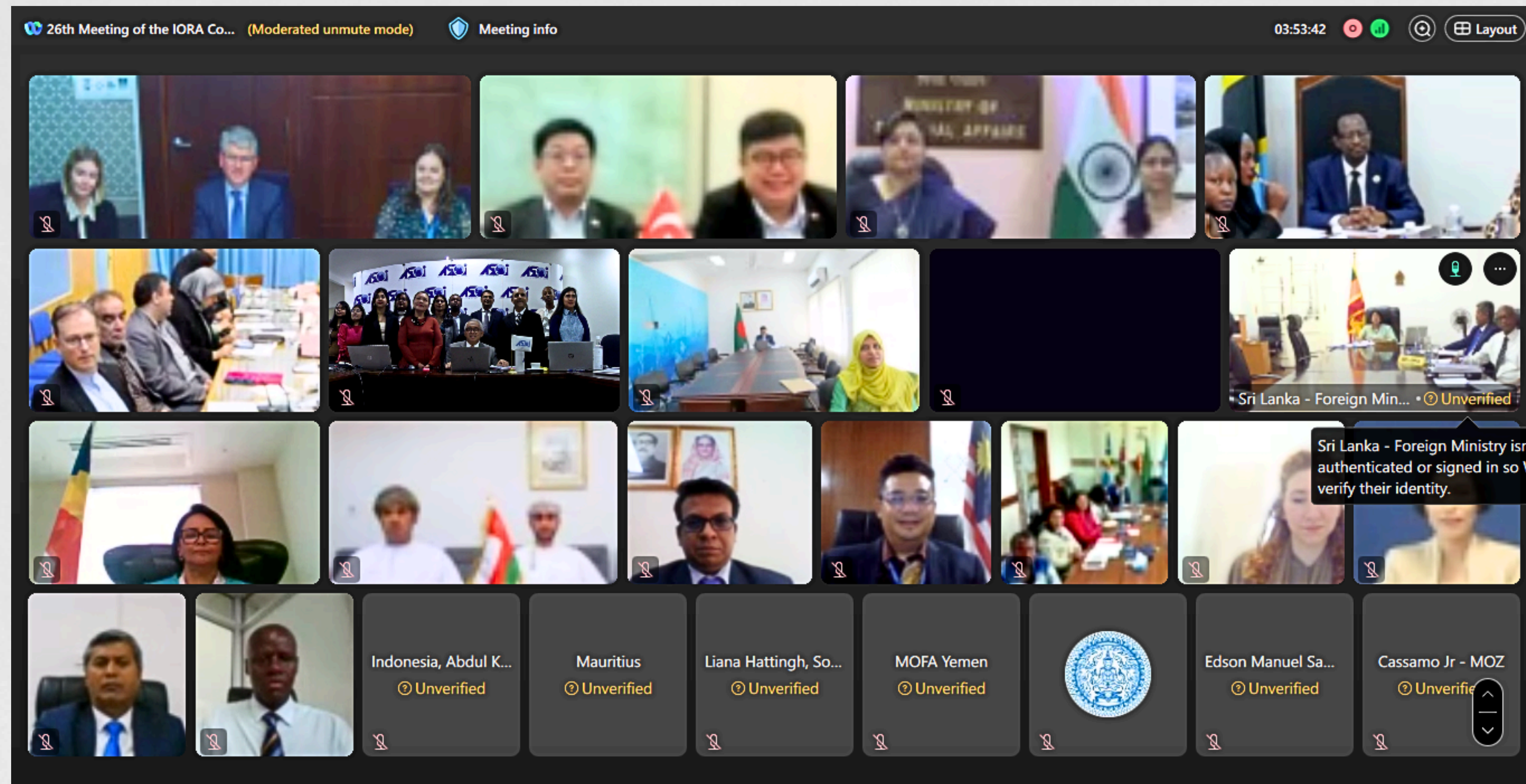


26TH MEETING OF THE IORA COMMITTEE OF SENIOR OFFICIALS



The 26th Meeting of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) was convened virtually on May 30-31, 2024. Hosted by the Government of Sri Lanka, the current IORA Chair, the CSO was focussed on the theme “Strengthening Regional Architecture: Reinforcing Indian Ocean Identity.”

The virtual meeting commenced with insightful remarks from Sri Lanka (Chair), India (Vice-Chair), Bangladesh (Past Chair), and the Secretary-General of IORA, H. E. Salman Al Farisi. The meeting proceeded with a detailed review of the agenda items by IORA Member States, IORA Specialized Agencies, and the IORA Secretariat.

The CSO, serves as the second-highest decision-making body within the IORA and plays an essential role in reviewing, discussing, and making recommendations on various agenda items, which are subsequently forwarded to the Council of Ministers (COM) for final approval. Comprising senior government officials from IORA Member States, the CSO meets bi-annually, with the provision for additional sessions as mutually agreed upon by Member States.

