

THE RISE OF OCEAN REGIONS GOVERNANCE CHALLENGES FOR THE INDO-PACIFIC AND THE ATLANTIC

A report on a colloquium held at the
University of Pretoria

2 -3 November 2022



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The past several years have seen a dramatic and renewed interest in ‘oceanic worlds/regions’, most obvious of which are the maritime component of China’s Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and the evolution of the Indo-Pacific region, driven by the US, Japan, India and Australia (the ‘Quad’) and other actors. Although the set-up of regional organisations still tends to be terra-centric, oceans are not merely fringes and margins, confined to being lanes of transport and communication. Rather, we are witnessing the development of the ‘century of the oceans’.

The growing interest in and importance of the evolution of ocean regions brought together three research institutions - the Ocean Regions Project at the University of Pretoria, the Atlantic Centre in Portugal and the United Nations University Institute on Comparative Regional Integration Studies (UNU-CRIS), together with South African, Mozambican, Brazilian, British and North American scholars and South African policy practitioners - in early November 2022 for a two-day colloquium to explore ocean region governance challenges in the Indo-Pacific and the Atlantic oceans.

The colloquium was hosted by the University of Pretoria, with funding made possible by the National Institute for Humanities and Social Sciences (NIHSS) BRICS research institutes and the Atlantic Centre in Lisbon. The colloquium was conducted under Chatham House rule and the findings reported in this publication are not attributed to any of the speakers or participants.

The speakers and practitioners deliberated a range of topics and questions

during seven sessions that were thematically arranged as follows over the two-day period:

- Session 1: How did we get here and where is ‘here’? Exploring the evolution of maritime security in the Indo-Pacific and Atlantic Oceans.
- Session 2: Actors, interests, and policy issues.
- Session 3: Maritime strategies for the Indo-Pacific and the Atlantic Oceans.
- Session 4: Towards the AU Agenda 2063: Youth perspectives on the maritime domain.
- Session 5: Multilateral and regional cooperation in the Indo-Pacific and Atlantic Oceans.
- Session 6. African and South African perspectives on maritime governance.
- Session 7. Policy dialogue - bringing together research and practice.

This report was compiled by Daniela Marggraff and Dr Robin Blake, with input from Tshegofatso Ramachela.

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Introduction

Ocean spaces are in the process of being redefined strategically in terms of maritime perimeters to project power and protect interests beyond continental vicinities. Such spaces are increasingly viewed as *places* - they are becoming regions that are more than (sea) lanes of communication and trade (whether legal or illegal), increasingly encompassing a range of interests and issues; they draw the attention of the major powers, of states set on exploiting and controlling their territorial seas, as areas providing livelihoods to growing populations of coastal communities, as repositories of a range of minerals and other resources and as areas of concern in a world threatened by human-induced climate change amongst others. Amidst this growing interest in oceans as geographic areas of geopolitical and national interest, importance and prosperity, the *governance* of these spaces also attracts growing interest and involvement.

Abdenur and De Souza Neto in a 2014 article titled, 'Region-building by rising powers' in the *Journal of the Indian Ocean Region*, remind us that '[f]ar from being "naturally" delineated by geography or bound solely through shared culture, regions are actively constructed by states and other actors pursuing specific interests'.¹ Issues and interests collide and compete, or draw actors across such a geographical space together with a view to turning it into a 'governable place'.

Two such spaces are the Indian Ocean and the South Atlantic, with the former sharing with the latter the status of an UN-declared Zone of Peace. Yet the Indian Ocean is heavily militarised, and the Eastern Southern Atlantic, along the coast of West Africa, is experiencing a continued increase in piracy, maritime terrorism, and so-called blue

¹ Adriana Erthal Abdenur & Danilo Marcondes de Souza Neto (2014) Region-building by rising powers: the South Atlantic and Indian Ocean rims compared, *Journal of the Indian Ocean Region*, 10:1, 1-17, DOI: [10.1080/19480881.2014.896103](https://doi.org/10.1080/19480881.2014.896103)

crimes. The Indian Ocean is also increasingly treated as part of a larger region, the Indo-Pacific, especially geopolitically and geo-strategically. In this sense, South Africa as a bi-oceanic country, forming part of both these regions, is potentially an important player and this colloquium therefore also focused on South Africa in particular.

Overall, there is little doubt that the construction and governance of ocean regions will continue to be a top priority of great and emerging powers as well as regional and international organisations. The African continent faces a notable challenge in this regard, as both the African Union (AU) and its member states are seeking to position themselves in the rapidly evolving environment on their various maritime shores.

These developments generate a range of questions. What are the interests of the various internal and external actors? What do the recent strategy documents towards the Indo-Pacific/Indian Ocean/South Atlantic entail? What are the issues driving ocean regionalisation? Are there grounds to promote cooperation between these two vast maritime spaces to foster bi-oceanic governance? And what are African positions on its maritime spaces? What role can the AU and a strategically located country such as South Africa play?

This colloquium set out to discuss some of these questions, and to identify the most salient issues and challenges that would generate a research agenda that will draw together scholars, researchers and practitioners from across the two ocean regions that formed the subject of discussions, viz. the Indo-Pacific and the South Atlantic, though it should be noted that the 'South Atlantic', as is pointed out in the Report, cannot be disaggregated from the North Atlantic: in a way reference should be to 'the Atlantic', much as the Indian Ocean is discussed as an integral part of the evolving Indo-Pacific. And though the South Atlantic and the Indian Ocean are very much part of the global South, these regions cannot be studied, or governed, without taking into consideration the extent that

they are part of two ocean regions that are largely dominated by the major powers and global North.

**Session 1: How Did We Get Here and Where is ‘Here’?
Exploring the Evolution of Maritime Security in the Indo-
Pacific and the Atlantic Ocean**

2 November 2022

Chair: Prof Licinia Simão

Participants: Dr Lisa Otto (University of Johannesburg), Dr Garth le Pere (University of Pretoria), Prof Chris Alden (LSE/University of Pretoria)

Maritime security comprises issues related to the marine environment, economic development, national security and human security. Between these issues coalesce security issues such as marine safety, the blue economy, sea power and resilience. Undoubtedly, the sea is regaining its centrality in the politics of states and international relations.

While maritime security is mostly associated with littoral states, it is crucial to include the interests of landlocked countries as they have unique vulnerabilities and are reliant on littoral states for their maritime survival.

The purpose of the session was to deliberate the following questions:

- What is the impact of regional and global rivalries on the Indo Pacific and the Atlantic Ocean?
- What are the implications of the different delineations of maritime regions?
- What are the key drivers of regional and sub-regional insecurity?

Impact of global and regional rivalries on the Indo-Pacific and the Atlantic Ocean

The geostrategic importance of the Indo-Pacific is underscored by being home to more than half of the global population, its significant natural resources, and its contribution of 60 per cent to global GDP. Furthermore, the region also includes the largest emerging economies and rising powers that are vying for power and influence. This is coupled to various security challenges, such as piracy, illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, human and drug trafficking, and smuggling. Consequently, this is a region constantly in flux as new security and economic partnerships emerge.

The strategic importance of the Indo-Pacific has seen intensified involvement by external and internal actors. Not only has the United States (US) recently adopted an “Indo-Pacific Strategy of the United States” (February 2022) but several other

countries, such as Australia, India, South Korea, France, Japan, Germany, the Netherlands, and the European Union (EU), have prioritised the “Indo-Pacific” in their respective policies. Furthermore, the QUAD (comprising the US, Australia, India, and Japan) has gained currency, with the US hosting a QUAD-Plus (expanded to include New Zealand, South Korea, and Taiwan) gathering in March of 2022 to collectively address the COVID-19 pandemic.

“IORA, QUAD do not represent the Indo-Pacific. They represent the views of countries that happen to be part of the Indo-Pacific”

The projection of power by the US in the Indo-Pacific is defined by hard and soft power as the region is a critical strategic pillar. In response to the US’s power projection and the extent of its reach, China has similarly started to project its power in the region, especially through the BRI. Notably, China is using territorial disputes to acquire land, which allows it to project its national power to compete with the US.

The Global South is an arena for great power competition. In early 2022, Xi Jinping (China) and Vladimir Putin (Russia) issued a joint statement declaring that international relations have entered a new era. Both presidents also described a new partnership between Russia and China that has no limits. In the Western part of the globe, great power rivalry has also seemingly intensified with both the US and EU declaring China a strategic competitor and rival, respectively. This is perhaps not all too unsurprising, considering other events that have played out in the last few years, such as the US trade wars, and the introduction of a new national security law in Hong Kong by China. While, China and Russia have strengthened their relations, while the EU has acted with greater resolve, especially vis-à-vis its support for Ukraine. As a result, Russia is facing an unprecedented number of sanctions. Within this context, Western governments have been seemingly shocked by the voting behaviour of countries in the Global South who have not necessarily voted with the West against Russia. However, in a sense, this “shocking” behaviour from certain Global South countries has elevated the role of the Global South amidst calls for a renewed understanding of their foreign policies.

