

Indian Ocean Naval Symposium

July 3, 2021

In news

The 7th edition of Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS), a biennial event, was hosted by the French Navy at La Réunion from 28 June to 01 July 2021.

Key updates

- The Symposium held panel discussions themed on the three IONS working Groups viz., HADR, Maritime Security and Information Sharing & Interoperability.
- The Naval Maritime Foundation (NMF) also participated in the Panel Discussion on HADR.

About Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS)

- IONS is a **voluntary initiative that seeks to increase maritime cooperation among navies of the littoral states of the Indian Ocean Region** by providing an open and inclusive forum for discussion of regionally relevant maritime issues.
- In the process, it endeavours **to generate a flow of information between naval professionals** that would lead to common understanding and possibly cooperative solutions on the way ahead.
- The IONS initiative was **launched by India in February 2008**.
- It seeks to enhance maritime cooperation among Navies of the littoral states of the IOR by providing an open and inclusive forum for discussion of regionally relevant maritime issues that would lead to common understanding on the way ahead.
- The forum helps to preserve peaceful relations between nations, and thus is critical to building an effective

maritime security architecture in the Indian Ocean Region and is also fundamental to our collective prosperity.

- Subsequent seminars and meetings of the 'Conclave of Chiefs' have been held at the commencement of each two year IONS Chairmanship.
- The **chairmanship and location of the Symposium rotates between the various member states.**
- **The chairmanship of IONS has been held by India (2008-10)**, UAE (2010-12), South Africa (2012-14), Australia (2014-16), Bangladesh (2016-18) and Islamic Republic of Iran (2018-21). France assumed the Chairmanship on 29 Jun 21 for a two-year tenure.
- Taiwan will assume the Chairmanship in 2022

IONS Conclave of Chiefs

- IONS Conclave of Chiefs (CoC) is the decision-making body at the level of Chiefs of Navies, which meets biennially.
- 6th IONS and CoC was conducted by the Iran Navy in April 2018 at Tehran.
- Owing to the pandemic, the CoC 2021, will be hosted by French Navy later this year.

Members & Observers

IONS includes 24 nations that permanently hold territory that abuts or lies within the Indian Ocean, and 8 observer nations:

Members

- **South Asian Littorals:** Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Pakistan, Seychelles, Sri Lanka and United Kingdom (British Indian Ocean Territory)
- **West Asian Littorals:** Iran, Oman, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates
- **East African Littorals:** France (Reunion), Kenya, Mauritius, Mozambique, South Africa, and Tanzania.

- **South East Asian and Australian Littorals:** Australia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, Thailand and Timor-Leste.

Observers:

China, Germany, Italy, Japan, Madagascar, the Netherlands, Russia and Spain.