IORA Business Conclave 2024

The Ceylon Chamber of Commerce, the Chair of the Indian Ocean Rim Business Forum, in partnership with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Sri Lanka held the IORA Business Conclave 2024 in Colombo, Sri Lanka, from 28-29 May 2024 with the theme “Sustaining Growth - Bridging Horizons”. The event was launched by the Honourable Ali Sabry, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Sri Lanka.

The conclave brought together business leaders, industry experts, and professionals from across the Indian Ocean Rim region. Participants shared insights and discussed emerging trends in relation to ICT, Agriculture, Logistic, Tourism, Renewable Energy, SME Development and Women Empowerment sectors. The event attracted 216 delegates, including 70 international businesspersons from 13 Indian Ocean Rim Association Member States who engaged in collaboration and knowledge-sharing, networking through meaningful Business to Business activities.



SECOND WORKSHOP ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF IORA GUIDELINES TO COMBAT IUU FISHING, 02 - 04 MAY



Held in Saint Dennis, La Reunion from 2-4 May 2024, the Workshop was organized by the Ministries of Foreign Europe and Foreign Affairs of France and Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia. It is the follow-up of the First Workshop held in Jakarta, Indonesia, on 12-14 September 2023. The meeting was attended by 10 Member States, 1 Dialogue partners, France Development Agency (AFD) and Indian Ocean Commission (IOC). The IORA Guideline, initiated by France and Indonesia, aims to enhance cooperation among IORA Member States in combating IUU Fishing and promoting sustainable marine fisheries management. This Second Workshop aimed to gather the inputs from IORA Member States to develop a comprehensive guideline addressing Illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) Fishing.

INDIA-IORA CRUISE TOURISM CONFERENCE, NEW DELHI, INDIA, 13-14 JUNE



The India-IORA Cruise Tourism Conference took place in New Delhi, India, from 13-14 June 2024. The Republic of India Ministry of External Affairs and the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI) co-hosted the event with 10 Member States in attendance: Bangladesh, India, Kenya, Madagascar, Maldives, Mozambique, Seychelles, South Africa, Sri Lanka, and Tanzania. The conference was partially funded through the IORA Special Fund and was an Indian Ocean Rim Business Forum activity. Panel discussions focused on identifying business opportunities, improving the business environment by facilitating dialogue between business and government stakeholders including infrastructure, regulation, and innovation, promoting inclusion of women, and sustainability in the sector. Participants exchanged perspectives on best practices and cross-fertilized ideas to enhance the sector in the IORA region. The conference included the launch of the FICCI commissioned knowledge paper titled “Sailing to New Horizons”.

IORA SECRETARIAT AT THE PAMPLEMOUSSES GOVERNMENT SCHOOL'S SPECIAL NEEDS INTEGRATED UNIT

IORA Secretariat engaged with the students of Pamplemousses Government School's Special Needs Integrated Unit. This event underscored the importance of inclusivity, celebrating the joy, enthusiasm, and talents of children.

The day was filled with a variety of activities designed to bring smiles to the faces of the children. IORA Secretariat interacted with the children, participating in activities such as face painting and drawing. These initiatives by the IORA Secretariat are aimed at fostering people-to-people contact, promoting understanding, and building stronger, more inclusive communities.



➤ **FOURTH BAY OF BENGAL MARITIME DIALOGUE, 7TH-8TH MAY 2024, COLOMBO, SRI LANKA**



IORA participated at the Fourth Bay of Bengal Maritime Dialogue held on 7th and 8th May 2024 in Colombo Sri Lanka, which was organized by the Pathfinder Foundation and the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue. The latter organised a series of events from 2021 to 2023 to provide a space for dialogue on maritime affairs in the Bay of Bengal and explore synergies for further regional collaboration.

During these two days' dialogue, there were panel discussions on significant topics for an enhanced maritime domain awareness and building disaster resilience. IORA Secretariat representatives highlighted the need for more collaboration and sharing of best practices in dealing with the maritime challenges and disaster management and preparedness.

