

भारतीय उच्चायोग
पोर्ट लुई, मॉरिशस



High Commission of India
Port Louis, Mauritius

No. POR/NV-41/2020

4 February 2020

The High Commission of the Republic of India presents its compliments to the Secretariat of the Indian Ocean Commission and has the honour to inform the esteemed Secretariat that the Government of India has decided to seek 'Observer' status at the Indian Ocean Commission.

A note on India's Indian Ocean-related activities as well as its proposal for collaboration with the Indian Ocean Commission is enclosed herewith.

The esteemed Secretariat is hereby requested to formally start the procedure to process India's application to become an 'Observer' at the Indian Ocean Commission.

The High Commission of the Republic of India avails itself of the opportunity to renew to the Secretariat of the Indian Ocean Commission the assurances of its highest consideration.

The Secretariat
Kind Attn: Secretary General
Indian Ocean Commission
3rd Floor, Blue Tower, Ebene
Mauritius



India's Proposal Collaboration with Indian Ocean Commission

(Annexure to High Commission of India, Port Louis's Note Verbale no. POR/NV-41/2020 dt 4 February 2020)

India has millennia-old cultural, trade and people-to-people relations with the countries in the Indian Ocean Region. As an Indian Ocean country, India has significant and direct stake in the Indian Ocean Region.

Longstanding Regional Cooperation

2. Acknowledging the significance and well-being of Indian Ocean Region to India's prosperity and security, Government of India has been undertaking various bilateral as well as multilateral cooperation activities with countries in the region. India plays an active role in associations like Indian Ocean Rim Association (**IORA**), Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (**BIMSTEC**) and Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (**IOTC**). As a Strategic Partner of **ASEAN**, India contributes to regional cooperation through various ASEAN-led platforms like **EAS**.

Multi-sectoral Engagement

3. India's engagement with the regional organisations are multi-sectoral. We have been working with various multilateral mechanisms on cooperation areas like economic integration, tourism & cultural exchanges, academic, science and technology corporation, Blue Economy, women's economic empowerment, maritime safety and security, disaster risk management, telecommunications, information technology, railways, fisheries, climate change, counter-terrorism, trans-national crime, public health and IUU fishing. Workshops, seminars and capacity building exercises are regularly hosted by India under these frameworks. India is also contributing to the developmental assistance of the region through various regional mechanisms of which India is a part.

Need for Collective Solutions to Common Challenges

4. The challenges faced by the Indian Ocean need collective solutions. No single country or single organisation is in a position to offer answers to the issues faced by the region. Climate change mitigation efforts and sustainable development of oceans require our immediate attention. In this spirit, India recently announced an initiative called '**Indo-Pacific Oceans' Initiative**', highlighting the importance of the collective and focussed response to the various challenges that we are facing. This also reflects India's readiness to cooperate with other countries and regional organisations to find common solutions.

Commonality of Approach

5. Indian Ocean Commission is one of the oldest and important multilateral organisations in the Indian Ocean Region. It has achieved commendable success under the four Axes identified by it for cooperation. These cooperation verticals, particularly ***Enhanced Economic Integration*** and ***Environment and Sustainable Development***, are areas in which India is working with other regional organisations and countries in the Indian Ocean Region.

Proposed Collaboration with Indian Ocean Commission

6. There is an evident unity of purpose in the activities undertaken by Indian Ocean Commission and India, as far as the Indian Ocean-related issues are concerned. India believes that through its association with IOC as an Observer, it would be able to **learn from the successes of the Commission** as well as to **contribute to the various areas identified by the Commission for regional cooperation**. It would also help India better understand the priorities set by the Commission. This understanding would enable India to support Commission's efforts with similar and complimentary efforts in the various other regional fora where India is a member or a partner. An Observership status at the Indian Ocean Commission would help India to direct our **development partnership** in a more efficient and effective way, in line with the priorities identified by Indian Ocean Commission. India would also be willing to share the best practices, acquired through its engagement with other regional fora like ASEAN and BIMSTEC, pertaining to the four Axes areas.

7. **In view of the above, India believes that its association with the Indian Ocean Commission would be a mutually beneficial endeavour, and based on this belief, seeks 'Observer' status at the Indian Ocean Commission to realise this potential.**
