



### *Press Release*

## **Maritime Security: Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Regional Coordination Operations Centre (RCOC) and Information Fusion centre-Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR)**

**21 February 2023** – Captain Sam Gontier, Director RCOC and Captain Rohit Bajpai, Director, IFC-IOR signed a MoU this Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> February 2023 to promote collaboration and exchange and cooperation of personnel, information, technology, and best practices in the field of maritime safety and security in the Indian Ocean.

Initiating a dynamic partnership in the Indian Ocean is the main objective of the MoU signed between the RCOC and IFC-IOR. This initiative is part of the extension of the operationalization of the Western Indian Ocean Maritime Security Architecture in line with India's maritime policy - Security and Growth for all in the Region (SAGAR). Such an approach will allow the region to effectively developing a common operational maritime picture for an improved Indian Ocean Maritime Security.

The Maritime Security Architecture is implemented by the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) and supported by the Regional Maritime Information Fusion Centre (RMIFC), the Regional Operations Coordination Centre (RCCO) and the national centres of the seven signatory countries (Comoros, Djibouti, La Reunion(France), Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius and Seychelles) to the MASE Agreements.

The Maritime Security Architecture which covers more than 14 million km<sup>2</sup> in the Western Indian Ocean. Its efficiency and its added value will, however, be optimal only with the concretization of partnerships and institutional collaboration with third States beyond the Western Indian Ocean. The collaboration with the IFC-IOR will therefore contribute to complete the overall picture of the maritime situation throughout the Indian Ocean.

Intervening during the signature, the Directors of RCOC and IFC-IOR in India were unanimous on the need to network the structures responsible for the collection, analysis and dissemination of maritime information as well as for actions at sea.

While there is an increasing focus on the Ocean Economy, the seas are indeed the ideal place for all kinds of crimes, traffics and threats. With maritime areas linked by the world's busiest shipping routes and the emergence of various transnational crimes, it is essential to bring together actors with common interests. Information, when available and shared, is an effective preventive weapon against maritime crimes and threats. Such a partnership will enable the processing of maritime information to enable States to better monitor and control maritime spaces and, more broadly, to improve the governance of the oceans in compliance with established international conventions.

---



INDIAN OCEAN  
COMMISSION



Though the RCOC and the IFC-IOR, each has its **own mandate and tasks**, both aim at addressing human security, environmental security and transnational organized crime. Both Centres have **shared perspectives** on security threats, but both are all limited in the scope of the coverage of the maritime zone while the vessels travel everywhere.

The MoU will thus enable to **build trust and help each other** to better align strategic perspectives across the region and feed into national and regional policymaking.

#### Contacts

##### RCOC

- Captain. Sam Gontier  
Director RCOC  
[sam.gontier@gov.sc](mailto:sam.gontier@gov.sc)  
(+248) 282 6716

##### IFC-IOR:

- Captain. Rohit Bajpai  
Director IFC-IOR  
[ifc-ior.gurugram@navy.gov.in](mailto:ifc-ior.gurugram@navy.gov.in)  
(+0124) 220 8385

[communication@coi-ioc.org](mailto:communication@coi-ioc.org)

---