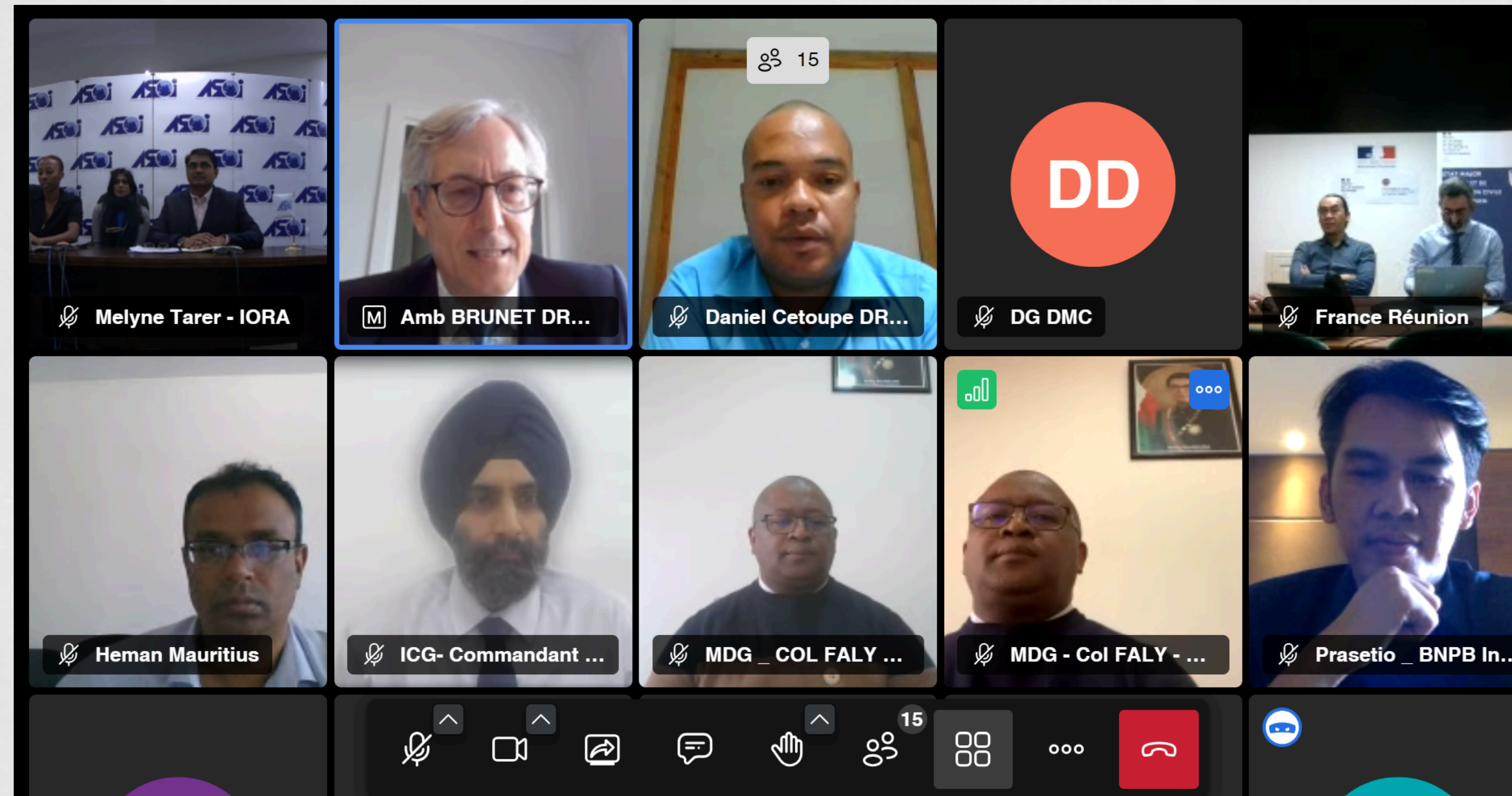
➤ **SUFIP SUSTAINABLE FINANCE IN THE INDO-PACIFIC, 24 - 25 JUNE 2024, BANGKOK THAILAND**



On June 24th - 25th, 2024, IORA participated in SUFIP II 2024: Sustainable Finance in the Indo-Pacific, hosted in Bangkok, Thailand. The event marked a significant platform for critical discussions on adaptation financing in the region.

During the panel session on "Finance Resilience - Adaptation Finance in the Indo-Pacific," IORA contributed insights aligned with its Indo-Pacific Outlook adopted in 2022. Key highlights included emphasizing the pivotal role of the blue economy sector in the Indian Ocean Rim (IOR), particularly focusing on blue carbon initiatives.

➤ SECOND MEETING OF THE WORKING GROUP ON DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT (WGDRM), 22 MAY 2024



The 2nd Meeting of the Working Group on Disaster Risk Management (WGDRM) was held virtually on 22nd May 2024, by France as the Chair of the Working Group and Madagascar as Coordinating Country for Disaster Risk Management. 23 participants from 11 Member States attended the meeting. The outcome document along with the revised workplan is being prepared and will be circulated to Member States soon.

