

**BALI PROCESS AD HOC GROUP SENIOR OFFICIALS' MEETING
COLOMBO, SRI LANKA, 16 NOVEMBER 2016
CO-CHAIRS' STATEMENT**

1. The 11th Ad Hoc Group (AHG) Senior Officials' Meeting of the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime (Bali Process) was held in Colombo on 16 November 2016.

2. The Meeting reviewed progress of AHG activities and achievements since the Sixth Bali Process Ministerial Conference (BPMC) (23 March 2016, Bali) and preceding Senior Officials' Meeting, and the 10th AHG Senior Officials' Meeting (1 February 2016, Bangkok). This included the activities of the Bali Process Working Groups on Trafficking in Persons and Disruption of People Smuggling and Trafficking in Persons Networks, and of the Bali Process Regional Support Office (RSO), and the key outcomes adopted by Ministers, including work on a Consultation Mechanism, a Review of the Andaman Sea Events of 2015, and closer engagement with the private sector to address trafficking in persons and slavery. The AHG also considered a further updated Bali Process Strategy to incorporate key initiatives to sustain the momentum in regional cooperation achieved at the Ministerial Conference.

Key Themes

3. The Meeting acknowledged the ongoing challenges of irregular migration, increasingly mixed migration flows, displacement and humanitarian situations globally and in the Asia-Pacific region. The Meeting welcomed recent concerted responses by the international community and regionally to address these situations, including the United Nations High Level Summit for Refugees and Migrants, the Sixth Global Meeting of Regional Consultative Processes on Migration, and affirmed recent statements including the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, the East Asia Summit Declaration on Strengthening Responses to Migrants in Crisis and Trafficking in Persons. The meeting noted that these statements, together with the Bali Declaration on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime, emphasised the need and determination of States to strengthen cooperation bilaterally, regionally and globally, to address people smuggling, trafficking in persons and associated irregular migration and displacement.

4. The Meeting recognised that these subsequent global and regional meetings reaffirmed the key priorities outlined at the Sixth Ministerial Conference and in the Bali Declaration, including: addressing the root causes of irregular migration, greater business and private sector engagement, safe and legal migration pathways, returns and reintegration of persons found not to be owed protection, and further cooperation in tackling criminal syndicates engaged in people smuggling, trafficking in persons and related transnational crimes.

5. The Meeting endorsed an updated Bali Process Strategy for Cooperation, incorporating outcomes of the Sixth Ministerial Conference to continue and enhance coordination to combat people smuggling and trafficking in persons. In doing so, the Meeting affirmed the Strategy as a 'living document' to give practical direction to the priorities set by Ministers, as well as changing regional and global circumstances. The Meeting welcomed New Zealand's confirmation of funding for a training workshop for Bali Process Pacific

Island countries. As agreed at the 8th AHG SOM, the Strategy will continue to be refined and updated at least annually.

6. The meeting recalled Ministers' call for more agile, timely responses by Bali Process members to regional circumstances, including through a voluntary, non-binding mechanism to authorise the Co-Chairs to consult and convene meetings, as necessary, to discuss urgent irregular migration events in the region. The Meeting welcomed the work by the Co-Chairs and input from members in developing a Concept Note for Administrative Arrangements to implement the Consultation Mechanism. The Meeting endorsed the Concept Note, while noting that the arrangements would be subject to ongoing review and may be modified by the Co-Chairs in consultation with, and with the agreement of, the Ad Hoc Group.

7. The Meeting acknowledged the increasing complexity of migration flows in the region, both regular and irregular, and the need to learn from experiences globally and in this region. In this context, Members welcomed the report presented by the Co-Chairs on the Review of the Region's Response to the May 2015 Andaman Sea Situation, and thanked members (including UNHCR, IOM and Member States) who had provided valuable input to the Review. The Meeting endorsed the Report and requested the Co-Chairs take necessary action to implement the recommendations of the Report. (The Review Report is attached – Attachment A.)

8. The meeting also recalled the Bali Declaration's recognition of the need to engage constructively with the private sector, including to combat human trafficking and related exploitation. In this regard, the Meeting welcomed the Co-Chairs' work on a proposal for a Bali Process Business Forum. The Business Forum would bring together Bali Process ministers and senior private sector leaders from the region to discuss and make recommendations to prevent trafficking in persons and slavery.

Proceedings

9. The Meeting welcomed the RSO's ongoing work in carrying out its role of facilitating capacity-building, exchange of best practices and pooling of technical resources, among members. The meeting commended the RSO's implementation of its 2015-17 Work Plan, including partnerships with the Centre International de Formation des Autorités et Leaders (CIFAL)-Jeju and the Jakarta Centre for Law Enforcement Cooperation (JCLEC). The Meeting further recognised the practical value of RSO activities, such as the development of Quick Reference Guides on Interviewing Victims of Trafficking, the development of a Regional Strategic Road Map, a tool to allow States to monitor their own progress across various policy and legislative tools to combat trafficking in persons. The Meeting encouraged members to continue to participate in, and support, RSO activities including through considering provision of staff; and thanked the outgoing Australian Co-Manager for her valued contribution to the work of the Bali Process.

10. The meeting commended the Trafficking in Persons Working Group (co-chaired by Australia and Indonesia) for the strong progress in delivering its forward Work Plan, including convening its second annual meeting (18 May 2016 in Bangkok), which, for the first time, included presentations from business and NGO representatives to gain insights into their work to prevent exploitation in supply chains, and to assist and protect victims of trafficking. The meeting affirmed the value of the Working Group's ongoing work in promoting the use of the existing Bali Process policy guides. Members welcomed the

outcomes of the Following the Money Forum (co-hosted by Thailand and Australia in May 2016), and looked forward to the development of a new 'Following the Money' Policy Guide and training module.

