
UAE*	51.8	139
Oman*	47.2	146
Mauritius*	44.7	148
Singapore*	33.8	160
Australia*	25.9	170

Note: *member of IOR-ARC.

Source: Foreign Policy (2009).

longevity and education, for example. In short, UNDP for the past two decades has been in the process of describing and analysing various aspects of social insecurity and has developed a 'human development index' as part of this research programme. The human development index (HDI) is a composite of three basic and essential dimensions of human existence – a long and healthy life, access to knowledge and a decent standard of living (UNDP 2009).

The Indian Ocean Region contains only six states that fall into the global category of very high human development – Australia, Singapore, Brunei, Kuwait, Qatar and UAE, while the majority of regional states are classified as medium human development. Clearly particular developmental strategies need to be created for the seven low human development states, nearly all of which are in Africa (see Table 3).

Human rights and freedoms

In a globalised era in which non-traditional threats such as terrorism require collective state policy responses, there is an important research need to closely monitor government actions. For example, there is a possibility that once a government can convince its people that they have more to fear from disorder than tyranny, then governments can be granted a licence to repress human rights. Of course, rights are restricted by the state for many often interrelated reasons – for example, self-preservation, elite dominance, religious victimisation, ethnic discrimination, income inequality and corruption, among others. Rights and freedoms once curtailed are invariably difficult to restore, even in the medium term.

One of the important challenges in the Indian Ocean Region is that there are very few states that are currently classified as being 'free' – Australia, Botswana, Mauritius, India, Indonesia and South Africa (Freedom House 2010). Rather, most Indian Ocean states are either 'partly free' (24 states) or 'not free' (20 states). The most repressive regional states – Burma, Somalia and Sudan – represent the greatest threat to regional stability (see Table 4). The interrelationships among traditional military security indicators, human development, state 'success' and freedom are complex. For example, only one regional state (Australia) ranks high on human development, state 'success' and freedom, yet is relatively low on traditional security indicators.

Table 3. The Human Development Index 2007: Indian Ocean States*.

	State	2007 Index	Global Rank
Very High Human Development (HDI > 0.9)	Australia	0.970	2
	Singapore	0.944	23
	Brunei Darussalam	0.920	30
	Kuwait	0.916	31
	Qatar	0.910	33
	UAE	0.903	35
High Human Development (HDI 0.8–0.899)	Bahrain	0.895	39
	Oman	0.846	56
	Seychelles	0.845	57
	Saudi Arabia	0.843	59
	Malaysia	0.829	66
	Mauritius	0.804	81
Medium Human Development (HDI 0.5–0.799)	Thailand	0.783	87
	Iran	0.782	88
	Maldives	0.771	95
	Sri Lanka	0.759	102
	Philippines	0.751	105
	Indonesia	0.734	111
	Vietnam	0.725	116
	Egypt	0.703	123
	Botswana	0.694	125
	South Africa	0.683	129
	Bhutan	0.619	132
	Laos	0.619	133
	India	0.612	134
	Cambodia	0.593	137
	Burma	0.586	138
	Comoros	0.576	139
	Yemen	0.575	140
	Pakistan	0.572	141
	Swaziland	0.572	142
	Nepal	0.553	144
	Madagascar	0.543	145
	Bangladesh	0.543	146
	Kenya	0.541	147
Sudan	0.531	150	
Tanzania	0.530	151	
Djibouti	0.520	155	
Lesotho	0.514	156	
Uganda	0.514	157	
Low Human Development (HDI < 0.5)	Malawi	0.493	160
	Zambia	0.481	164
	Rwanda	0.460	167
	Ethiopia	0.414	171
	Mozambique	0.402	172
	Burundi	0.394	174
Afghanistan	0.352	181	

Note: *No data are available for Iraq, Somalia and Zimbabwe.

Source: UNDP (2009, pp. 167–170).

Table 4. The Freedom House Rating 2009: The Indian Ocean Region.

Status	State	Score
<u>Free</u> (n = 6)	Australia	2
	Mauritius	3
	South Africa	4
	Botswana	5
	India	5
	Indonesia	5
<u>Partly Free</u> (n = 24)	Lesotho	6
	Seychelles	6
	Bangladesh	7
	Comoros	7
	Malawi	7
	Maldives	7
	Mozambique	7
	Philippines	7
	Tanzania	7
	Zambia	7
	Kenya	8
	Kuwait	8
	Malaysia	8
	Nepal	8
	Sri Lanka	8
	Bhutan	9
	Burundi	9
	Pakistan	9
	Singapore	9
	Thailand	9
Uganda	9	
<u>Not Free</u> (n = 20)	Djibouti	10
	Ethiopia	10
	Madagascar	10
	Bahrain	11
	Brunei Darussalam	11
	Cambodia	11
	Egypt	11
	Iraq	11
	Oman	11
	Qatar	11
	Rwanda	11
	UAE	11
	Yemen	11
	Afghanistan	12
Iran	12	
Swaziland	12	
Vietnam	12	
Zimbabwe	12	
Laos	13	
Saudi Arabia	13	

Table 4 (Continued)

Status	State	Score
	Burma	14
	Somalia	14
	Sudan	14

Source: Freedom House (2010).