➤ SIGNING OF THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU) BETWEEN IORA AND UNECA, 19 JUNE 2024

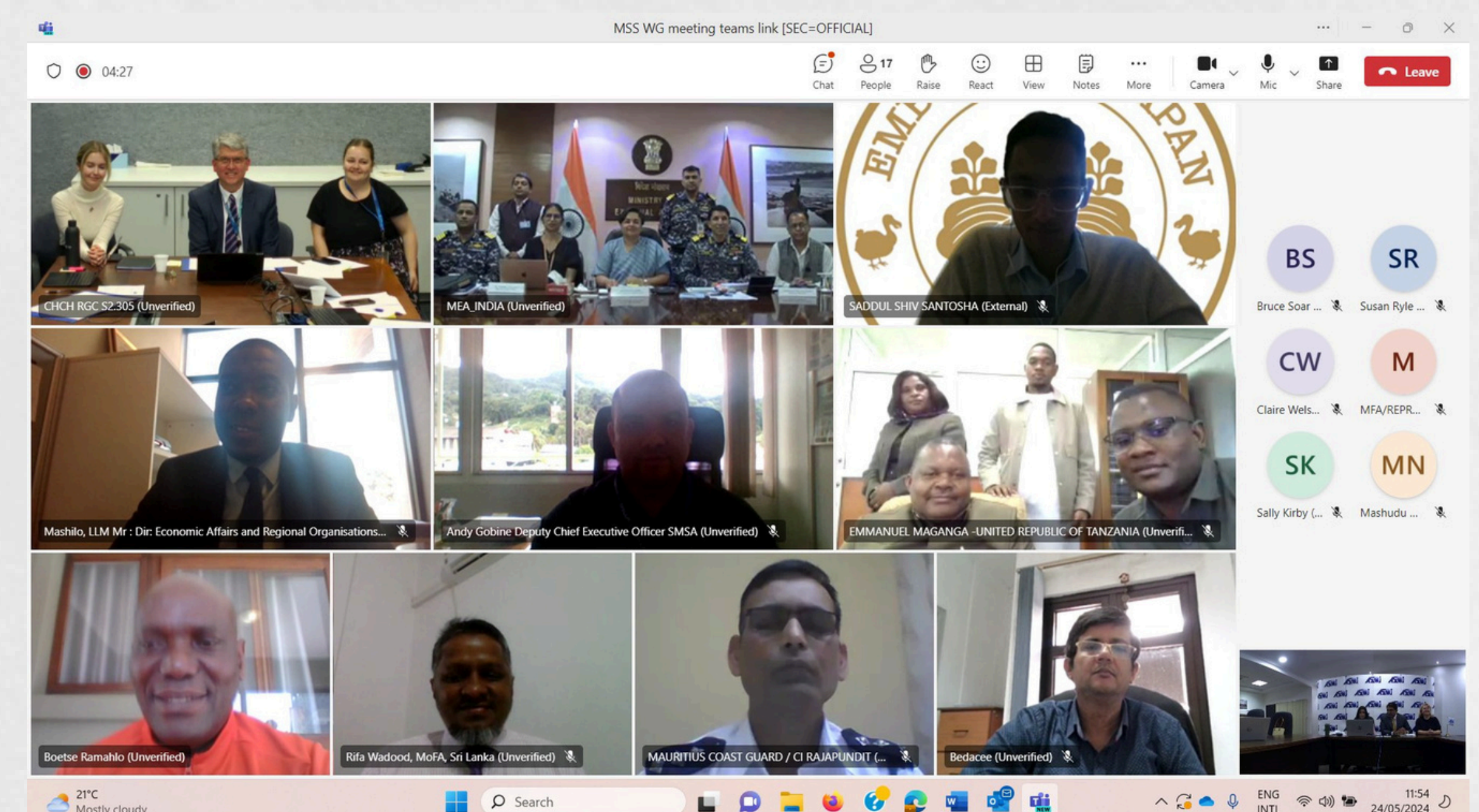
IORA signed an MOU with the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, Sub-Regional Office for Eastern Africa (UNECA SRO-EA) on 19 June 2024. This MOU serves to structure the collaboration of both parties in dispensing their respective blue economy-related knowledge, tools, information, network, and support facilities, to assist the partner states, affiliate agencies, regional economic communities, and other agreed stakeholders of both parties. The objectives of this collaboration are to promote economic, social, and ecological development of the blue economy in Africa and the IORA Region; strengthen regional blue economy capacity and promote international cooperation in the blue economy.

➤ FOURTH WORKING GROUP MEETING ON MARITIME SAFETY AND SECURITY (WGMSS), 24 MAY 2024

The 4th Working Group Meeting on Maritime Safety and Security (WGMSS) was held on 24th May 2024 virtually, with the participation of 7 Member States including Australia as Chair of the Working Group and India as Coordinating Country for Maritime Safety and Security.

The objective at the meeting was to streamline and rationalize the workplan to a more concise one.

There was also a dedicated session with 4 Dialogue Partners (UK, US, Japan & Russia) after the WGMSS meeting, highlighting their active engagement for an enhanced maritime safety and security in the region.