Understanding the foreign policy positions of these countries can be done through various lenses, such as a realist lens, which explains that states engaging in hedging or band wagoning. However, this does not explain their behaviour sufficiently. Thus, an alternative

explanation is to focus on regional organisations such as BRICS as emblematic of trends across the Global South. Interestingly, BRICS members belong to more than just BRICS, some form part of the G20, G77 or the Non-Aligned Movement too. Consequently, they can be viewed in different ways as many of these countries are major recipients of arms, and may be preoccupied with regional rivalries, such as India and Pakistan, or Brazil and Argentina.

A particular point of interest is the positionality of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and their relations with great powers in the region. In this respect, SIDS have successfully leveraged their position and influence through their foreign policies. For example, Mauritius has played off two great powers, China and India, in their sphere of influence, whilst other SIDS have successfully used climate change to centre their foreign policies. In terms of multilateralism, climate change remains an important means of articulating the voices of smaller states, specifically SIDS.

The value and reach of emerging multilateral organisations such as the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) cannot be underestimated as a counterpoint to other multilateral organisations such as QUAD. A particular advantage of these 'newer' bodies is that the member countries are more representative of their regions and the interests at stake.

Implications of the different delineations of maritime regions

Although the maritime domain is artificially demarcated into geographical oceanic spaces with specific names such as the Indian or Atlantic Ocean, it is an interconnected whole in which events occurring in one part inevitably spill over into other parts. Moreover, the vastness of the ocean makes it difficult for states to exercise sovereign control, especially considering that many states struggle to manage events within their land borders.

Key drivers of regional and sub-regional insecurity

The most pertinent issues currently preoccupying states in the Indo-Pacific are: maintaining open access to sea lines of communication (SLOC) (which have become vital to the global economy, especially in terms of digital communication); cyber-attacks and online espionage; organised crime (particularly the threat of piracy and criminal networks); counter-terrorism (in relation to the Islamic State and the return of the Taliban in Afghanistan); and lastly, the nuclear issue (India and Pakistan are both nuclear-capable states but not members of the Non-proliferation Treaty and where China has rejected the US Proliferation Security Initiative).

The extension of spheres of influence, attributed to the establishment of military bases in strategic areas, such as in Djibouti or Diego Garcia has allowed for the projection of power both to the East and West of the Indo-Pacific, not only by the great powers but also by African states as the case of Djibouti demonstrates. Along with the establishment of military bases there is economic investment in the development of ports, especially at chokepoints. Here China plays a significant role by increasing its footprint in the region through significant investment in trade infrastructure.

Regarding the Atlantic Ocean, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) recently endorsed a new “Strategic Concept” in June of 2022 and it is through NATO that the US projects its dominance this region. However, the Atlantic is not only important to the US, but also to the EU, as 40 per cent of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is derived from maritime regions and 90 per cent of its external trade goes by sea. In conclusion, the US will remain a critical actor in the Euro-Atlantic and the Indo-Pacific, especially because of its role in the QUAD, AUKUS (US, Australia and the United Kingdom (UK)) and NATO’s AP4 Dialogue (involving Japan, Australia South Korea, and New Zealand).

Answering the question “Where is Africa?”, requires two considerations. Firstly, there has been a lack of strategic vision for the inclusion of Africa by Western Powers and secondly, and African states have mostly neglected the Indo-Pacific region in their strategic calculus and foreign policies. Yet Africa is a site of great power competition. It occupies a central position in maritime affairs, especially considering its vital chokepoints it has, namely at the Gulf of Aden, the Strait of Gibraltar, and the Cape of Good Hope. Even more so, South Africa has a strategic position and could play the role of a strategic hinge, considering that it has a foot in both the Atlantic and Indian Oceans, is a member of BRICS and promotes the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. However, South Africa does not presently have the capabilities to be considered a maritime power or to position itself as the gateway to Africa.

Concluding Summary

The ‘here’ of maritime security and its evolution is typified by the sea regaining its prominence specifically in the politics of states as well as in international relations more generally. However, there are two considerations: firstly, the Indo-Pacific is characterised by instability that is a consequence of rivalry between states and, multilateral organisations, and secondly, the Indo-Atlantic is more stable and dominated for the time being by the US, the EU and NATO.

African countries must heed these developments and strategically position themselves to accommodate and promote their national interests in their foreign policies concerning the Indo-Pacific and Atlantic Ocean.

Key points

- Maritime security is concerned with national and human security and is central to the politics of states in their international relations.
- The geostrategic importance of the Indo-Pacific and the emergence of new security and economic partnerships has led to the involvement of several internal and external actors as well as an intensification of rivalry between the US, China, and Russia.
- Multilateral organisations such as BRICS, the G20 and G77 are actively seeking to extend their influence in the region. However, BRICS is fraught by

unresolved divisions between member countries and who share little common ideology or purpose.

- Africa occupies a pivotal position both in the Indo-Pacific and Indo-Atlantic oceans but this is not reflected in the strategic thinking and foreign policies of the countries concerned. South Africa, geostrategically located at the fulcrum between the Atlantic, Indian Oceans and Southern Oceans, should leverage this advantage to benefit both the country and the continent.
- IORA can serve as an anchor and catalyst for African and other Indian Ocean states with maritime interests to collaborate and advocate their common interests and positions.
- Presently, the Indo-Atlantic is, for the most part, more stable than the Indo-Pacific.

Session 2: Actors, Interests and Policy Issues

2 November 2022

Chair: Prof Katabaro Miti (University of Pretoria)

Participants: Dr Carina Bruwer (Institute for Security Studies), Frigate Captain Luis Cabral (Ministry of National Defence, Portugal) Dr Sergio Chichava (Eduardo Mondlane University, Mozambique), Mr Tim Walker (University of Pretoria/Institute for Security Studies)

Understanding the plethora of actors, their interests and their policies that have been implemented or are currently in the process of formulation relating to the Indo-Pacific and Atlantic Ocean, is vital. The driving forces that dictate and underpin the activities of actors in the maritime domain include but are not limited to: traditional and non-traditional security issues, the environment and climate change, non-state actors and the military assets that are committed to the maritime domain by the actors involved.

The purpose of the session was to deliberate the following questions:

- What are the main traditional and non-traditional issues related to maritime security in each of these ocean regions?
- How does environmental security/climate change shape the regional outlook?
- What is the impact of non-state actors, such as transnational criminal organisations on the region?
- How do different actors seek to build their coast guard/naval capabilities?

Maritime security: traditional and non-traditional issues, non-state actors and transnational criminal organisations

Maritime security has two inter-related, but connected components: a landward component and a maritime component. Activities on land dictate what happens on the oceans and in this respect land-based human insecurity invariably spills over into the maritime domain. However, the maritime domain is a single entity that has been artificially demarcated into different regions which shape the perceptions and views of the actors concerned.

Globalisation has had a major impact on how the oceans are exploited for illegal purposes by criminal actors. While vessels, for example, facilitate world trade they are similarly exploited for criminal activities. In this respect the inherently transnational nature of vessels, where citizens of different countries are aboard a vessel, that blurs the line of who can and should be held accountable for illegal activities. In terms of who the actors are, both state and non-state actors (i.e.,

private entities such as shipping companies, fishing companies, passenger ships) can be responsible for maritime insecurity and crime. The proliferation and involvement of non-state actors, particularly private security companies, is also deserving of attention and the phenomenon of floating armouries raises questions in terms of their use, control and accountability.

A major challenge is law enforcement at sea. While some states do not have the capacity to monitor illegal activities in their waters, other states intentionally choose not to exercise their jurisdiction. Another challenge is the use of 'flags of convenience' where states or maritime shipping companies elect to register their vessels in states unable to enforce their jurisdiction. Lastly, the fact that 50 per cent of the ocean represents the high seas, is another challenge as there is no sovereign authority in these waters.

From an African perspective, two maritime hotspots are the Gulf of Guinea and the Horn of Africa, both home to active shipping lanes. In these areas, traditional and non-traditional security issues are encountered and include: piracy, human trafficking, migrant smuggling, pollution, terrorism, drug trafficking, illegal exploitation of resources, biodiversity crime, and IUU fishing are contemporary manifestations of maritime crime and insecurity.