In addition, apart from the basic problem of the accurate measurement of freedom among Indian Ocean states, there is also a problem of scale – that is, freedom is calculated at the state scale and says little about variations in freedom within the state across income, ethnic and other categories and by gender. While it is of considerable importance to regional development and stability to monitor human rights and human rights abuses and to compare regional state policies in this regard, a fundamental future research priority is the examination of the intra-state variability of rights and freedoms, especially the changing nature of women's rights in the Indian Ocean Region.

Economic insecurity

Economic insecurity is a key element of commonality in the Indian Ocean Region. Since the region has been described as the 'heart of the Third World', then official development assistance (ODA) has been important for many years. Indeed, in 2005, some regional states were 'aid dependent' and the region contained states with the two highest levels of global aid dependency – ODA to Afghanistan in 2005 was 316.9% of central government expenditure and for Cambodia 112.6% of central government expenditure (World Bank 2007).

In addition to the special case of Iraq, five regional states were the largest ODA recipients in 2005 – Afghanistan, Indonesia, Pakistan, Sudan and Vietnam. Furthermore, several African states had high ODA per capita and received ODA in excess of 40% of the total value of imports (see Table 5). Apart from analyses of the geography of ODA, future research lends itself not only to a detailed inquiry into the geopolitics of aid but more especially into its effectiveness in improving the standard of living of the inhabitants of recipient states.

4. Maritime jurisdiction and security

Maritime jurisdiction and maritime security in the Indian Ocean Region offer a broad research agenda, especially in the areas of the limits of maritime jurisdiction, unresolved boundaries, maritime boundary disputes and non-traditional maritime security threats.

The limits of maritime jurisdiction

The conclusion of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (LOSC) had a profound impact on the scope of claims to maritime jurisdiction worldwide

Table 5. Official Development Assistance receipt: Indian Ocean states 2005.

State	Net ODA (US\$M)	Aid/capita (US\$)	Aid as % GNI	Aid as % of imports
Afghanistan	2775	99	37.8	n.a.
Bangladesh	1321	9	2.1	n.a.
Botswana	71	40	0.7	1.4
Burma	145	3	n.a.	4.0
Burundi	365	48	46.8	97.7
Cambodia	538	38	9.1	11.0
Egypt	926	13	1.0	2.6
Ethiopia	1937	27	17.4	39.2
India	1724	2	0.2	1.8
Indonesia	2524	11	0.9	2.5
Iran	104	2	0.1	0.7
Iraq	21654	705	n.a.	n.a.
Kenya	768	22	4.1	11.4
Laos	296	50	11.4	44.1
Lesotho	69	38	3.9	4.8
Madagascar	929	50	18.7	127.9
Malawi	575	45	28.4	65.7
Malaysia	32	1	0	0
Mauritius	32	26	0.5	0.7
Mozambique	1286	65	20.7	38.4
Nepal	428	16	5.8	15.3
Oman	31	12	0.2	0.2
Pakistan	1666	11	1.5	5.2
Philippines	562	7	0.5	1.1
Rwanda	576	64	27.1	82.0
Saudi Arabia	26	1	0	0
Somalia	236	29	n.a.	n.a.
South Africa	700	15	0.3	0.9
Sri Lanka	1189	61	5.1	11.4
Sudan	1829	50	7.1	19.9
Swaziland	46	41	1.7	2.0
Tanzania	1505	39	12.5	36.6
Uganda	1198	42	14.0	42.9
Vietnam	1905	23	3.7	4.7
Yemen	336	16	2.5	4.7
Zambia	945	81	13.9	53.6
Zimbabwe	368	28	11.4	n.a.

Source: World Bank (2007, pp. 348–350).

and this certainly applies in the Indian Ocean context. LOSC provides the framework for maritime jurisdictional claims and a particular achievement of the Convention was the way in which it outlines clear spatial limits to maritime jurisdictional claims – notably the 12 nautical mile limit for the breadth of the territorial sea (a highly contentious issue prior to the conclusion of LOSC). The introduction of the 200 nautical mile exclusive economic zone (EEZ) has transformed the extent of national maritime claims, arguably representing the greatest shift in property rights (in this case over marine resources) from an international regime (the high seas) to

national jurisdiction (EEZs) of the twentieth century. Consequently, vast swathes of the Indian Ocean have come under the jurisdiction of the littoral states.

