

## **3<sup>rd</sup> JOINT PERIOD OF ACTION PLANNING WORKSHOP**

### **BALI PROCESS WORKING GROUP ON THE DISRUPTION OF PEOPLE SMUGGLING AND TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS NETWORKS**

**KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA  
28 FEBRUARY 2017**

#### **CO-CHAIRS' STATEMENT**

1. The Governments of Malaysia and New Zealand co-chaired the 3<sup>rd</sup> 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) on 28 February in Kuala Lumpur. The workshop was co-chaired by Assistant Commissioner of Police Maszely Minhada from the Royal Malaysia Police and Assistant General Manager Peter Devoy from Immigration New Zealand. This was the first meeting with Malaysia as the new co-chair, replacing Sri Lanka, who stepped down from the role in December 2016, but remains a committed member of the Working Group.
2. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Joint Period of Action involves two or more investigation teams simultaneously targeting the same people smuggling or trafficking syndicates through coordination in participating countries. Ten countries – Australia, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia, Maldives, New Zealand, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and USA – attended the workshop and agreed to participate in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Joint Period of Action.
3. During the planning workshop, countries provided an overview of the investigations nominated for inclusion under the 3<sup>rd</sup> Joint Period of Action. Subsequent discussions and collaboration led to the development of nine joint investigation plans. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Joint Period of Action will be carried out over a six month period (March to August 2017).

#### **Proceedings**

4. Peter Devoy, Assistant General Manager of Compliance and Border Operations with Immigration New Zealand, welcomed participants and opened the meeting by introducing Assistant Police Commissioner Maszely Minhada with the Royal Malaysia Police (RMP) as the new co-chair of the Working Group. The New Zealand co-chair also thanked Sri Lanka for serving as co-chair for the past two years.
5. The Malaysian co-chair warmly welcomed participants to Kuala Lumpur. He thanked members for their confidence in Malaysia as the new co-chair and reiterated Malaysia's dedication to the Working Group and dismantling people smuggling and trafficking in persons networks.
6. The co-chairs reflected on the progress made since the Working Group was established at the Eighth Ad Hoc Group Senior Official's Meeting in August 2014 in Canberra. They

noted that the trusted relationships fostered by Working Group members have resulted in many successful operations and criminal networks being dismantled. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Joint Period of Action, the co-chairs highlighted, offers another opportunity to improve on joint operational activities and strengthen law enforcement cooperation. However, it will be critical to address ongoing challenges and apply lessons learnt from previous operations to ensure this Joint Period of Action is the most successful to date.

7. The co-chairs outlined that the 3<sup>rd</sup> Joint Period of Action would involve two or more investigation teams simultaneously targeting the same people smuggling or trafficking syndicate(s) through coordination in participating countries. It will be carried out over a period of six months (March to August 2017).
8. The co-chairs reminded the Working Group that participants at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Joint Period of Action debrief workshop held in December 2016 had suggested investigations under the 3<sup>rd</sup> Joint Period of Action attempt to incorporate a 'follow the money' element to assist in their investigation and prosecution efforts. Anti-money laundering and asset recovery tools and techniques have proven to be an effective way to target, disrupt and prosecute those involved in criminal activities.
9. After the opening session, countries provided overviews of the investigations nominated for inclusion under the 3<sup>rd</sup> Joint Period of Action. The co-chairs were pleased that several of the presentations included a focus on the financial activities of syndicates as part of their larger smuggling or trafficking investigations as it built on work carried out by the two Bali Process Working Groups last year on 'follow the money' tools and international crime cooperation mechanisms.<sup>1</sup>
10. To assist countries with integrating a 'follow the money' approach into their investigations, Michael Petty, Law Enforcement Advisor with the Australian Attorney General's Anti-Money Laundering Team, Financial Crime Section, gave a refresher presentation on anti-money laundering and financial investigation techniques.
11. During the afternoon session, countries divided into groups and developed joint data collection or investigation plans. Nine plans, focused on the following investigations, were developed:
  - **Australia – Malaysia:** Investigation into labour exploitation involving Malaysian nationals in Australia.
  - **Indonesia – Australia – New Zealand:** Financial investigation into a people smuggling syndicate involved in a failed illegal maritime venture which departed Indonesia in 2015.
  - **New Zealand – Philippines:** Investigation into labour exploitation involving Filipino nationals in New Zealand.

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<sup>1</sup> The Working Group on the Disruption of People Smuggling and Trafficking in Persons Networks and the Working Group on Trafficking in Persons (co-chaired by Australia and Indonesia).

- **Philippines – Australia:** Investigation into pay-per-view exploitation of children in the Philippines.
- **Malaysia – Thailand:** Investigation into networks involving the smuggling and trafficking of Rohingya and Bangladesh nationals to Malaysia and Thailand.
- **Malaysia – USA:** Investigation into the online commercial sexual exploitation of children in Malaysia.
- **Maldives – Bangladesh:** Investigation into Bangladesh nationals trafficked to the Maldives for the purposes of labour exploitation.
- **Sri Lanka – Maldives:** Investigation into Sri Lankan nationals trafficked to the Maldives for the purposes of sexual exploitation.
- **USA – Philippines:** Investigation into the online commercial sexual exploitation of children in the Philippines.

12. Countries provided report backs on their investigation plans, highlighting how they would progress their joint operations over the next six months.

13. The co-chairs outlined the next steps under the 3<sup>rd</sup> Joint Period of Action:

- Co-chairs to write up and distribute the investigation plans to the Working Group participants
- Co-chairs to revise the reporting template and distribute to participants for comment
- Participating countries to submit mid-term reports to the co-chairs on the progress of their joint investigations by end of May 2017
- Participating countries to submit final reports to the co-chairs by end of August 2017
- Co-chairs to convene a debrief meeting on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Joint Period of Action in September 2017

14. The co-chairs thanked countries for their ongoing commitment and support of the Working Group and the Joint Period of Action initiative. Countries were encouraged to inform the co-chairs of any challenges or obstacles hindering their investigations so that solutions could be identified as soon as possible. In closing, the co-chairs reiterated that outcomes achieved by the Working Group over the last two years showed that cooperation by law enforcement authorities against criminal people smuggling and trafficking syndicates can be successful.