11. The Meeting commended the Working Group on Disruption of People Smuggling and Trafficking in Persons Networks, and thanked the Working Group Co-Chairs (Sri Lanka and New Zealand) for their leadership. Following the successful first Joint Period of Action (JPA), a follow-up JPA is currently underway (May to November 2016) involving 10 countries' law enforcement and immigration agencies working together on nine separate parallel or joint investigations aimed at dismantling people smuggling or trafficking networks through the region. Members looked forward to the outcomes of the second JPA, to be discussed at a workshop in December 2016. Members welcomed confirmation that a third Joint Period of Action will be held next year.

12. The Meeting further recalled the Bali Declaration's recognition of timely, safe and dignified return of those found not to be entitled to international protection, as an important element of orderly migration. In that context, members welcomed confirmation that Australia would take forward the Ministers' decision to establish a Technical Experts Group on Returns and Reintegration, which will exchange and examine best practices on sustainable returns and reintegration. The Bali Process Co-Chairs, will identify a Co-Chair for the Technical Experts Group, with the first meeting to be held in early 2017.

13. The Meeting welcomed a presentation from UNHCR on global and regional irregular migration developments, and recent key events including the United Nations High Level Summit for Refugees and Migrants and the resulting agreement on development of global compacts. Members agreed that the Bali Process should continue efforts, led by the Co-Chairs, to engage with the global compacts and with other global and regional migration fora.

14. The Meeting welcomed an update on the ongoing progress with the Regional Biometric Data Exchange Solution (RBDES) to facilitate the secure exchange of biometric data between interested member countries. Members noted Ministers' affirmation of the value of biometric data sharing for verifying traveller identities and tracking migration flows, commended the RSO and IOM for their work in maintaining the Policy Framework and technical developments, and promoting the use of RBDES; and encouraged members to attend the training workshop scheduled for early next year.

15. The Meeting welcomed progress on the Bali Process Pilot Joint Information Campaign to deter people smuggling and trafficking in persons, as agreed at the 8th AHG SOM. Australia and Bangladesh confirmed their partnership in progressing implementation of the pilot, with targeted communication activities to be implemented by IOM and local non-government organisation partners in key communities. Bangladesh noted that the pilot aligned with National Plan of Action activities already underway.

16. The Meeting commended the ongoing activities of UNODC, including work to encourage use of the Voluntary Reporting Scheme on Migrant Smuggling and Related conduct (VRS-MSRC), and support members to improve data collection and reporting into the system. Members welcomed the increase in the number of States and Territories using the VRS-MSRC.

17. The Meeting received an update from IOM on its work on communications and outreach activities on behalf of members, including attendance and presentations on behalf of the Bali Process at meetings such as the Sixth Global Meeting of Regional Consultative Processes on Migration, and Budapest Process meetings. The Meeting welcomed implementation of the new Bali Process website, and again encouraged Members to provide input and updated information to maximise the value of the website as a tool of information-sharing and advocacy for the Bali Process.

18. The Meeting discussed the challenges of the range of transnational crimes related to people smuggling and trafficking in persons. The Meeting acknowledged the ongoing challenges of associated serious crimes, particularly illegal fishing, drug trafficking and money laundering to camouflage illegally earned profits.

19. Reaffirming the importance of communication and information-sharing not only within the Bali Process but with other, complementary programs and initiatives, the Meeting welcomed updates on the Australia-Asia Program to Combat Trafficking in Persons (AAPTIP), the Tripartite Action to Enhance the Contribution of Labour Migration in Growth and Development in the Association of South East Asian Nations project (TRIANGLE II), and the Preventing Exploitation of Women Migrant workers in ASEAN project. Following the signing of the ASEAN Convention Against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (ACTIP), the Meeting welcomed an update from the Philippines (as Lead Shepherd of the ASEAN Senior Officials' Meeting on Transnational Crime (SOMTC) Working Group on TIP) on progress of the Convention.

20. The Meeting welcomed an update from the Co-Chairs on the third meeting of the Track II Dialogue on Forced Migration (Kuala Lumpur, 5-6 September 2016), and affirmed the ongoing positive contribution made by the Dialogue to the Bali Process. Members looked forward to further close engagement with the Dialogue, including potential provision of policy support to the Consultation Mechanism. Members agreed that the Co-Chairs continue to work with the Asia Dialogue and seek further opportunities to engage with civil society.

21. The Meeting noted the recommendation from the Steering Group that the request for membership of the Bali Process by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) be submitted for consideration at the next Bali Process SOM, and noted that OHCHR, if it is deemed necessary, could be invited as an Observer at Bali Process meetings and activities in the interim.

22. The Co-Chairs thanked Sri Lanka for its hospitality in hosting the 11th AHG Senior Officials Meeting and the preceding 31st Steering Group Meeting, and expressed particular appreciation to the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka, the Hon Ranil Wickremesinghe, for inaugurating the Meeting.

23. The administrative and logistical support provided by IOM was also appreciated, in addition to the important technical contributions made by IOM, UNHCR and UNODC across the range of Bali Process activities. The Meeting thanked the outgoing programme manager for IOM Canberra for his long standing and valuable contribution to managing the administrative support for the Bali Process.

Participants

24. The Meeting was attended by representatives of Afghanistan, Australia, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Maldives, Myanmar, New Zealand, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, United Arab Emirates, United States and Vietnam as well as representatives from UNHCR, UNODC and the IOM. Canada attended the meeting as an observer. The RSO Co-Managers also participated in the meeting.