Environmental security/climate change and regional outlooks

Climate change will have a particularly devastating effect on African coastal cities. Considering that the coastal cities of many African states are main economic hubs, attention needs to be paid to some of the issues, such as erosion and cyclones, that these coastal cities already and will experience. Added to this are the changing trends in urbanisation which, in some states, sees people migrating from the hinterland to coastal cities because of climate change. The migration of people to coastal cities also raises important questions of how land is allocated and utilised in the coastal cities. Further issues are that African ports (built during the colonial era) have limited capacities to facilitate large scales of trade and the ports scattered along the African coastline are not connected to one another. Thus, in the future, to mitigate these issues, thinking of these coastal cities as a region will be vital.

In the light of climate change and rising sea levels, territoriality and sovereignty will require reconsideration. Traditionally, states are preoccupied with protecting their territorial sovereignty and navies are tasked to provide this protection. Climate change is already changing coastlines, resulting in shifting maritime boundaries. Considering the impact of climate change, there is a need to think of different ways of determining boundaries, such as using geographical coordinates rather than physical features. However, this remains problematic as not only are there existing disputes regarding certain land and maritime boundaries. Perhaps moving away from this apparent 'land worship' or fetishization of territory will open the way for innovative solutions from new and alternative perspectives.

Building coast guard and naval capabilities

Cooperation by actors in the maritime domain is not an act of benevolence but is rather the outcome of numerous countries working together but cooperation means

different things to different countries. In aiming to achieve cooperation and build strategy, the PMESII (political, military, economic, social, information and infrastructure) tool involves identifying and specifying relationships between actors and an understanding of the actions required to achieve desirable outcomes.

Furthermore, it is vital to understand the environment in which one is working and consciously not replicated what one does at home. There also needs to be a sense of ownership with a concerted effort to ensure that the partner experiences the project as one of its own. Lastly, projects need to be realistic - one should not raise expectations to a level that cannot be met.

From the Mozambique perspective, Africa is not yet ready to take advantage of great power rivalry as there is a notable absence of debate on the impact of great power rivalry on Africa. Great power rivalry is not an African priority as it is perceived to be a Western concern. Furthermore, African countries have no strategies to deal with the competition for African resources. This is a major challenge. While the conflict between Russia and Ukraine and the subsequent global repercussions provided Africa with an opportunity to reassess how it can, for example, improve its oil and gas production to fill the gaps, the continent has failed to capitalise on this opportunity. Mozambique specifically, remains heavily dependent on the West. While the Mozambique Channel is home to one of the largest reserves of minerals, gas and biodiversity, the country has been unable to address issues of illegal fishing, trafficking and insurgency. The state is unable to exploit its own natural resources and control issues that afflict the country. This undeniably illustrates one of the challenges facing African countries, namely: the locals' inability to protect themselves. Therefore, there is an urgent need for robust long-term solutions such as the establishment of a strong and professional navy.

Concluding Summary

Although the maritime domain is conceptualised as a single entity there are several actors with competing interests and policies that add an additional layer of complexity. Chief amongst these actors are non-state actors and especially transnational criminal networks that have identified and exploited loopholes. These loopholes are exacerbated by the witting and unwitting inability of states to effectively police and control the maritime domain, especially in grey areas such as the high seas.

Climate change and rising sea levels will negatively affect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of littoral and island states, especially from an African perspective. Moreover, the domestic effects of climate change will lead to mass migration, especially to coastal cities, ultimately increasing the potential for human insecurity.

Key points

- There is a clear nexus between the landward and maritime domains. Landward activity must take account of the maritime and vice versa.
- The maritime domain is an interconnected singular entity and artificial demarcations must not be allowed to shape the way in which the domain is perceived and solutions are conceptualised.
- Maritime crime is inherently transnational and is complicated by the inability of states to enforce law and order at sea.
- Traditional and non-traditional maritime security issues include: piracy, human trafficking, migrant smuggling, pollution, terrorism, drug trafficking, illegal exploitation of resources, biodiversity crime, and illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing are contemporary manifestations of insecurity.
- Climate change will have a particularly devastating impact on Africa's coastal cities which will negatively affect economic activity. Moreover, the expansion and contraction of maritime boundaries will affect state sovereignty and cause disputes that will have to be resolved through negotiation and legal mechanisms.
- From an African perspective, most countries are ill-equipped to meet the challenges posed by the involvement of outside actors in the maritime domain.

Session 3: Maritime Strategies for the Indo-Pacific and the Atlantic

2 November 2022

Chair: Dr Frank Matteis (United Nations University - CRIS)

Participants: Dr David Camroux (Sciences Po Paris/Franco-German Observatory of the Pacific), Prof Daniel Hamilton (John Hopkins University), Prof Danilo Marcondes (Brazilian War College (ESG)), Ms Sanusha Naidu (Institute for Global Dialogue), Dr Yu-Shan Wu (University of Pretoria)

Certain actors have taken steps to formulate specific maritime strategies to advance their interests and policies in the Indo-Pacific and the Atlantic. Prime considerations for formulating these strategies include discerning the importance attached to the Southern Oceans by regional and global powers, the roles that major powers foresee, the perceptions of other actors regarding the involvement of outside actors, and the impact of the various strategies.

The purpose of the session was to deliberate the following questions:

- Why are the Southern oceans considered to be important by regional and global powers?
- What role do the major powers foresee for themselves?
- How is the involvement of external actors perceived?
- What is the impact of the various national strategies?

Regional and global power considerations: The importance of the Southern Oceans

Past attention was primarily on the Pacific but the Pacific only constitutes a part of the world and the Atlantic hemisphere has in recent times, been rising in importance. The impact of globalisation, has led to increased trade between the Atlantic and the Pacific, and elevated the significance of the Atlantic Ocean. The Atlantic has been neglected in the past but is crucial in the bigger picture. For example, the Atlantic is the locus of the earth's thermos heating system and acts as a carbon reservoir. Additionally, three out of four convection points are found in the Atlantic. Unfortunately, the Atlantic is also host to an increasing number of marine dead zones.

Currently, there is no pan-Atlantic agreement or mechanism related to maritime governance. Establishing pan-Atlantic cooperation is vital considering that the Atlantic is facing increasing human security challenges, such as trafficking of people, arms, drugs and money. The argument is often made that the Atlantic is too big and diverse. However, the Pacific is no less diverse yet has demonstrated that regional

organisations are feasible. Although organisations or forums have attempted to address these issues have been made, they are mainly limited to smaller regions within the Atlantic and are not pan-Atlantic. Thus, there is both a need and an opportunity to establish such mechanisms and South Africa can play a pivotal role in being a part of this.

Role of major powers and perceptions regarding the involvement of external actors

“Establishing pan-Atlantic cooperation is vital considering that the Atlantic is facing increasing human security challenges, such as trafficking of people, arms, drugs and money.”

European Perspectives on the Indo-Pacific: The “Indo-Pacific” concept is a European construct first used by Karl Haushofer, although it has since frequently surfaced in the strategic documents of Australia and further promoted by the late Shinzo Abe. European countries differ in terms of what geographical space is included in the Indo-Pacific. The Netherlands, for example, consider the Indo-Pacific to refer to the space between Pakistan and the Pacific Islands, while Portugal has a broader conception and includes the East coast of Africa. Generally, a common thread between the different conceptions is that the Eastern coast of Africa and the Western coast of America is peripheral.

Broadly speaking there are five groups that have differing positions. The first group refers to *resident middle powers* (i.e. France), which has a large number of its citizens living in this region. In fact, France has the largest EEZ with 94 per cent of its EEZ falling in the Indo-Pacific. France has both a strategic and economic vision for the Indo-Pacific and places a high premium on partnerships, which explains why the AUKUS agreement was met with relative outrage by the French.

The second group is the *global mercantile powers* (i.e. Germany or the Netherlands), while the third group is described as the *mercantile power/resident landlord* (i.e. Britain). In terms of Britain, the Indo-Pacific makes sense, especially in the post-Brexit trope of a Global Britain. The fourth group is referred to as the *motivated fellow travellers* (i.e. Portugal or Lithuania). This group comprises European economic actors that have a global economic outlook. However, they not only economic considerations, but also normative considerations, such as defending democracy and human rights. The final group is called the *indifferent fellow travellers* (e.g. Cyprus or Greece).

There are four reasons for the importance of the Indo-Pacific to the EU. Firstly, the term “Indo-Pacific” captures a wider Asia policy and partially compensates for the lacuna in an existing patchwork of arrangements. Secondly, it is a political statement on the salience of Europe’s regulatory power in the region. The EU can impose its rules and regulations in a way that other powers such as the US and China cannot. Thirdly, it provides a foundation for a shared European and American understanding in responding to China. Fourthly, it confirms the regional legitimacy of a resident power like France (within its global role) and that of a mercantile power such as Germany.