➤ **IORA SECRETARIAT PARTICIPATED IN THE ASEAN-AUSTRALIA INDO-PACIFIC WORKSHOP ON THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY FOR SUSTAINABLE AQUACULTURE, 21-22 MAY 2024**



IORA Secretariat participated in the ASEAN-Australia Indo-Pacific Workshop on the Use of Technology for Sustainable Aquaculture, which was held on 21-22 May 2024, Bali, Indonesia, was jointly organised by Indonesia and Australia. The two-day Workshop enabled ASEAN Member States, Timor-Leste, Pacific Island Forum (PIF) Countries and IORA to exchange views and practices on the use of technology for sustainable and smart aquaculture. This workshop is part of the implementation of the IORA-ASEAN MOU, more specifically on the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific, Blue Economy and People-to-people exchange.

➤ **WORKSHOP ON MARITIME DOMAIN AWARENESS IN THE INDIAN OCEAN- ENHANCING REGIONAL INFORMATION SHARING, 10-12 JUNE 2024.**



IORA Secretariat participated in the workshop on Maritime Domain Awareness in the Indian Ocean-Enhancing Regional Information Sharing held in New Delhi, India, on 10-12 June 2024.

Mr Shivraj Dhuppe, Director for Intervened through virtual mode on 12th June 2024 as one of the speakers at the session on the Role of regional and international organizations in facilitating Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA).

The session explored the necessity for collaboration of the Regional and International Organisations such as Indian Ocean Commission (IOC), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and IORA in facilitating MDA and the need for further cooperation for an enhanced maritime safety and security.