Additionally, LOSC provides for the definition of limits to national outer continental shelf rights beyond 200 nautical miles from the coast (where the continental margin can be proved to extend that far offshore). While the LOSC provisions on determining outer continental shelf limits are undoubtedly complex, as well as expensive and time-consuming to put into practice, they represent a huge step forward as compared with the open-ended situation previously that could ultimately have led to the entirety of the sea floor being divided up among coastal states. Achieving consensus on these limits to maritime jurisdiction was no mean feat and largely served to constrain the phenomenon of 'creeping coastal state jurisdiction' whereby coastal states were claiming ever more expansive maritime areas.

The Convention has achieved widespread international recognition and this is also the case in the Indian Ocean where the vast majority of littoral states are parties to the Convention as well as enthusiastic claimants of the extensive zones of maritime jurisdiction that it sanctifies (although it is worth noting that there are a few claims that still fail to comply with the LOSC framework – Somalia's 200 nautical mile territorial sea claim being a good example).

It is the case, however, that the 'package deal' achieved in the drafting of LOSC, the delicate balance of rights and responsibilities between coastal and user states enshrined in the Convention, now appears to be under increasing stress and there is evidence of this alarming trend in the Indian Ocean.

Among the problematic issues arising in relation to maritime jurisdiction evident in the Indian Ocean region is the issue of baselines. The normal baselines of the coastal state consist of the low-water line along the coast as marked on large-scale charts. Maritime claims are then usually measured from base points along the normal baseline. Where the baseline advances (through, for example, deposition along the coast) the outer limits of the maritime claims measured from that baseline will likewise tend to expand seawards. Conversely, where the normal baseline recedes (for instance through coastal erosion), the coastal state may 'lose' maritime areas as their maritime claims are likewise pulled back. This traditional linkage between ambulatory normal baselines and the outer limits of national maritime zones is potentially extremely problematic in the context of climate change-induced global sea level rise. Rising sea levels will necessarily mean that normal baselines will move inland and potentially enormous areas of presently claimed maritime zones may be forsaken. This could have dire consequences for the coastal states of the Indian Ocean and in particular those that have extensive, low-lying and densely populated areas along their shores, such as Bangladesh and India. Moreover, the continued existence of the small low-lying island states of the Indian Ocean Region such as the Maldives and Seychelles may ultimately come under threat from the inundation of the entirety of their land territory.

It is also the case that, if LOSC provides a clear spatial framework for coastal state maritime claims where the breadth of national maritime zones is clear and largely observed, problems still remain concerning the extent of national maritime claims because of disputes over where such claims are measured from. Numerous Indian Ocean states have defined arguably excessive systems of straight baselines along their coasts, giving rise to overlapping maritime claims with their neighbours and, thus, maritime boundary delimitation disputes. The continued existence of 'creeping

coastal state jurisdiction', has also recently been illustrated by the 'scramble for seabed' as coastal states located on broad continental margins had engaged in a race to beat the May 2009 deadline applicable to many of them to make submissions on their outer continental shelf limits to the relevant United Nations scientific body (the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf). Many of the submissions made, including those in the Indian Ocean, had the character of broad ambit assertions and, indeed, overlap with one another, creating multiple 'new' maritime boundary disputes far from the coast. Furthermore, creeping coastal state jurisdiction is also evident in terms of the additional rights, arguably beyond those defined in LOSC, that several Indian Ocean states have claimed within 'their' maritime spaces – upsetting the balance of competing interests achieved under LOSC.

Finally, it can be observed that, even though LOSC has delivered enormous expanses of the Indian Ocean to national maritime jurisdictional claims, the expected economic dividends from these maritime zones have to a large extent failed to materialise as hoped and anticipated. In large part, this stems from a distinct lack of capacity among Indian Ocean coastal states in terms of their ability to realise the opportunities that these 'additional' maritime areas offer. In particular, weaknesses in terms of surveillance and policing of broad maritime claims means that marine resources, especially fisheries, are under threat from illegal fishing activities by unscrupulous foreign fishers (Rumley, Chaturvedi and Sakhuja 2009). Moreover, there exist large areas of the Indian Ocean that lie beyond national jurisdiction and thus management and attempts to regulate resource exploitation activities there have met with only limited success. While their expansive maritime claims in the Indian Ocean offer great potential for the littoral states, they also represent a significant governance challenge for them to manage sustainably.

Unresolved maritime and terrestrial boundaries

Mutual respect for the independence, sovereignty, equality, territorial integrity, and national identity of all states is the foundation upon which the countries of the Indian Ocean Region have developed since the late 1960s based on the principles outlined in a plethora of documents and annual meetings. Some of the many challenges that countries within this region face include: how to enhance regional cohesiveness on maritime security without sacrificing national distinctiveness; how to integrate old and new members at different levels of economic development and with different political systems; and, how to adapt to globalisation and maximise the opportunities and potentialities while minimising a decline in economic status. From 2009 onward, every country, every regional bloc and international organisation have faced similar challenges in their own way.