Impact of national strategies

Brazilian engagements with the South Atlantic space focus on Brazilian region-building that are discursive and material in nature. The discursive dimension refers to the way the Navy, Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Foreign Affairs construct a region by supporting a specific identity for the South Atlantic Ocean. Brazil, for example, refers to it as the “most peaceful ocean” and supports the South Atlantic Whale Sanctuary. The Blue Amazon Concept has also been used mostly for domestic audiences. The material dimension refers to a more practical approach to region-building and includes maritime diplomacy such as port visits and building a presence in African states. Furthermore, efforts have also been made to build defence capacities, promote scientific research expeditions in the South Atlantic Ocean and laying submarine cables such as the one from Brazil to Cameroon.

In terms of Brazil’s strategy, there are both domestic and international constraints. In the case of the former, there is inter-bureaucratic dispute over the allocation of resources; border issues, such as illegal trade, drug trafficking and refugees along the country’s borders with Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia, Paraguay and Venezuela and insufficient support for the institutionalisation of ZOPACAS (The South Atlantic Peace and Cooperation Zone). In terms of international constraints, there is a lack of support from other ZOPACAS states, such as South Africa, which focuses mostly on the Indian Ocean. Furthermore, there are alternative region-building discourses by other countries such as Portugal, Spain and Morocco, and an increase in presence of NATO members.

The Brazilian perspective is framed by three considerations. Firstly, it highlights how the ocean has a long history both as a space for expanding the reach of state authority and for acknowledging its limits. Secondly, there is a growing interest from external actors in the South Atlantic, such as China, India, Russia, and Turkey. Finally, there is an ambiguity over the level of potential interest when engaging with NATO and its member states. Some domestic considerations also include competition over resource allocation priorities and interests, with the South Atlantic essentially having to compete with the Arctic. The Brazilian Navy has been involved in the revitalisation of ZOPACAS as is evident by the recent meeting held in Cape Verde in November 2022.

The future of Brazil, especially considering President Lula’s re-election, is accompanied by expectations that there will be a re-establishment of ties with African states (and potential for engagement with East African partners on defence matters), cooperation with the US and Argentina and Brazil’s recovery from “pariah”

status. While these outcomes are essentially optimistic, there are domestic constraints such as a conservative Congress, as well as complicated civil-military relation).

India and its perspective vis-à-vis the Indo-Pacific raises important questions such as “how applicable is the label of Indo-Pacific for India in the context of its foreign policy and regional relationships” and “where does the construct of the Indo-Pacific fit in India?” Within this context, the Indo-Pacific is a relatively new construct in India. It is linked to two dimensions of its national and domestic environment, namely: how does it strengthen its identity at a national level based on its regional outreach and positioning and what does this mean in terms of the value proposition it brings to the region?

There seems to be an understanding that India has moved away from the Bandung conference and the Non-aligned Movement and exerted a degree of autonomy in its choice of alignment. The Indo-Pacific represents a theatre of opportunity for deepening partnerships and the expression of a level of ambition. During the Cold War, India was seen as a second-choice partner, but now there is recognition that India has a vital role to play in the region. Thus, India has an elevated role and status. Alliances such as QUAD also means that India has new channels for forging economic and military partnerships beyond those such as IBSA. Thus, while its withdrawal from RCEP in 2019 raised concerns about the economic impact, it has now moved closer to Australia.

While the Indo-Pacific seems to have provided many opportunities for India, there are issues that nonetheless prevail. For example, it is important to question whether India looks at the Indo-Pacific beyond the Indian Ocean. One case in point is the fact that India has never returned to the India-Africa summit. Further challenges are: the digital context and who is going to drive the commercial end of the opportunities in the region; whether it will push itself into the great power competition; the extent to which the Indo-Pacific legitimises India’s historical aspirations of being a regional actor; and lastly domestic challenges such as terrorism, transnational crime, unsafe borders and issues of migration.

In terms of China and the Indo-Pacific, it is highlighted that there is a need to differentiate between the Indo-Pacific as a foreign policy concept and what it means in practice. In the case of the former, the dominant media narrative of the Indo-Pacific has specifically focused on the US’s vision for the region which pinpoints China and its BRI as a threat. In fact, its 2022 Indo-Pacific strategy even places the threat of China ahead of climate change. However, it is also important to remember that these narratives do not necessarily represent the entire reality as strategies become structures for our understanding, thus it is important for countries to articulate their respective strategies for the region. In practice, the Indo-Pacific refers to a geographic region where China is not always a threat. China has achieved some success in institutionalising its relationship with Africa and the BRI by building on previous engagements. Moreover, Africa is of interest to China because it offers a reprieve from the tensions in the South China Sea. China is building or financing 46 ports in Africa of which it operates 11.

The Indo-Pacific is not only about policy-making; it has captured the imagination of the epistemic community. Surveys conducted in the Pacific suggest that neither the US nor China is an outright influential winner. China tends to hold more sway in terms of its economic influence while the US has more diplomatic influence.

Overall, when considering China and the Indo-Pacific it is important to remember that China itself has a shifting position. In fact, China may not be as closed to the idea of the Indo-Pacific as is often assumed. In recent times, China has been supporting ASEAN's outlook on the Indo-Pacific. In a sense, this indicates that China is not only concerned with countering the Indo-Pacific but shaping it. Notable too is the fact that China is promoting the Global Development Initiative, which raises the question whether this may be the new BRI.

Concluding Summary

When compared with the Indo-Pacific, the importance of the Atlantic and Southern Oceans is somewhat subliminal but it is a site of increasing interest and competition. It is important to note the absence of an overall pan-Atlantic cooperation agreement, but countries such as Brazil and South Africa can play an important part in initiating this. Conversely, the Indo-Pacific is more active from a security perspective and there are external actors who are actively engaging with this region. The Indo-Pacific can therefore provide important pointers as to how to approach maritime strategies for the Indo-Atlantic.

Key points

- Although the Indo-Pacific is an important maritime region, the Atlantic Ocean must also be included in the geopolitical metrics of the African continent and states such as South Africa.
- There is no pan-Atlantic cooperation agreement and this shortcoming must be rectified as there is an increasing interest and involvement in the Western Hemisphere, often by external actors.
- The Indo-Pacific is defined by different external actors in ways that accord with their regional perspectives and position. The actors can be broadly categorised as follows: resident middle powers, global mercantile powers, mercantile powers/resident landlords, motivated fellow travellers, and indifferent fellow travellers.
- Brazilian engagements in the South Atlantic space focus on region-building that is discursive and material in nature.
- The Indo-Pacific is a theatre of opportunity for India to deepening partnerships and the expression of a level of national ambition.

- China is no longer only concerned with countering the Indo-Pacific concept but could actively contribute to shaping it.

Session 4: Towards Agenda 2063: Youth Perspective on the Maritime Domain

2 November 2022

Chair: Dr Yu-Shan Wu (University of Pretoria)

Participants: Ms Cynthia Chigwenya (Southern Africa Youth Ambassador for Peace), Ms Tshegofatso Ramachela (University of Pretoria/Institute for Security Studies), Mr David Willima (University of Pretoria/Institute for Security Studies)

While the colloquium largely focused on providing perspectives on governance challenges in the Indo-Pacific and Atlantic Ocean maritime regions, this cannot and should not be done without paying close attention to the role that the youth play and can play in the maritime domain. Currently, more than 60 per cent of the continent's population is under the age of 25. Presentations in this session came from youth leaders and senior postgraduate students. The purpose of the session was to deliberate on the following question:

- To what extent is there an interest in and contribution from African youth to deliberations on the maritime domain in the context of the continent's future?

The African youth and the maritime domain

Currently, the involvement of youth in the maritime domain in Africa is not reflective of the number of youths on the continent. There is a lack of youth involvement in matters of governance and development at different levels, and the same is evident in the maritime space and maritime-related issues. In fact, there is a high degree of “double blindness”, namely, “sea-blindness” and “youth-blindness”, where the latter speaks to the role that the youth can play. On the matter of “youth-blindness”, this raises the question of whether this is because the youth is simply not interested enough or whether they do not see themselves represented in maritime domains and thus unable to relate to their peers over issues concerning the maritime domain. The limited number of youth participation in Africa vis-à-vis the maritime domain is a challenge that needs to be addressed.

Furthermore, not only is there limited youth involvement and a general lack of awareness and interest in the maritime domain but there is also a mass exodus of African youth to both coastal cities and European countries. Unfortunately, many of these youths fall prey to human trafficking or perish while trying to traverse the oceans. Consequently,

there is a pressing need to increase youth participation in the maritime domain as well as stem the tide of mass migration from Africa.