➤ **MEETING WITH COMBINED TASK FORCE (CTF) 150- COMBINED MARITIME FORCES (CMF), 25TH JUNE 2024**

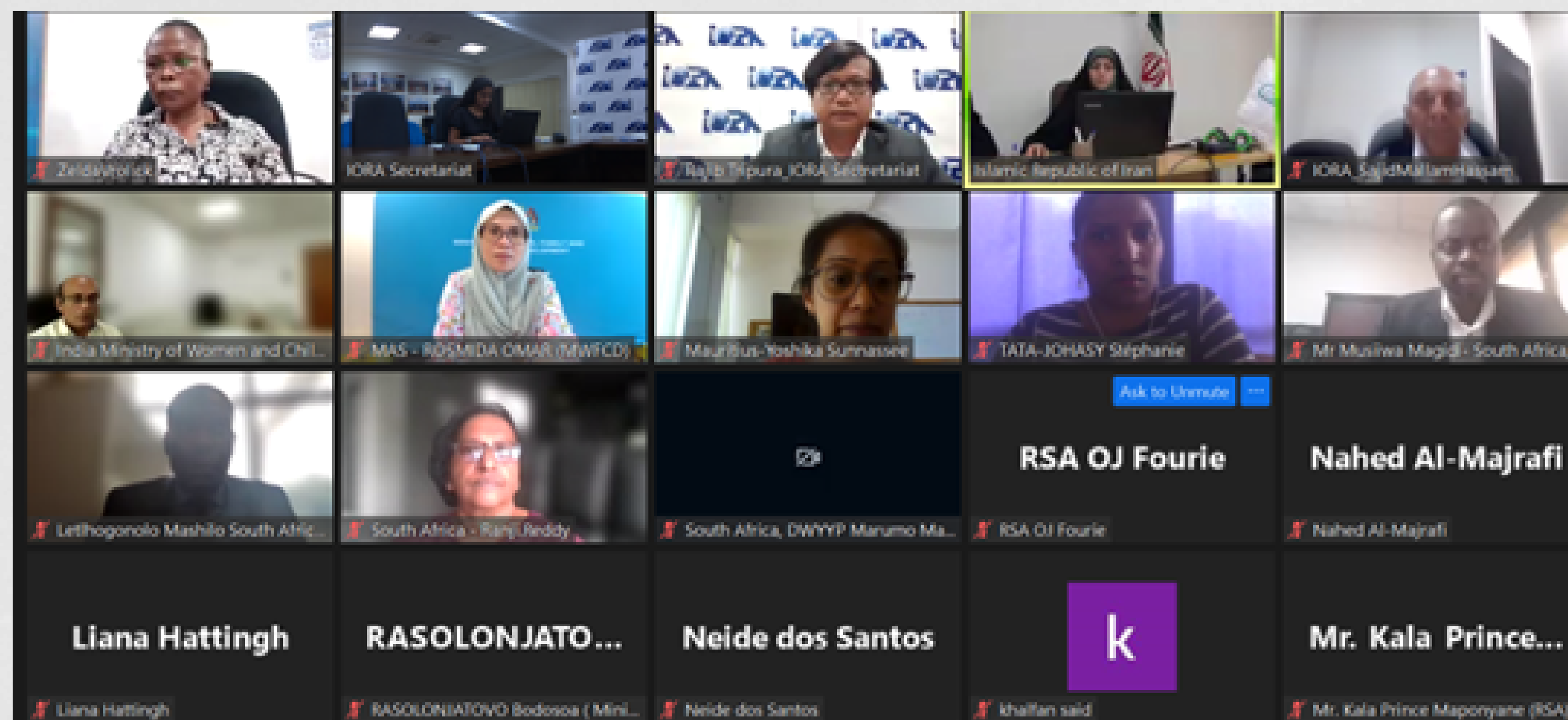


A delegation from Combined Task Force (CTF) 150, which is one of the five task forces operated by Combined Maritime Forces (CMF) met with IORA officials to discuss the possibility for cooperation on Maritime safety and security in Indian Ocean Region. The CTF 150's mission is to disrupt criminal and terrorist organizations and their mandated related illicit activities by restricting their freedom of maneuver in the maritime domain.

During the interaction the overview of the work on Maritime Safety and Security of the Working Group on Maritime Safety and Security, the proposed MoU between the IORA and the Information Fusion Centre in the Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR) and on how best can CTF 150 work together with IORA and other regional organizations such as Indian Ocean Commission in capacity building to enhance maritime safety and security across the Indian Ocean region were discussed.



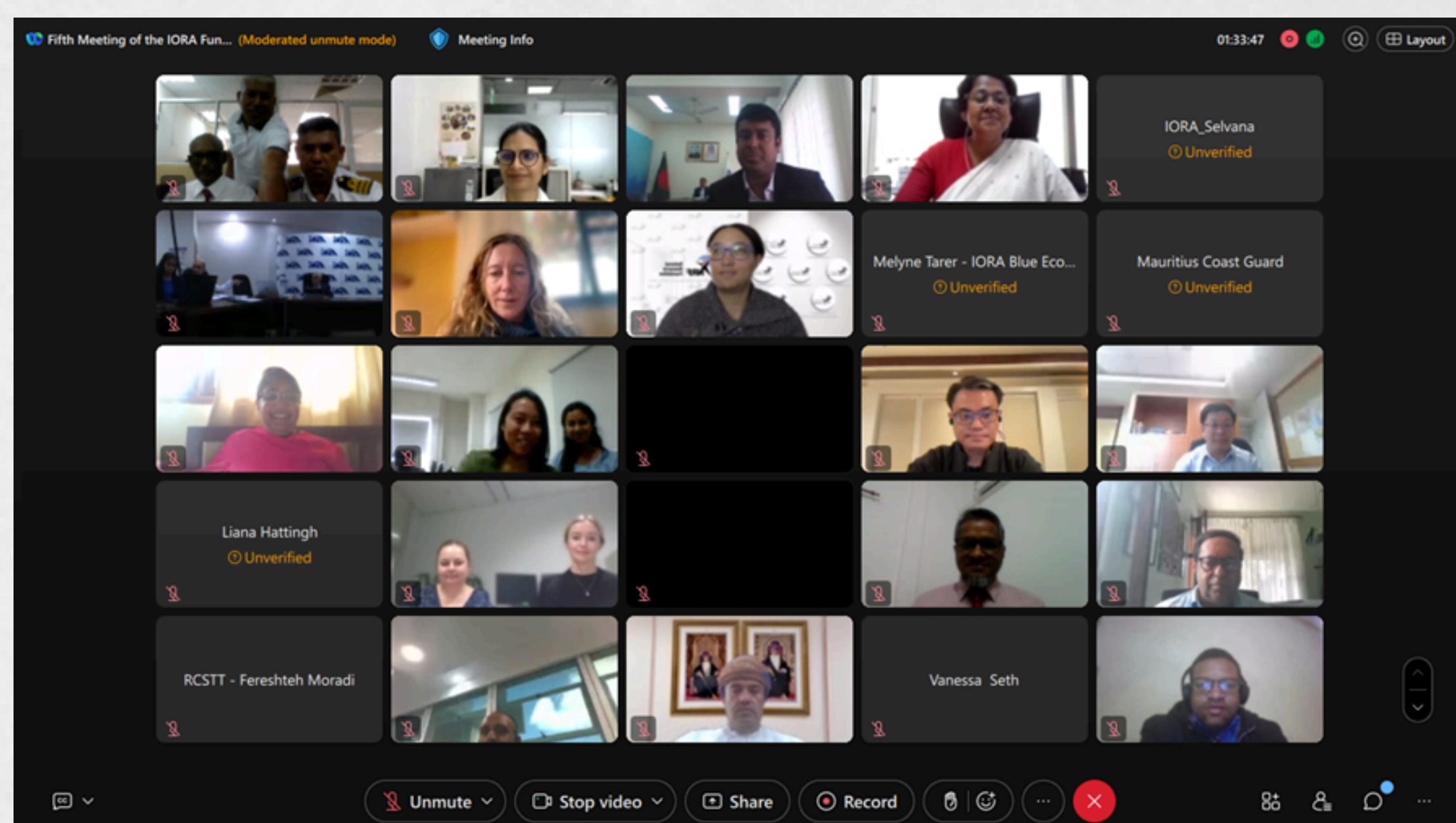
9TH MEETING OF WORKING GROUP ON WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT (WGWEE), 15 APRIL 2024