In most of the developed countries, international political terrestrial boundaries are generally well defined and their jurisdictional rules are recognised and observed. Some political disputes still exist – for example, India and Pakistan, Bangladesh and India, and Abu Dhabi and Iran; but these mainly centre on international political maritime and terrestrial boundary alignments and sovereignty claims to islands, rocks and reefs. However, in this regional context, whereas the political map delineating international boundaries may appear to be in order, this impression can be misleading. Political terrestrial boundaries in the Indian Ocean Region were generally defined by colonial administrators and in many instances these were ill-defined and many not

demarcated; and sections of many were not clearly delineated on maps and charts. If they were, it was probably drawn using coloured pencils that were not sharpened, thus portraying a thicker than usual line. Such a line on a small-scale map could give a false impression of the alignment of the boundary.

Maritime boundaries have been delimited along the eastern littoral of the basin with the exception of at least three in the Bay of Bengal, two in the Arabian Sea, at least three in the Gulf of Aden, as many in the Red Sea and off the Horn of Africa and no less than six in the Mozambique Channel.

Maritime boundary disputes

Where resolution was required over disputed sovereignty, cooperative zones have been established and special arrangements have been implemented whereby the resources of the marginal seas and adjacent oceans will be explored and harvested in a sustainable manner (Forbes 1998, pp. 113–126). Having defined the types of maritime jurisdictional zones and differentiated between a terrestrial border and a maritime boundary, it is necessary now to discuss the issues that result from the boundary delimitations and define the areas of conflict.

Maritime boundary delimitation and associated disputes, however, are a recent phenomenon. Disputes occur before the boundary is drawn and generally disappear when a line (or series of lines) is eventually determined and agreed upon. Examples where a dispute was resolved with the delineation of lines on a map or chart include the Fisheries Jurisdiction Line between Australia and Papua New Guinea within the Torres Strait and the maritime boundary in the South China Sea between Indonesia and Malaysia. However, there are instances where one party has sought to re-negotiate a maritime boundary. For example, Indonesia has on several occasions requested a re-negotiation with Malaysia of the seabed boundary in the Malacca Straits and with Australia in the Timor and Arafura Seas. It is not expected that there will be a change in the alignment of the former boundary but a change in status of the latter has been effected by the signing of a Treaty in Perth on 14 March 1997 (Forbes 1997, pp. 11–14). This Treaty and another between Australia and East Timor, which was signed in May 2002, have yet to be ratified (as at 5 February 2010), by the respective signatories.

There are several issues that may be involved in disputing maritime space. These include disputed sovereignty over offshore islands, the allocation of natural resources that straddle undefined boundaries, the sustainable development of biotic and mineral resources, and the recognition of rights – traditional and historical – to access those resources between places that transcend perceived national boundaries or frontiers. Thus far, there have been only minor skirmishes arising from boundary disputes many involving alien fishers operating in another state's national jurisdiction – perceived or defined. Whereas minor skirmishes have not been a common feature of the evolution of maritime boundaries to the present, the same cannot be said of terrestrial boundaries.

Maritime security

Many aspects of potential maritime security research for the Indian Ocean Region are contained in the papers that follow in this *JIOR* issue. This section thus restricts

itself to dealing with some broad general research parameters. Traditionally, maritime security was viewed as the need to secure a state's maritime realm through diplomatic and military means. However, there appears to be no commonly accepted definition of what constitutes maritime security that might be used as a basis for regional cooperation.

To date, the collective maritime security environment has been conceptualised as a composite of sea power and the naval arms build-up, island and maritime boundary issues, navigational regimes, activities in the EEZ, competition over resources and the maintenance of law and order at sea, including the protection of SLOCs. To these essential elements can also be added others associated primarily with the stability and integrity of ocean littoral states, the insecurity role of non-state actors and the important question of maritime environmental insecurity.

It goes almost without saying that the security of sea lanes of communication (SLOCs) is vital to the functioning of the global economy. In 2001, 80% of world trade by value and 90% by volume was in the form of sea trade and this involved 1.2 million seafarers, 46,000 vessels and 4000 ports. Maximising the economic security of sea trade thus necessitates the maximisation of security within and among all five basic elements in the maritime trading process – seafarers (e.g., background and nationality), vessels (e.g., registration and seaworthiness), cargoes (e.g., nature and destination), ports and SLOCs. However, any understanding of the security of SLOCs cannot be fully appreciated in isolation from the *overall* maritime security environment (Rumley, Chaturvedi and Taib 2007).