Methods to address limited youth participation

One way in which this can be achieved is through increasing maritime domain awareness, which includes discussing maritime issues and how these are linked to other issues. Importantly, this should not only happen in littoral states, but also in land-locked, or land-linked countries. Even within a country, maritime awareness should not be limited to those living in coastal areas but extend to all youths, especially those living around mass bodies of inland water. Furthermore, to truly capitalise on youth participation, it is important that the values that the youth bring to the table, are explored. Involving the youth should thus not only be about fulfilling quotas and making a specific field look representative by including the youth, but rather about a deeper understanding of how the youth can bring unique and creative perspectives and solutions to the maritime domain.

Along with this, it is vitally important to invest in government and academic institutions and restore their integrity and legitimacy. This may be a strategy to ensure the youth are not distanced from democracy to the extent that they are disinvested and choose instead to engage in petty crime, or express voter apathy. This is especially pertinent considering that on the African continent, military coups and unconstitutional changes in power are increasingly being driven by young people. Thus, investing in government and academic institutions is vital to increasing youth participation.

In terms of addressing the youth exodus, there is the possibility of introducing a three-pronged strategy. The first component introduces a blue (maritime-focused) curriculum into existing academic curricula, thus aiming to cultivate a genuine interest in maritime-related aspects among young Africans. This could, for example, include a maritime law module that takes into account UNCLOS and the high seas. This could be further supplemented with a section that addresses the evolution of maritime security by tracing its roots to chartered companies as part of a history module.

The second component looks at cultivating blue skills. This would involve teaching the hands-on expertise young people would need to live and work in coastal areas, and areas near inland bodies of water. Whereas the first component forms the theoretical foundation, the second part constitutes the practical components of the strategy. This component could include both modern and indigenous methods. In fact, there is a need to embrace the Zulu phrase, *lalela ulwandle*, which translates

to “listen to the ocean”. In terms of achieving sustainable marine practices, it is vital to listen to the environment and understand what it is telling us.

“There needs to be a concerted effort to enhance the participation, representation, and inclusion of the youth in the maritime domain. However, as mentioned earlier on, this needs to extend further than just fulfilling quotas”

The third component revolves around blue jobs. These are opportunities within the maritime sector, in areas of academia, conservation, policymaking, governance and many others, set aside specifically for young people. There needs to be a concerted effort to enhance the participation, representation, and inclusion of the youth in the maritime domain. However, as mentioned earlier on, this needs to extend further than just fulfilling quotas. Agendas should not be imposed on the youth, but rather, the youth should be able to express their own unique and creative ideas relating to the maritime domain. This above-mentioned strategy could aid in combatting the indifference and poor maritime literacy that currently hinders enhanced youth involvement in the maritime domain.

It is vitally important to do away with youth tokenism and instead promote genuine youth inclusion, participation, and representation in Africa’s maritime sector and policymaking spaces. Going forward, a cross-institutional study could be conducted, using either surveys, questionnaires or focus groups, in order to gauge the level of youth awareness and interest in maritime-related aspects. This could be the first step in establishing an Africa-centred and Africa-driven ‘blue youth agenda’ which speaks to the AU’s Agenda 2063 and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Ultimately, Africa’s maritime future and African youth are interconnected and should not be conceptualised separately.

On the topic of oceans, it is also important not to view the oceans only as a space from which threats emerge, but as an ocean of opportunities, to resolve existing issues. There is a need to alter the current and predominant way of thinking about the oceans, to reconcile economic objectives and environmentally friendly practices. One solution to these challenges could be the “Great Blue Wall”, an initiative launched at COP26, by the Republic of Seychelles and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN). This Africa-led initiative aims to create interconnected protected seascapes which transcend geopolitical boundaries, in order to protect the oceans, by 2030. The Great Blue Wall is premised on supporting the establishment of fair, inclusive and participatory governance mechanisms. This is an opportunity to scale up the operationalisation of nature-based solutions. Furthermore, despite heightening geopolitical competition, there remains room for cooperation, and the Great Blue Wall initiative epitomises this cooperation.

Concluding Summary

The youth will undoubtedly play a central role in Africa's future. However, this potential cannot be harnessed if the status quo remains. Crucial to invoking change is increasing maritime awareness. This needs to begin from early schooling. Currently, many schools in South Africa, for example, (especially former Bantu education schools) still have a basic education syllabus, while at universities many degree qualifications do not mention of maritime domain. Thus, there is a need to increase maritime awareness in the education of the youth so that the youth can picture a role for themselves in the maritime domain. Ultimately, one cannot speak about Africa's maritime future - without speaking about Africa's youth.

Key points

- The participation of youth in the maritime domain in Africa is not reflective of the number of youths on the continent. Youth involvement is very limited.
- Africa is currently experiencing a youth exodus as many youths are migrating from the continent.
- Maritime domain awareness needs to be increased, in not only littoral states, or coastal cities, but also in land-linked or landlocked countries.
- Increasing youth participation should not only be concerned with fulfilling quotas but should explore more deeply the value that the youth bring to the maritime domain.
- Introducing maritime law and history modules, cultivating blue skills and increasing the representation of the youth in the maritime domain may aid in combatting the mass migration of African youths.

Session 5: Multilateral and Regional Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific and the Atlantic Ocean

3 November 2022

Chair: Dr Philani Mthembu (Institute for Global Dialogue)

Participants: Mr Jaimal Anand (University of Pretoria/Department of International Relations and Cooperation, South Africa), Mr Tim Walker (University of Pretoria/Institute for Security Studies), Prof Licinia Simão (Atlantic Centre), Dr Frank Matteis (United Nations University)

A central part of grasping the emergence of ocean regions involves understanding the role of multilateral and regional institutions and how they shape the governance of these regions. In this context, the purpose of the session was to deliberate the following questions:

- What role do regional and multilateral institutions play in building cooperation, for example the Indian Ocean Rim Association, the Zone of Peace and Cooperation of the South Atlantic, the AU, the Gulf of Guinea Commission, the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries, BRICS, IBSA?
- Is functional cooperation more effective than political institutions?
- What does the fragmentation and overlap of regional institutions say about maritime governance?

Cooperation: Regional and multilateral institutions

The AU has largely been unable to mobilise its strategies and initiatives, and operationalising its objectives remains a challenge. Furthermore, there is insufficient critical analysis and critique of the AU's maritime strategies. Additionally, while there is discussion, which is a good starting point, more critical analysis is needed.

Africa's significance in the debates concerning the Atlantic and Indo-Pacific regions is underpinned by its strategic geographic position. The continent is at the intersection of major sea lanes within these regions, and in the context of 90 per cent of global trade occurring on ships should see Africa playing a larger role in the maritime space. Similarly, from a geographic perspective the continent must include the maritime domain in its strategic calculus. Africa needs to overcome its sea-blindness because a third of African countries are landlocked yet they depend on the oceans for trade. Thirty-nine AU member states are either coastal or island states with a total coastline of 26,000 nautical miles, and 13 million square kilometres constituted combined exclusive economic zones, and the continent has not fully exploited the opportunities emanating from its strategic location.

African interventions for exploiting and securing the opportunities its maritime sphere include: the 2009 Djibouti Code of Conduct, the 2013 Yaoundé Code of Conduct adopted by the Gulf of Guinea countries, the 2014 African Integrated Maritime Strategy (AIMS), the 2016 African Charter on Maritime Security and Safety and Development in Africa also known as the Lomé Charter, and the 2017 Jeddah Amendments to the Djibouti Code of Conduct. These initiatives seek to advance African states' national, environmental, economic and human security interests by seeking to tackle the maritime insecurities of piracy, armed robbery, illicit maritime activity such as illegal unreported and unregulated fishing, and illegal chemical dumping. Thus, these interventions ought to ensure the safe transport of goods and persons on the seas, as well as the safety of the environment that will enable a conducive and sustainable setting for economic development towards a prosperous Africa by 2050.

Although these initiatives offer a substantial amount of confidence in the continent's maritime outlook, they do not necessarily translate into Africa optimizing its geostrategic advantage and in the main, three key challenges hinder progress in this regard. The first is sea-blindness. This is apparent in the paucity of references made both at regional and continental levels to maritime security and the structures intended to mobilise collective action on the continent. Considering the African Continental Free Trade Area Agreement (AfCFTA) is a high priority on Africa's Agenda 2063 which highlights unlocking the continent's development potential, energies should focus on infrastructure development and human resource needs, both on land and at sea in order to efficiently implement the AfCFTA.