The 9th Meeting of the IORA Working Group on Women's Economic Empowerment (WGWEE) was held virtually on 15th April 2024, under the Chairship of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The Chair, Dr Karimi, Director General of the Vice-Presidency for Women and Family Affairs of Iran welcomed delegates, and reiterated Iran's commitment in working with IORA's functional bodies to promote the mainstreaming of Women's Economic Empowerment across IORA priority areas. She further invited Member States to provide an update as to the status of implementation of activities under the WGWEE's workplan. The meeting was attended by the 11 IORA Member States namely Comoros, India, Iran, Kenya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mozambique, Oman, South Africa and Sri Lanka.



FIFTH MEETING OF THE FUNCTIONAL BODIES' CHAIR AND COORDINATING COUNTRIES (FBC-CC), 23 APRIL 2024



The 5th Meeting of the FBC-CC was held on 23 April 2024, virtually. It was an occasion for IORA functional bodies' Chairs to provide an update as to activities implemented in the last 6 months, as well as to highlight any coming events by their respective Working Group/Forum under their Chairship. This meeting precedes every Committee of Senior Official (CSO) Meeting and allows the effective reporting of initiatives undertaken by IORA Member States to IORA primary bodies, i.e CSO and Council of Ministers.

TRIPARTITE MEETING BETWEEN IORA, EUROPEAN UNION AND SEYCHELLES, 20 JUNE 2024

A tripartite meeting between the European Union and Seychelles, was facilitated by IORA Secretariat on 20 June 2024, virtually, to kick-off the collaboration with the European Union within IORA frameworks. Seychelles expressed interest to become the Coordinating Country for the European Union that has become the 12th Dialogue Partner of IORA. The primary agenda of the meeting was mainly to discuss on the role of Seychelles as the coordinating country for the EU and way forward for the future cooperation within IORA. In practice, every IORA Dialogue Partner has been assigned an IORA Member State to facilitate their engagement within the organization, and to promote cooperation in the region and beyond. This is in accordance with the 'Regulations for implementation of Article 4 (b) (i) of the IORA Charter on status of Dialogue Partnership' where it was mentioned that there will be a Coordinating Country for each Dialogue Partner.

