

**BALI PROCESS AD HOC GROUP SENIOR OFFICIALS MEETING
BANGKOK, THAILAND, 2 FEBRUARY 2016
CO-CHAIRS' STATEMENT**

1. The 10th 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 Bangkok on 2 February 2016.
2. The Meeting reviewed progress of AHG activities and achievements since the Fifth Bali Process Ministerial Conference (BPMC) (2 April 2013, Bali), and agreed on recommendations to the Bali Process Full Senior Officials' Meeting (to be held on 22 March 2016) and the Sixth BPMC (to be held on 23 March 2016) in Bali. 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). It considered a draft updated Bali Process Strategy to continue momentum in regional cooperation.

Key Themes

3. The Meeting discussed the rapid developments around the world, including the Mediterranean, Europe and the Middle-east, and in this region, since the 9th AHG SOM. Members noted the focused responses within the region to these evolving challenges, reflected in various fora including the two *Special Meetings on Irregular Migration in the Indian Ocean* (29 May and 4 December 2015, Bangkok), the *Jakarta Declaration Roundtable Meeting on Addressing the Root Causes of Irregular Movement of Persons* (28-29 November 2015, Jakarta), the *Special Retreat on Irregular Migration in the Indian Ocean* (1 February 2016), and through the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) framework.
4. Members reaffirmed that the key themes from these and other fora were equally relevant for the Bali Process, including further enhancing regional cooperation in addressing irregular migration through: strengthening law enforcement cooperation and capacity-building; expanding and increasing access to, and awareness, of safe, legal migration pathways; victim-centred approaches to combatting human trafficking; strengthening collaboration and capacity-building related to protection of refugees, other displaced persons and vulnerable groups; cooperation in managing the return and reintegration of persons found not to be owed protection; increasing efforts to address transnational crimes related to people smuggling and human trafficking (with a focus on key sectors); safety of life; and further measures to strengthen the integrity of border management and identity management systems.
5. The Meeting noted the complex factors leading to irregular migration and the use of people smugglers and human traffickers, including social and economic factors, and the often mixed nature of migration flows. It emphasised the need to strengthen efforts to address the root causes of irregular migration, including through integrated approaches to development and migration; respect for human rights; and sustainable, inclusive economic growth; and ongoing dialogue among affected countries and international organisations.
6. The Meeting discussed the *Bali Process Strategy for Cooperation* for promoting and implementing coordinated approaches to irregular migration challenges. The Strategy should remain a 'living document' to reflect the progress and new priorities made since

its adoption, and the changing global and regional context. A draft updated Bali Process Strategy was submitted by the Co-Chairs to the Meeting. The Strategy will subsequently continue to be refined and updated, to reflect directions set by Ministers.

7. The Meeting reaffirmed the important role of the RSO in facilitating capacity-building, exchange of best practices, information-sharing and pooling of technical resources, and in providing administrative and coordination support for Bali Process activities. Members commended the RSO's progress in implementing its 2015-17 Work Plan. Members welcomed the update on the RSO-CIFAL workshop promoting a victim-centred approach to victims of trafficking, and on proposed RSO projects: on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS), and the planned workshop on the nexus between labour migration and humanitarian responses, noting these directly support Bali Process priorities including protection of vulnerable groups, and help address Sustainable Development Goal targets.

8. The Meeting noted the continuing importance of information and communication strategies in preventing people smuggling and human trafficking, and other irregular migration, and welcomed updates on recent information campaign initiatives. These include the planned Bali Process pilot joint information campaign, the RSO Technical Training Working Group on Information Campaigns, and the regional pilot information campaign announced by Thailand following the *Second Special Meeting*.

9. The Meeting welcomed an update on the RSO and the Jakarta Centre for Law Enforcement Cooperation (JCLEC) partnership, which commenced in June 2015. RSO-JCLEC will develop a catalogue of training and capacity building courses, host a meeting of National Training Directors for Police and Immigration, and hold regular meetings of regional training centres of excellence.

Proceedings

10. The Meeting welcomed a presentation from UNHCR on irregular mixed movements in the region, and relevant global trends. The presentation noted that there has not been a resurgence of movements of the nature of last year, although UNHCR and other agencies continue to use experiences from last year and from other regions to prepare for any future movements in this region.

11. The Meeting thanked Indonesia for its update on logistical and substantive preparations planning for the Sixth Bali Process Ministerial Conference, and agreed on provisional agendas for the Full SOM and BPMC, and discussed proposed priorities for Ministers' consideration. The Meeting agreed to recommend that the Sixth Ministerial Conference adopt a Ministerial declaration, reinforcing members' commitment to effectively respond to irregular migration challenges. It reaffirmed the role of the Bali Process; agreed on priority areas of focus over the next two years; and recommended establishing a consultation mechanism to respond to current or emerging regional issues.