The second challenge is the persistent maritime insecurities along Africa's Oceanic Space and the weaknesses in addressing them. Lastly, the stagnant pace, due to a lack of political will to institutionalise maritime security across the continent in a way that synergies are created not only between regional frameworks and the continental agenda but also transnational collaboration beyond the continental space.

Consequently, in order to confront the issues that hinder Africa's progress in the maritime space, four key priorities were identified. The first is to strengthen the security-development nexus within the maritime security space in order to centralise the potential of Africa's blue economies, within the perspective of maritime security. The second priority is energy and the significant role maritime resources can play in the energy sector. The third is digital connectivity and the interconnectedness of the global village. This entails strengthening the underlying sea cables, to ensure that data moves seamlessly across the planet. Lastly, prioritising food security by developing the continent's fishing industry. At present, this industry has an estimated value of US\$ 24 billion, and employs approximately 12 million inhabitants of the continent, but could be so much more with further development.

While the AU has perhaps struggled to operationalise its objectives, there is evidence that various AU bodies are showing the intention of taking maritime security seriously. Other efforts have been made to enhance regional cooperation. The Institute for Security Studies (ISS) recently sponsored the first meeting of the

“Unfortunately, maritime security is often still perceived as a soft security issue and is often not high on the agenda of regional and multilateral institutions”

technical committee for the creation of the Naval Task Force for the Gulf of Guinea (GoG). This task force consists of a committee of navy planners from different African navies deliberating on rules of engagement. Importantly, considering that the task force is not a new idea - it was already put forth in communiqués from the AU’s Political Affairs, Peace and Security Organ - the aim is not to create something entirely new, but rather to build on what exists, and to eventually replicate this model in other regions, like the Southern African Development Community (SADC). In the Atlantic Ocean, the economic and security ties of the United States (US), the European Union (EU), and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) have formed the backbone of trans-Atlantic relations. This has contributed to keeping the North Atlantic a zone of peace and a strong security community strengthened by a shared values.

Furthermore, on the periphery of the G7++ Group of Friends of the Gulf of Guinea (FOGG) a new (albeit informal) initiative is being launched. While many EU countries have initiatives in this region, there has been little cooperation between them. Thus, the EU recently launched its Coordinated Maritime Presences concept which will enhance cooperation between EU countries in the region. The aim is to encourage the sharing of information, such as how to fight piracy, instead of countries operating alone. One important problem identified was that this initiative originally did not consider the perspectives of the African countries and as such there is now an aim to bring together navies of African and European states to create a handbook on best practices.

Unfortunately, maritime security is often still perceived as a soft security issue and is often not high on the agenda of regional and multilateral institutions. This may be in part be due to a dearth of major naval wars in recent decades. Moreover, maritime security has often been discussed in relation to infrastructure at sea, illegal activity at sea and is therefore perceived as a hard security issue. However, the Russia-Ukraine war and its maritime dimensions have begun to shift the paradigm. Furthermore, maritime security is a fluid concept and means different things to different people. In some contexts, it may be linked to hard security, while in other contexts it may refer to free

trade routes or even human security. Either way, states, regional and multilateral organisations need to define what constitutes maritime security.

Functional cooperation versus political institutions

When it comes to political institutions, the United Nations (UN) is a prime example. One of the challenges of the UN, is, however, that it is a massive bureaucracy and highly inflexible which can stall processes. In contrast the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) are both smaller, have a higher degree of flexibility, and are able to quickly pick up and act on issues. When it comes to the Atlantic Ocean, countries often divide the Atlantic into the South Atlantic and the North Atlantic. However, threats and issues don't conform to this divide, and thus political institutions need to become more flexible. Functional cooperation, specifically, has more flexibility, but here the question needs to be asked, what is defined as functional cooperation and what represents dysfunctional cooperation? While several interlocutors have argued that IBSA (India, Brazil and South Africa) represent dysfunctional cooperation this is debatable. In fact, key issues the IBSA agenda has addressed relate to Palestine. Consequently, IBSA is arguably one of the formations epitomising south-south cooperation.

Regarding functional cooperation versus political institutions, political cooperation is one of the main drivers of regional organisations, depending on political affinities and the respective governments. Importantly cooperation is driven by a level of functional purpose. A recent example of functional cooperation is the first Ministerial Meeting of Atlantic African States, held in June 2022. The meeting ended with the adoption of the Rabat Declaration which aims to provide an Inter-African framework for cooperation and deals with issues such as political and security dialogue, maritime connectivity and energy, sustainable development, and the blue economy.

Lastly, cooperation on security issues faces significant challenges because security is at the heart of sovereignty. Additionally, security is at the heart of state-building efforts, which impact both the domestic and international levels. Thus, power balances will impact how cooperation occurs. Ultimately, cooperation on security issues must involve the consideration of long-term effects.

Maritime governance: fragmentation and overlap of regional institutions

Cooperation varies across time. During times of peace, cooperation tends to flourish across sectors such as the economy and trade. However, during war cooperation tends to stop and becomes fragmented into blocks. There are also specific regions where there is more

fragmentation than other regions. For example, while the North Atlantic, structured around NATO, is typically depicted as a zone of peace, the South Atlantic finds itself with more fragmentation and instability. Many of the security threats in this region are due to weaknesses in governments, economic inequality, and transnational organised crime, perpetuating a violent cycle of instability and insecurity. Although there are cooperative frameworks, which link the North and South Atlantic, the capacity of states must be reinforced to address insecurity because states remain primary actors. Ultimately, if the institutions and cooperative frameworks being developed don't become more flexible and overcome divisions, they are essentially immobilising themselves. There is a need for a solution to work through and around the existing divisions and engage all relevant stakeholders in the process of building cooperative frameworks.

Furthermore, in terms of maritime governance, there is a trend towards increasing flashpoints, over issues including Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs), their demarcation, contested maritime boundaries and the like. These flashpoints are occurring not between African states, but rather amongst great and emerging powers. In the context of Africa, the issues occur in the membership of groupings, for example, the Gulf of Guinea Commission, whose membership excludes some geographic GoG states. In this case, interoperability is one of the few challenges which may arise.

Additionally, maritime spaces can be delineated according to various logics, such as geology, law or politics. Often, these delineations result in either competition between two distinct regional formats or cooperation between complementary governance mechanisms. Specifically, political organisations see a high degree of antagonism. For example, in the Atlantic space, NATO embodies a combination of socio-economic and geopolitical criteria that spans over the North Atlantic, while ZOPACAS, defines its identity differently. Referencing the South Atlantic ZOPACAS considers itself marginalised in the global economic and security order, especially in terms demilitarisation. This poses a challenge to maritime governance, specifically when it comes to addressing conflict. For example, under the Regional Security System of the Organisation of American States, the leading NATO member, the US, has responsibility for maritime security of the North Atlantic shores, including the Caribbean. Concurrently, Brazil, the leading ZOPACAS member, shares responsibility for the adjacent maritime space up to the Rio de la Plata. These tensions between regional organisations are also evident in the Indian Ocean, where the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC), dominated by France, conflicts with the AU and SADC to provide regional security in the Southwest Indian Ocean.

A further example of antagonism is the Pan-American approach of the Organisation of American States (OAS), which is at times antagonistic towards South American states. The OAS has a strong regulatory power for dealing with disputes by means of an integrated defence and regional security system, with the US as its dominant power. These delineations do

not function very well in the context of maritime spaces - this is evident in ongoing maritime disputes between states in these regional groupings, for example between Colombia and Venezuela. Essentially, these delineations are more about who should be excluded, vis-à-vis who should be included.

Concluding Summary

Both political institutions and functional cooperation have an important role to play in ocean regions. However, political institutions often struggle to implement their objectives and respond to emerging issues timeously, hampered as they are by size, bureaucracy, and a high degree of inflexibility. Furthermore, antagonisms exist between organisations which limits their efficiency. In contrast, functional cooperation seems to have had more success in responding to emerging issues, evidenced by the first Ministerial Meeting of Atlantic African States held in June 2022 in Rabat. A main point emerging from the meeting session was that although it may be easier to delineate regions and sub-regions into smaller areas, such as the South Atlantic and the North Atlantic, the oceans remain one large, interconnected space. Transnational security threats do not stop at borders, but rather flow across ocean waters, regardless of delineations.

Key points

- The AU needs to engage in critical debates regarding its own maritime strategies.
- Despite some of the AU's shortcomings, there are other indications that maritime cooperation is taking place with the Rabat Declaration and the launching of an informal initiative on the periphery of the G7++ Group of Friends of the Gulf of Guinea as evidentiary.
- Maritime security is often still viewed as a soft security issue and is thus low on the agenda of regional and multilateral organisations.
- Functional cooperation has demonstrated a greater ability to respond to emerging developments than political organisations.
- Political organisations see a high degree of antagonism when it comes to the delineation of maritime spaces which leads to challenges in responding to conflict, for example.