➤ **SUB-COMMITTEE ON FINANCE (SCF) OF THE COMMITTEE OF SENIOR OFFICIALS MEETING (CSO) WAS HELD ON 7 MAY 2024**

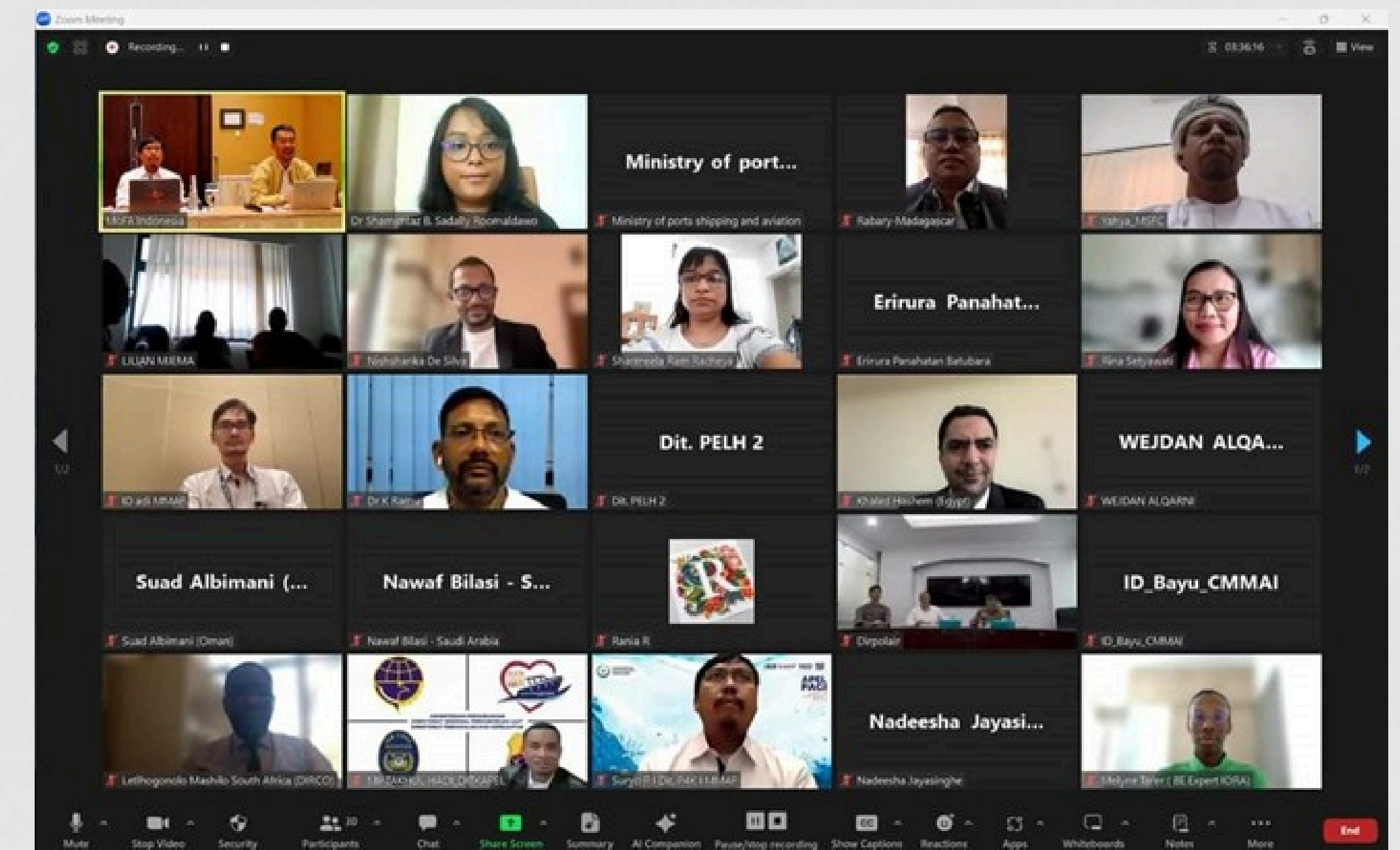
The Sub-Committee on Finance (SCF) of the Committee of Senior Officials Meeting (CSO) was held virtually on 7 May 2024. It was chaired by the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka. The Meeting was attended by representatives of IORA Member States and the Secretary-General of IORA.

The progress of all financial-related matters of the IORA Secretariat for the period ending 30th April 2024 was reviewed in this virtual meeting.



➤ **WEBINAR ON MARINE DEBRIS: MARINE WASTE MANAGEMENT - POLICY AND BEST PRACTICES, 22 APRIL 2024**

Hosted by Indonesia, the webinar served as a platform to facilitate discussion and exchange best practices regarding national policies on marine debris among IORA Member States. Moreover, it showcased innovations in vessel designs aimed at combating marine debris. The aim of the webinar was to promote regional exchange of knowledge, best practices, and experiences in waste management.



SECRETARY-GENERAL'S COURTESY CALL AND MEETINGS

H.E. Dr Salman Al Farisi attended the 38th Council of Ministers of the Indian Ocean Commission held in Mauritius, on 16 May 2024.

Secretary-General affirmed that the collaboration between IORA and IOC will not only benefit Member States but also enhance the profile and influence of both organizations.



H.E. Dr Salman Al Farisi was pleased to meet Mauritian journalists for an enriching gathering to foster valuable networking. Enhancing IORA's visibility is crucial for regional progress.

SECRETARY-GENERAL'S COURTESY CALL AND MEETINGS



H.E. Dr. Salman Al Farisi was delighted to meet Mr. Goran Mandic, the Deputy High Commissioner of the British High Commission in Mauritius to discuss possible collaboration between IORA and UK



H.E. Mr Oskar Benedikt, Ambassador of the European Union to the Republic of Mauritius and to the Republic of Seychelles paid a visit to H.E. Dr. Salman Al-Farisi, Secretary-General. They discussed many future partnership projects.



H.E. Salman Al Farisi was delighted to welcome Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) Madagascar team and JICA ODA Advisor in Mauritius to discuss possible collaboration.



Courtesy Call of H.E Abiz Alam Eldin, Ambassador of the Republic of Egypt to the Republic of Mauritius.



The Secretary-General of IORA, H.E. Dr Salman Al Farisi warmly welcomed the Ambassador of Japan, H.E. MR Kan Masahiro at the IORA Secretariat on 15 March. Fruitful discussions were held on advancing collaboration for a resilient future in the Indian Ocean Rim region.



H.E. Dr Salman Al Farisi, paid courtesy call on H.E. Mr. Fayez Meshel B. Altemyat, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the Republic of Mauritius whereby they discussed possible areas of cooperation.