Engagement and interoperability are critical to maritime security and successful humanitarian assistance and disaster relief missions rendered worldwide are essential. Linking regional stability to the ideals of cooperation and partnership is possible. Partnerships can shape the maritime domain, relieve the suffering of others to ensure that the international community is prepared for any uncertainty in the future. The political will at local, national and regional levels must exist. Working together with partners assists all to reap the benefits of joining forces and sharing experiences to the best effect of the security of the maritime domain and to ensure the best response to regional crises. Seaborne threats such as armed robbery, piracy, drug smuggling, human trafficking and terrorism are real. Many of these threats cross international boundaries, requiring like-minded maritime and terrestrial forces to cooperate and share real-time information in order to maximise regional maritime security.

5. Environmental security

The concept of environmental security is equally diverse in its meaning: it includes the traditional, conflict-based, statist frameworks which view environmental stress as an additional threat to peace and stability; the securitisation of the environment by nation-states; and, then, more innovative interpretations which envision it as a lynchpin of cooperative models of regional and global security, with the potential to secure access for all people to fulfil their basic needs for survival – a security to practice a diverse range of livelihoods (Barnett 2001; Dalby 2002; Dodds and Pippard 2005).

There is an enormous gap in the literature on environmental security and the Indian Ocean Region. There have been substantial academic works completed in recent years on the broad subject of environmental security (see, for example, Myers 1995; Dabelko and Dabelko 1995; Broda-Bahm 1999; Lowi and Shaw 2000; Redclift 2000; Cheremisinoff 2002). Some of these works move from theory into empirical research, but when this occurs, most of this scholarship is based in and around the Atlantic, Pacific and Southern Oceans (see Kakonen 1994; Barnett and Dovers 2001; Dokken 2001; Foster 2001). It has been very rare that researchers have utilised the concept of environmental security in the Indian Ocean Region.

This lack of research literature reflects a broader neglect by the more affluent, minority world in addressing social science policy issues confronting the South. There have been some articles addressing a particular environmental security issue in a specific country, such as water wars in the Jordan Basin (see Shaheen 2000) or environmental degradation leading to human displacement in South Africa (Singh 1996). In a search of the electronic version of *Expanded Academic Index*, only one reference emerges which includes environmental security insights into the Indian Ocean Region as a whole (Chaturvedi 1998).

Obviously, establishing an environmental security agenda for the Indian Ocean region is also significant in that it addresses basic survival issues which affect the inhabitants of the region who represent approximately one third of the world's population. Chaturvedi writes:

The Indian Ocean has been rightly described as the 'Heart of the Third World' or the 'Ocean of the South', with low per capita income and low levels of development in the majority of countries. The overwhelming mass of these peoples struggle to survive under the conditions characterised by chronic poverty, precarious political systems, stagnating and struggling economies, fragmented political systems guided by the considerations of ethnic identities. (Chaturvedi 1998, p. 712)

The concept of environmental security must be brought to life by reference to some of the most pressing environmental issues confronting the Indian Ocean Region. Just seven broad policy-making areas are identified here, each one ecologically interlocking with the other, snowballing in magnitude, creating desperate realities for billions of people culminating in abject poverty, both in terms of biodiversity (or lack thereof) and in terms of human existence: land degradation; water; fisheries; climate change; nuclear waste; environmental refugees; and urban explosion and deterioration (Doyle and Risely 2008).

These major environmental security issues should not simply be read as a 'litany of woes'. All of these issues impact upon all nation-states in the Indian Ocean Region. In traditional, or 'hard' security terms, environmental security issues, if not addressed, will lead to increases in human conflict and, ultimately, wide-scale disease, poverty and death. But also, since these problems are regional and thus shared, they are also policy issues which invite cooperation among nation-states; a shared agenda can emerge, with the potential for promoting a peaceful and extremely necessary dialogue. The long-term outcomes of such multilateral dialogues are immeasurable in positive terms.

The academic work of the Human and Environmental Security grouping within the IORG is both theoretical, as well being rooted in public policy practice. In a

region where most social and environmental decision-making, for example, is made without the benefits of adequate base-line data, much of the group's policy work has revolved around the building of these research and policy-implementation networks across the region. In many ways, this work is akin to 'academic' or 'public' diplomacy', liaising with every sector of these diverse societies, bringing together academics, corporations, governments and non-governmental bodies to focus on particular policy outcomes relating to securing all citizens in this less affluent region to basic needs.

Between 2002 and 2010, the IORG Human and Environmental Security grouping has led five policy practitioner panels on environmental security as part of larger workshops across the region in this cutting edge field: in India, Iran, Malaysia, Oman, and again in India. These policy workshops have been on: Water Management and Sustainable Development in South Asia, particularly India, Pakistan, Nepal and Bangladesh (Chandigarh); Energy and Nuclear Security in Iran and the Indian Ocean Region (Tehran); Security of Maritime Choke-Points in the Malacca Straits (Kuala Lumpur); Global Fisheries Management and Security in the Middle East (Muscat); and, most recently, Climate Change as It Impacts upon the Global South (Hyderabad).

