



The Bali Process

on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime

Ad Hoc SOM – Bali 6 December 2022 – GABF Statement

The period since the Ad Hoc Group officials last convened has presented an array of challenges, not just to our region, but globally. Compounding crises including the COVID-19 pandemic, and conflicts have in many ways exacerbated the problems the GABF is trying to address.

These crises have created an environment where disruption to employment and education has been the norm, not the exception. They have led to demonstrable increases in poverty and irregular migration.

Together, these factors also bring the risks to people who face labour exploitation.

In the light of the events, the Bali Process established a unique platform of collaboration between government and business to tackle these massive problems together.

First held in 2017, the GABF became a permanent track of the Bali Process in 2018. It brings together Bali Process ministers and influential business leaders at a high-level meeting held alongside the Bali Process Ministerial Conference to discuss how to combat human trafficking and

The Forum is co-chaired by the Foreign Ministers of Indonesia and Australia but also by Business Co-chairs from Australia - Mr Andrew Forrest - and from Indonesia - Mr Garibaldi Thohir. The ad-hoc Secretariat is provided by Walk Free.

The GABF like so many other forums across the world, had to revise its usual approach due to the risks presented by the pandemic. However, the crisis presented an opportunity to develop new ways to engage, including through online engagement.

The Online Consultation and Innovations sessions were first held in 2020 and take a sectoral focus, recognising the value of bringing together government agencies and officials with relevant businesses and others working in that specific area to share experiences and best practice.

Since the last Ad Hoc Group meeting, the Co-Chairs have delivered a further sessions, covering the electronics, garments and shipping sectors. They have each attracted 80-110 participants from across business, government and civil society.

The business membership of the GABF is broad and incorporates a range of sectors. The consultations session have allowed to identify sector specific challenges and solutions. It also enabled consideration how business and government can work together to respond to these challenges.

The range of issues discussed at these sessions include: forced labour in the electronics sector; ethical recruitment in our region; the risks and opportunities to combating forced and child labour in the garment sector; and key actions in addressing labour exploitation and forced labour at sea.

But one of the overarching themes that stretched across these consultations was the use of technology.

The Co-Chairs are seeing a growing number of platforms and tools available to both businesses and governments that address GABF focus areas of supply chain transparency, ethical recruitment and worker redress. Some of these are sector specific, others have a broader application.

This is an area of interest to many GABF members and the Co-Chairs are working on ways to incorporate these technological solutions into the GABF's work.

To help implement the GABF's Acknowledge, Act, Advance (AAA) recommendations adopted in 2018, during the 7th Bali Process Ministerial Conference, the Regional Support Office provided funding to the IOM Regional Office in Bangkok to develop a Good Practice Guide for Business and Bali Process members.

This guide will provide a wide range of examples for scalable solutions for businesses and the Bali Process Members to protect migrant workers from labour exploitation.

The Co-Chairs look forward to the virtual launch early next year and will provide Bali Process members further details of this event and ensure all members receive a copy of the Good Practice Guide.

The Co-Chairs would like to recall the importance of business engagement in Bali Process as highlighted during the Foreign Ministers' Meeting of the Steering Group in Paris this year.

The GABF becomes a prominent example of collaborative efforts between Government and Private sectors in addressing issues of combating human trafficking and related exploitation in the region.

The Co-Chairs note the recent phenomena where traffickers and criminal networks misuse information and communication technologies to deceit our nationals into trafficking in persons and people smuggling.

It is important to address and tackle this situation in the future work of GABF.

To do this, below are several suggestions for GABF to ponder:

- 1) To re-energize the activism of GABF members, amongst all, through the implementation of AAA [*read*: Triple A] Recommendations.
- 2) To seek, as an urgent matter, ways to collaborate with Governments in responding the current issues of human trafficking and related exploitation across supply chains.
- 3) To devise concrete actions of what private sectors can do in digital and technology sectors, including creative ways to raise public awareness.

Planning for the next high-level meeting of the GABF is well underway. The GABF Secretariat has been seeking input (including case studies) into a survey on what action and activity business and governments have taken under the 'AAA' Recommendations.

This feedback will be used to produce the 'AAA' progress report that will highlight good practices and challenges that GABF members have encountered in implementing the recommendations.

During the meeting, the Co-Chairs will be welcoming back many business leaders who attended the first GABF. The Co-Chairs will also be welcoming new members and would encourage government representatives to welcome and engage with these new leaders in the lead up to the Ministerial Conference.

The Co-Chairs appreciate the assistance of the Australian and Indonesian Governments in providing support to identify and approach potential business leaders. The Business Co-Chairs are in the process of re-engaging with existing leaders and inviting new leaders.

The co-Chairs plan to hold a full-day Business Roundtable in advance of the GABF – it will be held at the same time as the SOM in the lead-up to/margins of the Ministerial Conference.

This Roundtable will serve to introduce new leaders to the GABF and the issues it covers, as well as remind returning leaders of the work of the forum.

The day will focus on the progress made and future plans to implement the three pillars of the AAA Recommendations – supply chain transparency, ethical recruitment and worker redress. The Co-Chairs will also hear about the key outcomes from the Consultation and Innovation sessions.

With regard to outcomes and the future work of the GABF:

- The Co-Chairs propose the next online Innovation and Consultation session cover the agriculture sector
 - The Co-Chairs will continue to highlight sectors that have a high risk of human trafficking and related exploitation.
- The Co-Chairs are considering ways to engage business and government leaders to host in-person regional workshops on the three thematic areas of supply chain transparency, ethical recruitment and worker redress.

- The Co-Chairs will encourage Forum members to implement the AAA recommendations.

The Co-Chairs welcome any comments or feedback on these plans, and look forward to our continued collaboration with governments and business leaders to combat human trafficking, modern slavery, forced labour and the worst forms of child labour across the region.

The Government and Business Forum was launched in 2017 – recognising the need for us to all work together to address the complex crimes of forced labour and human trafficking.

And today that partnership is even more crucial in the face of pandemic-related supply chain and irregular migration issues.

Still, the Co-Chairs also put to you that the world is changing in other, more positive ways. Throughout the region, the Co-Chairs are seeing the rapid emergence of national laws, that are not just about criminal justice. These laws are demanding that businesses address risks in their supply chains.

More and more, businesses are expected to show how they address these risks to gain access to markets and capital.

The Government and Business Forum provides a forward-looking space where we can come together to share insights into the work we are all doing to combat human trafficking and related exploitation.

It is a space where we are able to highlight some of the best practice activities that are being undertaken by not only business and government but also civil society.

It encourages us to look inwards at our own practices, and to work with our peers across the region to end forced labour and human trafficking, which are abuses that we must eradicate.

Our understanding is that, based on the recent Online Consultation and Innovation Sessions on electronic, garment, and shipping sectors, the main message of all discussions include:

- Businesses have crucial role in preventing and addressing the threats of trafficking in persons in the electronic, garment, and shipping sectors, especially through practice of good governance, monitoring and strict law enforcement.
- The members share the notion to strengthen the implementation of the AAA (Acknowledge, Act, and Advance) Recommendations.
- The works of GABF, its innovative cooperation between governments and businesses, present great potential to contribute to economic and social development.

Therefore, there is a need for stronger collaboration between private sector and government to reach the common goal to end human trafficking and related forms of exploitation.

The Co-Chairs look forward to the upcoming the 8th Bali Process Ministerial Conference (BPMC) to produce much more tangible results.

The Co-Chairs encourage the Ad Hoc Group Members to engage with your business leaders, but also with businesses in your countries, on how we can together to make a difference.