



2nd Joint Period of Action Planning Workshop under the Bali Process Working Group on the Disruption of People Smuggling and Trafficking in Persons Networks

Bangkok, 19 May, 2016

Co-Chairs' Statement

1. The Governments of New Zealand and Sri Lanka co-chaired the 2nd Joint Period of Action Planning Workshop under the Bali Process Working Group on the Disruption of People Smuggling and Trafficking in Persons Networks (the Working Group) in Bangkok on 19 May 2016. The workshop was co-chaired by Kapila Waidyaratne, Additional Solicitor General with the Sri Lankan Attorney General's Department and Steve Stuart, General Manager with Immigration New Zealand.
2. Ten countries – Australia, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia, Maldives, New Zealand, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and USA – attended the workshop and committed to participating in the 2nd Joint Period of Action to disrupt people smuggling and trafficking in persons networks.
3. The planning workshop involved in-depth discussions of ongoing investigations as well as the development of joint investigation plans to lay the groundwork for the next Joint Period of Action. Under the 2nd Joint Period of Action, two or more countries will work together on eight separate investigations to build a better intelligence picture, gather evidence, and if possible, disrupt specific syndicates. The 2nd Joint Period of Action runs over a period of six months from 19 May to 20 November, 2016.

Proceedings

4. The co-chairs opened the workshop by warmly welcoming participants. They praised the outcomes of the inaugural Joint Period of Action, which ran from 28 September to 28 October 2015. During this period, law enforcement and immigration agencies from eight countries assisted 59 trafficked persons, identified 63 suspects, made 32 arrests, launched eight new investigations, and made over 70 enquiries to progress current investigations.¹ The co-chairs remarked that it was the first time countries under the Bali Process had undertaken a Joint Period of Action.
5. The co-chairs were pleased all eight countries committed to the 2nd Joint Period of Action, and welcomed the participation of Bangladesh and the USA as first time participants. The co-chairs noted that this level of participation was a reflection of the shared commitment of Bali Process Ad Hoc Group (AHG) members to disrupt and dismantle people smuggling and trafficking networks.
6. The co-chairs welcomed presentations from countries on active people smuggling and/or trafficking investigations nominated for inclusion in the 2nd Joint Period of Action. Nominated investigations were expected to involve cooperation with one or more countries. Countries then divided into groups and developed joint investigation or data collection plans. Nine plans were developed:

¹ The eight countries were Australia, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Maldives, New Zealand, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Thailand.

- **Indonesia / Australia / New Zealand** – Investigation into a failed illegal maritime people smuggling venture which departed Indonesia in 2015.
 - **Indonesia / Thailand** – Investigation into fishermen from Cambodia, Myanmar and Thailand trafficked aboard foreign fishing vessels operating in Indonesia (Benjina / Ambon).
 - **Malaysia / Indonesia** – Investigation into Indonesian victims trafficked to Kuala Lumpur for the purposes of sexual and labour exploitation.
 - **Maldives / Bangladesh** – Investigation into Bangladeshi men trafficked to Malé for the purposes of labour exploitation.
 - **Philippines / New Zealand** – Investigation into agents and employers that may be engaging in the exploitation of Filipino migrant workers in New Zealand.
 - **Philippines / USA** – Investigation into the online commercial sexual exploitation of children.
 - **Thailand / Malaysia** – Investigation into networks involved in smuggling and trafficking Rohingya to Malaysia.
 - **Sri Lanka** – Investigation into Sri Lankans trafficked to Egypt for the purposes of labour exploitation.²
 - **USA / Thailand** – Investigation into the online commercial sexual exploitation of children.
7. Countries provided report backs on their investigations plans, explaining how they would work together over the six month period of the Joint Period of Action to build a better intelligence picture, gather evidence, identify suspects, issue arrest warrants, and seize assets with the aim of disrupting people smuggling or trafficking syndicates.
8. The co-chairs encouraged participants to draw on ‘follow the money’ tools and international crime cooperation mechanisms discussed at the joint workshop of the Working Group on the Disruption of People Smuggling and Trafficking in Persons Networks and the Working Group on Trafficking in Persons on 18 May 2016. The joint workshop aimed to help countries prepare for the 2nd Joint Period of Action and provide an opportunity for information sharing and collaboration between the Working Groups.
9. The co-chairs expressed their encouragement at the number of investigations nominated for the 2nd Joint Period of Action. The 2nd Joint Period of Action will be carried out over a period of six months from 19 May to 20 November 2016.

Next steps under the Joint Period of Action

10. In terms of next steps:

- Co-chairs to write up and distribute the investigation plans to Working Group participants
- Participating countries to submit a mid-term report to the co-chairs by 20 August 2016
- Participating countries to submit a final report to the co-chairs by 30 November 2016
- Co-chairs to issue media release on the outcomes of the 2nd Joint Period of Action by mid December 2016
- Co-chairs to convene a debrief meeting on the 2nd Joint period of action in December 2016.

² Although Egypt is not a member of the Bali Process, Sri Lanka will continue to work with Egyptian officials on this case.