Session 6: African and South African Perspectives on Maritime Governance

3 November 2022

Chair: Prof Licinia Simão (Atlantic Centre)

Participants: Dr Fonteh Akum (Institute for Security Studies), Mr Dhesigen Naidoo (Presidential Change Commission/Institute for Security Studies), Rear-Admiral (ret) Derek Christian (University of Pretoria, Prof Anthoni van Nieuwkerk (University of South Africa)

Africa is located at the intersection of major sea lanes. Thirty-nine AU member states are either coastal or island states and in total, Africa has a coastline of over 26 000 nautical miles, as well as an EEZ of 13 million km². Taking this into consideration, together with the fact that most trade takes place via ships, Africa should be expected to play a vital role. In fact, as a continent, significant strides have been made in the past decades, such as the 2009 Djibouti Code of Conduct, the signing of the Yaoundé Declaration in 2013, and the adoption of the Lomé Charter in 2016. However, framework documents, such as these, do not necessarily translate into optimising Africa's advantage in the maritime domain. Rather, maritime remains rather poorly conceptualised and articulated as a key priority. A reoccurring theme in previous sessions being the absence of a strategic, critical African and even South African position or strategy in the maritime domain. The purpose of the session was to deliberate on the following questions:

- What role for South Africa as a bi-oceanic African country?
- To what extent do Africa's concerns overlap with those of other actors in these regions?
- What are the responses and strategies on the continental and regional level?

“However, framework documents, such as these, do not necessarily translate into optimising Africa's advantage in the maritime domain”

South Africa's role as a bi-oceanic African country

SA's position is at the centre of East and West coincidentally between the Indian and Atlantic Oceans and provides a strong geostrategic position. However, the downside of SA's location is that it's far from its major maritime trading partners, who make up the major maritime hubs of the world, consequently marginalising the country from the grand stage of maritime geopolitics. To substantiate this point, an illustration of global shipping traffic indicates that

although a substantial amount of traffic moves in and around the Southern African coast, it is mostly in transit moving east to west.

SA's ability to fulfil its international hydrographic obligations was underlined as the only significant positive attribute of the country's maritime competencies as it adequately produces signals for ships, in relation to marine traffic, incidents of pollution at sea, location of accidents and submerged containers at sea as part of its NavArea-7 responsibilities for the International Hydrographic Organisation. This encouraging attribute stands out among four key challenges observed.

The first is SA's inability to provide adequate support to incidents at sea in terms of search and rescue missions. SA has an envisaged plan of 12 major assets towards fulfilling its maritime support missions. However, this envisaged plan of assets remains hypothetical, as 2 assets are yet to be operational while at any stage about half the Navy's equipment is not available for search and rescue due to service and maintenance issues. The second challenge is SA's declining relevance in the international maritime security debate with the Navy's lack of participation in global maritime initiatives cited as the source. The third challenge is the declining maritime infrastructure, particularly container harbours in Durban and Cape Town which are ranked 354 and 365, respectively out of 370 harbours by the World Bank. The last challenge is the unclear jurisdiction over the maritime environment as there is no single government entity in charge of this space. In conclusion, it was emphasised that for there to be any progress in overcoming the above challenges, SA would have to strengthen the maritime discourse towards finding solutions through greater cooperation between various sectors of society from academics to policymakers, government departments, practitioners, and leaders.

South Africa undoubtedly plays an important role in Africa considering that it is a bi-oceanic country. In Southern Africa, specifically, South Africa is playing an instrumental role in fulfilling its hydrographic responsibilities. Even in terms of its intellectual capabilities, South Africa is well poised to offer a continental think space, especially as it already houses many institutions doing key work on the continent, such as the ISS. However, there are still many challenges that it faces, which undermine its ability to successfully take advantage of its role as a bi-oceanic country. The first of these is that South Africa has inadequate assets for national and international obligations. It has a large area to survey, however, its resources to do so, such as the availability of its Navy is often severely limited. Currently, South Africa is hardly a maritime power. It may be conceived of as a maritime power on the continent, but only because the bar is exceptionally low.

Secondly, South Africa is experiencing declining relevance in international maritime security debates. This is evidenced by its decreasing participation in maritime symposiums and conferences, for example. Thirdly, South Africa's maritime infrastructure is also in a state of decline with the Ports in Durban and Cape Town being ranked 364/370 and 365/370 respectively, according to "The Container Port Performance Index" in 2021. Fourthly, a further challenge concerns jurisdiction. There is currently no single entity or department in charge of maritime affairs. There are too many actors and too few resources available. Lastly, there is a disconnected and lack of co-ordination vis-à-vis the maritime effort with a lack of communication between different actors, which means that actors are operating in silos.

The significance of developing such a strategy for SA rests on two well-researched facts. The first is that the Indo-Pacific is a centre of global trade and commerce, and the second is that the Indo-Pacific is becoming a new centre of intense geopolitical competition. Consequently, it is imperative for SA to develop such a strategy not only to advance and protect its national interests of economic trade or its values of a rules-based international system that promotes the free and peaceful movement of ships. But to also strengthen its strategic engagement in the Indo-Pacific. By so doing, South Africa and Africa would be positioned at the core of the geostrategic construct of the Indo-Pacific region whose security is inseparable from that of the continent.

In pursuit of achieving these ends, particularly that of a free, open, inclusive, and peaceful Indo-Pacific, SA's multilateral engagements, particularly its engagements at the United Nations (UN), and the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) are identified as platforms that should form part of its strategy. The promotion and revival of enthusiasm towards UN's resolution 2832 of 1971 which declared the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace and the strengthening IORA engagements aimed at fostering strong regional economic cooperation are good places for SA to start. In addition, SA's Indo-Pacific strategy ought to focus on 4 key strategic objectives: the first being energy transition and security, followed by digital partnerships and transformation, then sustainable and inclusive growth within the context of developing the blue economy in an environmentally sustainable manner, and lastly security and defence within the Indo-Pacific that is geared at securing peace in the region eliminating maritime insecurities.

In conclusion it was highlighted that the development of this strategy ought to align with SA's broad policy framework, embrace contributions from the academic community of universities and think tanks, and encompass a regional and continental outlook that represents shared African interests and values.

Overlapping concerns: Africa and other actors

Apart from the challenges facing South Africa specifically, one of the key concerns that African states should share is their current and future marginalisation in the Indo-Pacific. As it stands, many developing and developed countries (at least 10) and three regional organisations (ASEAN, EU and most recently, IORA) have proposed Indo-Pacific strategies, outlooks or visions. However, with neither the AU nor any single African state having launched any such strategy, this may potentially lead to its marginalisation. In fact, the general theme across the already published respective strategies is the general lack of attention paid to Africa. Thus, it is of pivotal importance that South Africa and Africa develop a strategy.

Furthermore, apart from the threat of marginalisation, there are other areas of concern that are shared between Africa and other actors in the region. These include issues such as: maintaining open access to sea lines of communication (SLOC); organized crime, such as IUU fishing and drug and human trafficking; increasing geopolitical tensions, and climate change. The acidification and warming of seas have a major impact on African states, especially coastal cities. Key issues in Africa, such as food insecurity are also impacted by climate change as the warming of oceans negatively impacts the availability of nutrition in maritime resources. Taken

together, these realities may increase the tension for resources. While this certainly portrays a grim future, it can perhaps positively be noted that Africa currently is the only continent that has a Committee of African Heads of State dedicated to studying and addressing climate change.

Responses and strategies on the continental and regional level

As has been mentioned in earlier sections of this report, while in general, Africa lacks a strategic maritime strategy, there have been some initiatives to address some of the above-mentioned concerns. For example, the “Great Blue Wall” is an example of a regional response to issues of climate change, while the creation of the Naval Task Force for the Gulf of Guinea (GoG) attests to the attempts to address a lack of regional cooperation. Along with this, the recent adoption of the Rabat Declaration also provides some evidence that efforts are being made to address the issues identified above.

“Important as well is that South Africa incorporates regional thinking into its vision or strategy”

However, with regards to South Africa specifically, it must be noted, that despite its key position as a bi-oceanic state, it currently lacks an Indo-Pacific strategy. A potential Indo-Pacific strategy for South Africa could and should include a focus on four specific areas: energy transition and security, digital partnerships and transformations, sustainable and inclusive growth, and security and defence. Important as well is that South Africa incorporates regional thinking into its vision or strategy. All in all, a South African Indo-Pacific strategy will contribute to stability, security, and prosperity as well as promote human rights, democracy and international law both at home and abroad.

