

Ad Hoc Experts' Working Group II

Legislation Workshop

**10-11 November 2003
Port Dickson, Malaysia**

***Opening Address, Pol. Maj. Gen. Krerkphong Pukprayura,
Coordinator, AHEG II***

Dear friends and colleagues,

It is my pleasure to welcome you again to the Malaysian Immigration Training academy for the Ad Hoc Experts' Working Group II's second Legislation Workshop.

I would like to thank from the outset Deputy Director General Datuk Abdullah Sani Bin Sulaiman and the whole of Malaysian Immigration for making this facility available to us and for facilitating our arrival and transfer from the airport to beautiful Port Dickson.

Before we get started on today's agenda, I would like to give you a brief overview of the work of the AHEG II since the first Bali Conference held in February 2002.

Our work began in earnest almost 18 months ago at the AHEG II Planning meeting held in Bangkok in June of last year. At the planning meeting, we determined that defining and agreeing upon a set of legislative and law enforcement standards or "elements" was an important first measure in defining the work plan of AHEG II and in meeting our objective of strengthening regional cooperation and national efforts to combat smuggling, trafficking and related transnational crimes. We further agreed to hold focused workshops, one on Legislation and the other on Law Enforcement, aimed at identifying practical and achievable action that could be undertaken by our governments.

The first such workshop was the "Legislative workshop" held here in Port Dickson last September, followed by a workshop on Law Enforcement held in Shenzhen, China the following November. At both of these workshops, we defined measures to improve our National responses to combat trafficking and smuggling, strengthen our national, bilateral and regional cooperation; and, tasked ourselves with following-up on these measures within our governments. These measures included:

- development of a legislative survey, to facilitate national self-assessment on the state of policy and legislative development
- preparation of a set of key elements that were identified as important for effective trafficking and smuggling legislation
- identification of a key law enforcement elements and practices that could lead to improved: *Operational Cooperation and Investigation; Identity Verification and*

Document Examination; and, Technical and Operational Capacity for Effective Enforcement

We also worked together with the IOM and the Ad Hoc Experts' Working Group I to develop a Bali Ministerial Conference Website to facilitate information sharing and exchange.

These activities provided us with a platform for furthering our objectives and, as such, were broadly endorsed by our Ministers at the Second Bali Ministerial Conference last April, where they collectively agreed that the work of both AHEGs should continue and increasingly work to define concrete measures to achieve practical cooperation and outcomes in our fight against people smuggling, trafficking in persons and related transnational crimes.

During this same period, several governments have strengthened national legislation and have taken measures to improve their capacity for national, bilateral and regional cooperation --- we will hear examples of the progress made, later on our agenda

Still, there is much work yet to be done, not only in our national efforts but also in our effort as a group to define effective strategies to achieve our goals. I have often stated, that I would like to see increased ownership of the Bali Process and more leadership taken from among our countries to advance our common agenda; and, as was mentioned by our co-chairs, we will need to demonstrate to our senior officials during the first half of next year what progress we have made in this regard. In particular, I would like to see increased cooperation within the group to further refine our efforts to

- promote the incorporation into national legislation, key legislative elements necessary for effective criminalization of trafficking and smuggling.
- Conduct focused legislative reviews aimed at strengthening legislation across the region to support more effective legal cooperation in combating people smuggling, trafficking and related transnational crimes.
- Promote improved mutual legal assistance to advance investigation and prosecution of criminal matters; assistance in tracing, seizing and freezing the proceeds of these crimes; and the extradition or transfer of persons suspected or convicted of these crimes.

I also look to IOM to further refine and develop the website to become a more interactive resource tool and forum for information exchange, one example being the development of a legislative matrix that could serve as a web-based reference guide on legislative development in our region. (IOM and Australia will discuss this a bit later.)

Over today and tomorrow, it is my hope that we work together as a group to exchange views and experiences that will help define our work plan and strategies to achieve our objectives, so that when we leave tomorrow we have a clear plan of action and shared sense of responsibility in achieving our goal.

I wish you all a fruitful and rewarding workshop.

Thank you.