

2023 MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN ASEAN AND THE INDIAN OCEAN RIM ASSOCIATION

Adopted in Jakarta, Indonesia on 4 September 2023

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (hereinafter referred to as "ASEAN") with its Secretariat located in Jl. Sisingamangaraja No.70A Jakarta, Indonesia, and the Indian Ocean Rim Association (hereinafter referred to as "IORA"), with its registered office at NeXTeracom Building 3rd floor, Tower I, Cybercity, Ebene, Republic of Mauritius, hereinafter are referred to singularly as the "Participant" and collectively as the "Participants";

CONSIDERING ASEAN as an intergovernmental regional organisation whose purposes, as expressed in the ASEAN Charter, are, among others, to maintain the centrality and proactive role of ASEAN as the primary driving force in its relations and cooperation with its external partners in a regional architecture that is open, transparent, inclusive, resilient, and rules-based;

REAFFIRMING the commitment of ASEAN to maintain close and beneficial cooperation with existing international and regional organisations with similar aims and purposes, and explore all avenues for even closer cooperation among themselves;

CONSIDERING IORA as an intergovernmental regional organization which aims at strengthening regional cooperation and sustainable development within the Indian Ocean region; focusing on those areas of economic cooperation that provide maximum opportunities for development, shared interest and mutual benefits; and, promoting liberalisation, removing impediments and lowering barriers towards a free and enhanced flow of goods, services, investment, and technology within the Indian Ocean Rim;

WELCOMING the opportunity for the cooperation between ASEAN and IORA to maintain and enhance peace and prosperity in both regions through the conclusion of mutually beneficial cooperation between them; and

DESIRING to strengthen cooperation between the two Participants for the benefit of their Member Countries,

HAVE REACHED THE FOLLOWING UNDERSTANDING:

PARAGRAPH 1 OBJECTIVE

The objective of this Memorandum of Understanding (hereinafter referred to as "MoU") is to set out practical cooperation between the Participants to be undertaken by their respective Secretariats.

PARAGRAPH 2 GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF COOPERATION

The Participants will aim to act in a spirit of close cooperation through regular consultations on matters of common interest on prioritised areas and programmes, which might include joint initiatives to be decided by the Participants.

PARAGRAPH 3 AREAS OF COOPERATION

The Participants will prioritise their cooperation in the following areas:

- (a) **Priority areas of cooperation of the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP)**, namely maritime cooperation, connectivity, United Nations Sustainable Development Goals 2030, economic and other possible areas of cooperation, and the IORA Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (IOIP);
- (b) **Blue Economy** referring to the sustainable, resilient and inclusive use, governance, management and conservation of oceans, seas as well as marine and coastal resources and ecosystems for economic growth across various sectors, such as fishery, aquaculture, maritime transport, renewable energy, tourism, climate change, and research and development, while improving human well-being and social equity;
- (c) **People-to-People Exchanges**, through seminars, workshops, conferences, exhibitions, documentaries and other events facilitating exchange of ideas, and learning experiences; and
- (d) **Digital and Green Economies**, and other areas of cooperation to be decided by the Participants such as supply chain resilience and smart cities.

PARAGRAPH 4 MODALITIES FOR COOPERATION

1. The Participants through their respective Secretariats will jointly review their cooperation and develop a 'Cooperation Plan' that would identify the specific activities or programmes to be implemented under this MoU.
2. The Participants will implement this MoU in conformity with their respective regulations, rules, and administrative practices.

PARAGRAPH 5 FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENT

Nothing in the MoU shall impose any financial or budgetary obligation upon either Participant. Without prejudice to specific agreements on a case-by-case basis, joint action will not give rise to any financial contribution, compensation, or reimbursement by either Participant.

PARAGRAPH 6 EFFECT OF MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

This MoU serves only as a record of the Participants' intentions and does not constitute or create obligations under international and domestic law and will not give rise to any legal process and will not be deemed to constitute or create any legally binding or enforceable obligations, express, or implied.

PARAGRAPH 7 SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTE

Any disputes or differences between the Participants concerning the interpretation, application, and/or implementation of the provisions of this MoU will be settled amicably through consultations and/or negotiations between the Participants, and will not be subject to any dispute settlement mechanism.

PARAGRAPH 8 OTHER RIGHTS AND INTERESTS

Notwithstanding anything contained in this MoU, where the implementation of cooperation under this MoU affects any Participant's rights and interests with respect to its confidentiality or secrecy of documents, information and data, that Participant may take appropriate steps or consult with the other Participant to ensure that its right and interest are protected and safeguarded.

PARAGRAPH 9 REVISION, MODIFICATION, AND AMENDMENT

1. Either Participant may request in writing a revision, modification, or amendments of all or any part of this MoU.
2. Any revision, modification, or amendment agreed to by the Participants will be reduced into writing and will form part of this MoU.
3. Such revision, modification, or amendment will enter into effect on such date as may be determined by the Participants.
4. Any revision, modification, or amendment will not prejudice the benefits and commitments arising from or based on this MoU before or up to the date of such revision, modification, or amendment.

PARAGRAPH 10 ENTRY INTO EFFECT, DURATION, AND TERMINATION

1. This MoU will enter into effect on the date of signing and will remain in effect for a period of two (2) years.
2. This MoU may be extended upon mutual consent of the Participants in writing.
3. This MoU may be terminated by either of the Participants by giving not less than six (6) months' written notice in advance of its intention to terminate this MoU to the other Participant. Such termination will not affect the implementation of ongoing activities or programmes which have been agreed upon prior to the date of termination.

SIGNED at Jakarta, Indonesia, on the Fourth Day of September in the Year Two Thousand and Twenty-Three, in two original copies in the English language, both texts being equally valid.

For ASEAN
DR. KAO KIM HOURN
Secretary-General of ASEAN

For IORA
DR. SALMAN AL FARISI
Secretary-General of IORA