There is considerable scope to engage in much more policy-related research on these and many other environmental security issues in the Indian Ocean Region. In particular, one of the other critically neglected areas for future region-wide research is the extent of water security and insecurity among Indian Ocean states. It is clear that there are many 'water-insecure' states in the Indian Ocean, many of which tend to cluster around the 'West Asian' northwestern part of the Region (see Table 6). Policies designed to meet water needs and to minimise state and regional water insecurity lend themselves to inter-state cooperation.

However, ultimately, if solutions are to be pursued successfully, we must move away from the concept that environmental security uniquely concerns nation-states withstanding threats *from* the environment, and move to a position which conceives environmental security 'as shifting the focus from state security to societal and individual well-being' (Doyle and Riseley 2008, p. 5), advocating the concept of environmental security as security *for* the environment (of which humanity is a part).

However, underwriting more liberal and critical interpretations of environmental security – and this is the key for the IORG's policy engagement in the region – is a

Table 6. Water-insecure states in the Indian Ocean Region.

State	Annual renewable water resources 1997 (km ³ /yr)	Total freshwater Withdrawal 2000 (km ³ /yr)
Bahrain	0.1	0.30
Kuwait	0.02	0.44
Oman	1.0	1.36
Qatar	0.1	0.29
Saudi Arabia	2.4	17.32
United Arab Emirates	0.2	2.30
Yemen	4.1	6.63

Source: Pacific Institute (2010, Tables 1 & 2).

definition of human and environmental justice that is reflective of the post-colonial historical and cultural reality of the Indian Ocean. In the early years of this new millennium, it is hoped that nation-states can continue to provide regional leadership across the Indian Ocean, rather than handing over their basic democratic responsibilities to transnational corporate interests. Currently, however, it is social movements which are the most visible players fighting for the basic rights of all people to secure access to the fundamentals of human survival.

6. Literary and cultural studies

While there has been an upsurge of interest in literary and cultural studies in recent years around the Indian Ocean Region, the comments that follow are principally restricted to a description of developments within South Africa. Key to research around Indian Ocean studies in South Africa is the Centre for Indian Ocean Studies in Africa (CISA). Situated at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, the research centre focuses its agenda on four themes – comparisons between India and South Africa on historical and current issues; connections between India and South Africa and the rest of Africa; cosmopolitanism as evidenced in transnationalism encompassing the Indian Ocean; and collaborative research as regards development policy. Given the historical links between India and South Africa, certainly since the arrival of indentured Indian labour in South Africa in 1860, it is surprising that such a Centre was only established in 2006. However, the relatively recent rise of India as a global power has foregrounded both historical and contemporary links with South Africa, and thus opportunities for research around India and the Indian Ocean Region have proliferated in recent years in South Africa. The CISA website offers the following rationale for current research into Indian Ocean–South Africa–India links:

The rise of India as a global power presents significant opportunities to the academy both locally and internationally. Sino-Indian rivalry as well as competition with the US challenge the certainties of an older three-world geopolitics and models of 'North and South'. Existing categories for studying the world (the 'West', area studies, Third Worldism, South–South relations, postcolonialism) have been brought into question.

As an arena in which these developments intersect, the Indian Ocean offers a privileged vantage point from which to track a changing world order. Sino-Indo-US competition plays itself out in both Africa – most prominently over hydrocarbons and other minerals – as well as in the Indian Ocean. The increase in the number of 'failed states' in the wake of the end of Cold War policing has become internationally visible: warlordism in Somalia moves out to sea in the form of piracy. Al-Qaida attacks in Kenya, Tanzania, Comoros and Yemen (all Indian Ocean littorals) and the US occupation of the Diego Garcia atoll are other examples which highlight critical international trajectories.

These developments have directed South African attention towards the Indian Ocean, and especially towards India itself. The countries share long-standing historical links and post-1994 there has been a significant intensification of trade, investment, tourist and educational links. (See <http://www.cisa-wits.org.za>)

Research collaboration between CISA, Roskilde University in Denmark and Jamia Millia Islamia University in Delhi has resulted in an Indian Ocean network project loosely gathered under the umbrella of 'The Indian Ocean as a Visionary Area'.

Academics from South Africa, India and Denmark have come together to work as a network on research projects focused on cultural interaction – historical and contemporary – in and among societies around the Indian Ocean. The explicit aim of the network is to engage in transnational research, looking at systems of trade and circulation, of diasporic movement between nation-states in the Indian Ocean Region.

Particular focus areas, based on the expertise of the researchers involved who are drawn largely from a humanities background, include the following. First, the analysis of cultural clashes and mediations around religious fundamentalisms and religious movements. Research projects here are concerned with Indian and African Islam in South Africa, Kenya and Uganda, and with transnational networks of Islamic organisations and of migrants stretching between South and East Africa, the Middle East and India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. Another focus is the dynamics of interaction between Hindu fundamentalism in Africa and India, and the spread of new types of Christianity as well as the role of conversions as a form of cultural mobilisation. Projects are directed at debate between religious positions and the media and institutions involved in this, which are important constituents in the formation of new structures of transnational public culture.