12. The Meeting welcomed an update from the Co-Chairs on the recent meeting of the *Track II Dialogue on Forced Migration*, held in Bangkok on 29-30 January 2016, and noted recommendations sent by the Dialogue conveners to the Bali Process Co-Chairs. Members agreed to recommend to Bali Process Ministers that officials be tasked to conduct a review of the regional response to last year's irregular migration events in the Andaman Sea, and share the lessons among Bali Process members. It will also identify recommendations to improve national and regional contingency planning and

preparedness to enable more predictable and effective responses on forced migration. Members reaffirmed the importance of engagement with the Track II Dialogue and other civil society, and agreed that the Co-Chairs continue such efforts to engage with key civil society stakeholders.

13. The Meeting welcomed an update on the development of the Regional Biometric Data Exchange Solution (RBDES) to facilitate the secure exchange of biometric data between interested member countries. Members commended the RSO for its work in developing the Policy Framework, incorporating strong accountability, and security and privacy protections, which included privacy impact assessments, legal agreements and policies. The Meeting also noted the planned technical and infrastructure work being undertaken. The Meeting encouraged members to utilise the RBDES.

14. The Meeting also received an update from IOM on its work on communications and outreach activities on behalf of members, including dedicated resources and improvements to the public Bali Process website. Members were encouraged to provide input and updated information to enhance the value of the website as a tool of communication and information-sharing on behalf of the Bali Process.

15. The Meeting further welcomed presentations on capacity-building and development programs and initiatives, beyond the Bali Process, in the region that address people smuggling, human trafficking and irregular migration. These included 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), the *Preventing Exploitation of Women Migrant workers in ASEAN* project, and the UN Action for Cooperation Against Trafficking in Persons (UN-ACT) Research Strategy. In addition, UNODC provided an update on its activities relevant to people smuggling and human trafficking, including the Voluntary Reporting Scheme on Migrant Smuggling and Related conduct (VRS-MSRC); and IOM gave an update on current work on safe migration under way in other Regional Consultative Processes.

The Way Forward

16. Following discussion of the planned Sixth Bali Process Ministerial Conference, and consideration of potential Bali Process priorities, participants agreed to recommend that the Co-Chairs:

- i) Prepare draft agendas for the Bali Process Full SOM and Ministerial Conference;
- ii) Prepare a draft for a Ministerial declaration which reinforces members' commitment to effectively address irregular movement of persons; challenges, trends and responses; reaffirming the role of the Bali Process and emphasising priority areas of focus over the next two years; and
- iii) Propose a new consultation mechanism, to enable the Senior Official Co-Chairs to consult and convene discussions with key members in response to current or emerging regional issues.

17. The Meeting further recommended that:

- members strengthen efforts to help tackle the root causes of irregular migration, including through activities that promote good governance, inclusive economic growth, improved community services, and address the problems of statelessness;

- members develop activities to enhance the protection of refugees and displaced persons, including through training of border officials in responding to asylum claims, and exploring predictable disembarkation options.
- members continue to progress the Regional Biometric Data Exchange Solution (RBDES);
 - and encouraged Bali Process members to consider entering into agreements utilising this biometric data exchange solution, in line with the Policy Framework;
- building on the outcomes of the *Bali Process Roundtable on Returns and Reintegration* (Manila, 3-4 December 2015), the Bali Process establish a Technical Experts Group on best practices for returns and reintegration; and work through the RSO on developing model readmission agreements for potential use by member countries;
- members pursue continued regional cooperation on effective information communications strategies, to inform potential migrants of the risks of irregular migration;
- increased cooperation on improving access to, and awareness of, safe and legal migration pathways, including information-sharing and coordination of labour migration policies, exploring opportunities for multilateral and multi-country labour mobility arrangements, and increased awareness among migrants and potential migrants of legal, regulated migration options;
- the *Working Group on Trafficking in Persons* provide ongoing support to members in capacity-building in:
 - identification and protection of victims of trafficking in persons,
 - developing effective anti-money laundering legislation and enhancing proceeds of crime laws;
- members participate in follow-up *Joint Period of Action* operations under the *Working Group on Disruption of People Smuggling and Trafficking in Persons Networks*, including cross-border coordination and joint operations;
- members develop activities to further enhance cooperation and information exchange with other relevant capacity-building and development programs, to maximize benefits to members and the region.

18. The Meeting encouraged members to support the work of the RSO, including through seconding staff to the RSO, and actively participate in developing and hosting RSO work plan activities.

19. The Co-Chairs thanked Thailand for its generosity and hospitality in hosting the 10th AHG Senior Officials Meeting and the preceding 30th Steering Group Meeting. The Co-Chairs advised the Meeting of the opportunity for other Members to host future AHG SOMs and invited expressions of interest from Members. The administrative and logistical support provided by IOM was also appreciated, as was the important technical input IOM continues to make to many of the activities of the Bali Process.

Participants

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