Concluding Summary

South Africa has a unique position as a bi-oceanic African country. However, as has been highlighted throughout this report it is currently not taking full advantage of its unique position. It is thus of pivotal importance that South Africa adopt an Indo-Pacific strategy. Furthermore, because there are many overlapping areas of concern between South Africa, Africa and other actors, as well as the threat of climate change, transnational organized crime, which undermine the prosperity of our oceans, it is vital that more strategic and purposeful regional and continental strategies are utilized.

Key points

- Although Africa has made some progress in terms of maritime governance (evidenced by the Lomé Charter), it still has a far way to go, especially in terms of prioritising the maritime domain.
- Prioritising the maritime domain will become especially important in the face of climate change which already is negatively impacting food security on the continent.
- Although South Africa's position as a bi-oceanic country should afford it a strategic importance, this is not currently being realised. In the maritime domain, there are various challenges South Africa faces, such as declining maritime infrastructure, decreasing participation in maritime symposiums and a general lack of co-ordinations vis-à-vis the maritime effort.
- It is crucial that Africa and/or South Africa release an Indo-Pacific vision otherwise they will be further marginalised. Africa must raise its voice in order to remain relevant.
- A potential South African Indo-Pacific strategy could include a focus on four specific areas: energy transition and security, digital partnerships and transformations, sustainable and inclusive growth, and security and defence.

Session 7: Policy Dialogue - Bringing Together Research and Practice

3 November 2022

Moderators:

Ambassador Anil Sooklal (Department of International Relations and Cooperation, South Africa)

Ambassador Manuel Carvalho (Embassy of Portugal to South Africa)

Global perspective on the maritime environment

“Globalisation is the norm in today’s world but we have forgotten to include the ocean space in the global village we inhabit because we live in a ‘global infinity.’”

The global maritime environment must take into consideration broader issues such as the current age of opaqueness which is characterised by alliances that do not make sense as well as the strained relations between states brought about by the Russian-Ukrainian conflict. However, we must not fall into the trap of thinking there is a return to the Cold War. It is over; we are not returning to it - as some claim - because the Cold War had a particular global context and dynamic. There is a new dynamic at play, which is transitional. One of the characteristics of the transitional dynamic is the semi-paralysed multilateral global order. In particular, the UNSC is totally paralysed; the very body entrusted with global peace enforcement is helpless and not much can be done to remedy the situation. The reform of the UNSC is moribund. This raises the question of how to deal with a world where global governance is in this state and particularly the implications for maritime governance and security and the importance of the oceans.

This decade can be labelled as ‘dangerous’ and Africa as a powerful - albeit poor - continent must not find itself marginalised. While there are moves for the AU to place the Indo-Pacific on its agenda, a South African position regarding the Indo-Pacific is not yet evident and deserves priority attention.

Globalisation is the norm in today’s world but we have forgotten to include the ocean space in the global village we inhabit because we live in a ‘global infinity.’ The oceans are a neglected frontier. However, hegemonic dominance is rooted in controlling the

maritime environment which is currently playing out in the Indo-Pacific and this is succinctly captured by the German assertion (that the future of the global architecture will be shaped by the Indo-Pacific).

‘Naming and framing’ the oceans depend on countries and their location. Europe and North America refer to the North Atlantic, Brazil the South Atlantic and the Zone of Peace, China lays claim to the South China Sea based on a contested historical interpretation of its territory and sovereignty. Therefore, the oceans are defined in different ways by actors with different interests and this needs to be understood by academics and practitioners alike.

African and South African response to the maritime environment

“Undoubtedly, South Africa’s security is tied into both the Indo-Pacific *and* the Indo-Atlantic. However, the connection between South Africa and its maritime domain is weak as the country is mostly landward focused in thinking and practice.”

Academics, think tanks and government need to investigate the implications of the Indo-Pacific for South Africa and the African continent - with its 38 out of 54 states which are littoral states - to counter the marginalisation that is currently taking place. A particular worry is the absence of any engagement at the AU level with the Indo-Pacific. Indeed, the question that needs to be asked and answered is: Why are we marginalised by ourselves and the greater world out there? One of the reasons is compartmentalising and narrow thinking; there is a dearth of formal and informal cross-fertilisation at all levels amongst all the African and South African actors involved in what is oft referred to as the inter-connected world. However, excluding an African development agenda in the core of an Indo-Pacific strategy will doom to failure any potential progress.

South Africa has a unique geographical position because the country straddles two, possibly three, (The Indian, Atlantic and Southern Oceans - depending on how geography is interpreted) oceans together with a major sea lane around the Cape. Undoubtedly, South Africa’s security is tied into both the Indo-Pacific *and* the Indo-Atlantic. However, the connection between South Africa and its maritime domain is weak as the country is mostly landward focused in thinking and practice. As a result, the importance of the maritime environment is marginalised in its economy together with the (sustainable) exploitation of marine resources. Nonetheless, a decade ago, South Africa was the first African country to formulate an oceans economic strategy, Operation Phakisa, which has since faded into the background.

Likewise, the African Integrated Maritime strategy and the ‘Decade of Oceans 2025’ document have achieved little if anything.

Concluding Summary

It was recommended that a workshop involving all role players (not only academics and think-tanks) be convened to brainstorm the meaning and implications for South Africa and Africa on the rise of the oceans, in particular the Indo-Pacific and the Indo-Atlantic. Amongst the issues that should be deliberated are the following:

- The Indo-Pacific and the Indo-Atlantic as maritime seascapes.
- Emerging and new role players in the maritime seascape.
- Formulating and operationalising a maritime development and security concept. Here it is stressed that terminology that causes antagonism or discomfort amongst states must not be ‘front-loaded’ in discussions or policy papers.
- Africa’s role and priorities regarding the maritime seascape.
- Reinvigorating IBSA which has a particular role and configuration.
- Cooperation between Brazil and South Africa regarding the Indo-Atlantic.
- Encouraging the involvement of China in the Indo-Pacific as an area of cooperation.

Key points

- The global maritime environment must take into consideration broader issues such as the current age of opaqueness, characterised by unconventional alliances, as well as the strained relations between states brought about by the Russian-Ukrainian conflict.
- The multilateral global order is semi-paralysed and this highlights the importance of the implications for maritime governance and security.
- The oceans are named and framed in different ways by actors with different interests and this needs to be understood by academics and practitioners alike.
- The oceans are a neglected frontier. However, hegemonic dominance is rooted in controlling the maritime environment and this is currently evident in the Indo-Pacific.

- Africa is not an active participant in the debates on the Indo-Pacific and has limited involvement in the Indo-Atlantic.
- South Africa's security is tied into both the Indo-Pacific *and* the Indo-Atlantic. However, the connection between South Africa and its maritime domain is weak as the country is mostly landward focused in thinking and practice.

Recommendations for Future Policy-related Research and Collaboration

The final section synthesises the inputs provided by the presenters and participants to identify an agenda for future policy-related collaborative projects.

Research Agenda

The collaborative research agenda is selectively multi-disciplinary, interdisciplinary or trans-disciplinary in nature and the purpose is to establish a collective understanding of the theories and concepts associated with the maritime domain.

The research agenda consists of basic (theoretical) and applied research as follows:

Theoretical research

- Maritime security from an African perspective.
- Maritime security and development: states and non-state actors; traditional and non-traditional security issues.
- Naming and framing the Indo-Pacific, Indo-Atlantic and Southern Oceans as seascapes. What is the nature of an 'Atlantic Ocean Africa' and 'Indian Ocean/Indo-Pacific Africa' and how are they relevant to Africa and South Africa? Is there scope for the development of an 'Indo-Atlantic' concept?
- The evolution of ocean regions
- Landlocked and land-linked states and the maritime domain.
- Ontological security in a maritime domain.
- Youth participation in the maritime domain.
- Climate change and its impact on evolving ocean regions.
- Maritime strategy.
- Small island developing states / large ocean states.
- Geopolitical change and its impact on the oceans and oceans-orientated international organisations and regimes.

- Oceans governance.

Applied research

- Naming and framing the Indo-Atlantic, Indo-Pacific and Southern Oceans from an African perspective.
- An AU maritime security and development strategy for the Indo-Pacific.
- An AU maritime security and development strategy for the Indo-Atlantic.
- An AU maritime strategy for the Southern Oceans.
- South Africa's response to its Atlantic Ocean link and the kinds of development, cooperation and capacity required.
- South Africa's response to its Indo-Pacific link and the kinds of development, cooperation and capacity required.
- South Africa's response to its Southern Ocean link and the kinds of development, cooperation and capacity required.
- The role of BRICS in the evolution of the Indo-Pacific and Indo-Atlantic.