A second key research area is the transnational history of nationalisms and the emergence of new universalisms. Research under this heading investigates the Indian Ocean world as a space of competing discourses of race, caste, community, civilisation, and religion which at times inform the idea of nation, and at other times transgress it. Race and caste are often seen as belonging respectively to Africa and India, but around the Indian Ocean they become relational and interactive. Research brought together within the network includes studies of the involvement of 'Asians' in colonial hegemonies of citizenship in South and East Africa, as well as of their role in anti-colonial and nationalist struggles, and of dialogues between nationalists across the Indian Ocean. A central focus is the role of newspapers, cinema, radio, television, and the Internet in the creation of diasporic audiences and transnational public spheres. (For further information on the Indian Ocean research network, see www.ruc.dk/isg_en/IndianOcean.)

Two conferences have recently been held that have facilitated this Indian Ocean network research. The first conference was hosted by CISA in January 2009 with the theme 'Print Cultures, Nationalisms and the Publics of the Indian Ocean'. The theme grew out of a range of scholarly work which showed that the imperial cities of the Indian Ocean Region sustained a distinctive public sphere from the 1880s until the First World War. The Indian Ocean during this time could be understood as a network of textual exchange and circulation which built on, sustained and invented forms of universalism across the Region. One key feature of the intellectual circuits – whether religious, political or literary in nature – was a rich flow of print materials: newspapers, letters, pamphlets, journals and so on. The conference set out to probe the world of Indian Ocean print culture and the interactions of different movements and ideologies of universalism and nationalism within them. The second conference, held in Goa, India, in November 2009, aimed to develop further agendas for transnational research, transcending the points of reference provided by national historiographies. Under the theme 'Connecting histories across the Indian Ocean: religion, politics and popular culture', an important focus of the conference was to look at the dynamics of port cities as places of transit, migration, trade and

intercommunication; as interconnected networks criss-crossing the histories of empires, colonies and states. Another focus was the interaction of religious mobilisations and discourse in the Indian Ocean Region; as was the popular cultural articulation of identity and citizenship struggles within the Indian Ocean arena from the late nineteenth century to the present day. A third conference to be hosted by Roskilde University, Denmark, is planned for May 2010.

Planned outcomes from this Indian Ocean network include an anthology of essays on transnational religious mobilisation around the Indian Ocean (London and Calcutta, Seagull Books); a special issue of *Journal of Southern African Studies* on Indian Ocean nationalisms; and an anthology on the Indian Ocean as visionary area (London, James Currey). In print are the following special issues of journals which have as their interest Indian Ocean studies from various disciplinary perspectives within the humanities: *Historia* 57 (2007) ('South Africa and India: towards closer scholarly ties'); *scrutiny*2, Vol. 13, no. 2 (2008) ('Africa/India: culture and circulation in the Indian Ocean'); and *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, Vol. 44, no. 1 (2009) ('South Africa-India: connections and comparisons').

Expected out shortly is the book *Eyes Across the Water: Navigating the Indian Ocean*, edited by Pamila Gupta, Isabel Hofmeyr and Michael Pearson (Pretoria and Delhi: UNISA Press and Penguin). As is evident from these examples, the flurry of recent publications gives some idea of the current upsurge in research into India–South Africa links, and into the Indian Ocean Region and among Indian Ocean states more generally.

7. Regionalism

Overall, with the 'collapse' of Cold War bipolarity, regionalism has become increasingly important in world politics, especially in the context of economic globalisation. Not surprisingly, since the end of the Cold War, there has also been a resurgence of interest in the nature and functions of regionalism among policy-makers, business people and academics. In many parts of the world, opportunities afforded by the end of the Cold War have resulted in a significant increase in regional institutionalisation. The nature and function of regionalism in the Indian Ocean Region has been the subject of much debate but lends itself to deeper and more critical analysis (Rao 2001).

Regionalism has often been taken to be synonymous with *economic* regionalism. Much of the early regionalism debate, in particular, appears to have been predicated on the belief that the economic dimension of regionalism is pre-eminent. Second, this privileging of the economic was taken to be non-controversial and was in turn linked to a view that regionalism was unidimensional. However, it is clear that there is a wide variety of perspectives on regionalism and that the concept cannot be simply conceptualised in economic terms (Rumley 2005).

Regionalism can also be conceptualised as being both informal and formal (or 'official'). It is informal in the sense that it can be equated with a sense of belonging or feeling of community in a socio-cultural sense – that is, it is a social construct associated with identity. From this perspective, regionalism can become a rationale for policies associated with stability and control within a perceived sphere of influence. This connects with an idealist view of community in which regional

policies are designed to create regional benefits and that members receive an equitable share of those benefits.

On the other hand, regionalism can be more formal or official. In this sense, it is created or constructed to meet certain state or other functions. As a result, there exist a variety of types of constructed regionalisms – economic, security and environmental. In a deterministic sense, geographical contiguity or propinquity has generally implied a degree of interest congruence between states. However, one of the more important dimensions of contested regionalism is that of inclusivity or exclusivity – that is, whether the scale or the type of regionalism includes or excludes certain states, and, in addition, whether the type of regionalism is in full accord with or conflicts in some way with state goals. This dimension of contested regionalism can be seen to operate in practice from two perspectives. That is, from the viewpoint of the state wishing to be included, and, from the perspective of the state or states wishing to implement exclusion. In either case, membership of regional organisations can be used as a mechanism for creating or reconstituting some form of regional identity.

In the Indian Ocean Region, while there exist several examples of important sub-regionalisms – for example, Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMST), Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) – there exists only one region-wide constructed regional grouping created in 1997 primarily for reasons of economic cooperation – the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation or IOR-ARC (see Table 7). Any serious critical evaluation of IOR-ARC will reveal that it has had limited success, due, among other things, to a combination of its restrictive scope, membership and commitment on the part of member states. Furthermore, as has been argued elsewhere, successful economic regionalism often follows rather than precedes strong internal economic interaction among member states (Rumley 2005).

However, there are some indications that Indian Ocean regionalism might take on a renewed salience, partly as a result of a potentially positive Australian government response to an important recent regional report (Bateman and Bergin 2010), but more especially when India assumes the Chair of IOR-ARC in 2011. In the case of the latter, a key statement was made by former Indian Minister of State, Dr Shashi Tharoor, at the Plenary Meeting of the Ninth Council of IOR-ARC Ministers in Sana'a, Yemen, in June 2009 (Tharoor 2009). Among many other important points, Dr Tharoor noted the following:

... important to focus on making faster progress and to give new directions to our cooperation ... the seeds are being sown for transforming the Association from a declaratory phase to an action oriented phase with Member Countries embarking on cooperative projects ... a great deal more needs to be done to make the Association realize its true potential ... the Association has now reached a level of maturity where we need to initiate and implement creative, indeed bold, initiatives. One serious proposal to intensify work of the Association is related to the strengthening of the IOR-ARC Secretariat and other associated mechanisms. India feels that the time is now ripe that priority areas emerging from the deliberations of the Academic Group, Business Forum and Working Group on Trade and Investment are identified and prioritized. (Tharoor 2009)

As a result of India's likely future leadership in strengthening Indian Ocean regionalism, and with the prospect of Australia's renewed regional interest, it is likely that Indian Ocean linkages will improve in the future, not just in matters of trade.

Table 7. Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC) states.

Australia (1997)
 Bangladesh (1999)
 India (1997)
 Indonesia (1997)
 Iran (1999)
 Kenya (1997)
 Madagascar (1997)
 Malaysia (1997)
 Mauritius (1997)
 Mozambique (1997)
 Oman (1997)
 Seychelles (joined 1999, withdrew 2003)
 Singapore (1997)
 Sri Lanka (1997)
 South Africa (1997)
 Tanzania (1997)
 Thailand (1999)
 United Arab Emirates (1999)
 Yemen (1997)

Dialogue Partners

China
 Egypt
 France
 Japan
 UK

8. Conclusion: prospects for greater regional cooperation

This essay has discussed six broad areas of research aimed at the development of policies that improve the life chances of all inhabitants of the Indian Ocean Region, as identified by some members of the *JIOR* international Editorial Board. It seems to us as self-evident that the very existence of the ocean itself should be a key catalyst for collaborative interest in research and policy-making given its regional and global social, environmental, geopolitical and economic importance.

In the development of regional policies aimed at creating just, peaceful and resilient localities, communities and regions, and in order to maximise all dimensions of security and thus minimise the necessity for conflict and for arms acquisition and use, it is to be hoped that a renewed IOR-ARC imbued with a wider vision, a broader regional membership and a firmer commitment can function as one among many platforms for such an important endeavour.

As Bose, again, has put it so eloquently:

If the globe at the dawn of the twenty-first century is indeed witnessing a new, ferocious round in the clash of civilizations, the prognosis will be one of deepening conflict and unending war. But if the history of the modern world can be interpreted to a significant degree as an interplay of multiple and competing universalisms, room can be created for understanding through intelligible translations. It was this task of creating hybrid and polyphonic languages of translation that the peoples of the Indian Ocean interregional

arena had so successfully accomplished through the archaic and modern phases of globalization. It remains the only hope for a new cosmopolitanism in a postcolonial setting. (Bose 2006, p. 282)

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