



# The Bali Process

on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime

**JOINT PERIOD OF ACTION PLANNING MEETING  
OF THE WORKING GROUP ON THE DISRUPTION OF PEOPLE SMUGGLING AND TRAFFICKING IN  
PERSONS NETWORKS  
BANGKOK, THAILAND 1-2 SEPTEMBER, 2015**

**CO-CHAIRS' STATEMENT**

1. At the inaugural meeting of the Working Group on the Disruption of People Smuggling and Trafficking in Persons Networks [the Working Group] under the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime [the Bali Process] in May 2015, seven Ad Hoc Group (AHG) countries expressed their commitment to participating in a Joint Period of Action to disrupt criminal networks.
2. On 1-2 September, 2015, the Governments of New Zealand and Sri Lanka, as co-chairs of the Working Group, convened a two day planning meeting in Bangkok, Thailand to develop the Joint Period of Action. Australia, Indonesia, Maldives, New Zealand, Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Thailand, the seven AHG member countries that had pledged their support, sent representatives from law enforcement agencies, mainly police and immigration, to attend the planning meeting. Malaysia, upon further discussions at capital level, also agreed to participate in the Joint Period of Action, bringing the total to eight countries. Two Malaysian law enforcement officials were sent to the planning meeting as participants. Representatives from INTERPOL and the United States of America (USA) also attended as they had agreed to supporting roles.
3. The planning meeting was designed to be hands-on and interactive. It involved a practical investigation exercise as well as in-depth discussions of national approaches or plans (concept of operations) to the Joint Period of Action.

**Proceedings**

4. The co-chairs of the Working Group, Kapila Waidyaratne, Additional Solicitor General with the Sri Lankan Attorney General's Department and Peter Devoy, Assistant General Manager of Compliance and Border Operations with Immigration New Zealand, warmly welcomed participants and emphasised the importance of the Joint Period of Action to disrupt people smuggling and trafficking in persons networks. The co-chairs highlighted the unprecedented movement of migrants bound for Europe on unseaworthy vessels operated by people smuggling and trafficking in persons syndicates. In this billion dollar business, migrants are commodities. People smuggling and trafficking in persons are low risk, high profit crimes that challenge many countries around the world, including those under the Bali Process.

5. Although trafficking in persons and people smuggling are complex issues, the co-chairs noted that successful operational results can be achieved through more coordinated and cooperative approaches among law enforcement. The activities carried out as part of the Joint Period of Action are just the start of what will hopefully be a new way to engage under the Bali Process. Not only does the Working Group have the potential to further strengthen and expand cooperation, its efforts could eventually lead to parallel and joint investigations among member countries.
6. The meeting commenced with countries providing an overview of their concept of operations and their efforts to combat trafficking in persons and people smuggling. Presentations highlighted:
  - Particular crime type(s) to be targeted
  - Individuals and/or networks to be targeted
  - Types of activities to be carried out
  - Agencies or departments to be involved
  - Main goals and objectives to be achieved
  - Cooperation envisaged with other countries
  - Proposed timeframe

The presentations provided a good foundation for further operational planning and discussions on Day Two.

7. Following the country presentations, Rastislav Sasik, Project Manager at INTERPOL, provided an overview of a) how National Central Bureaus (NCBs) can assist member countries to work together on cross-border investigations, b) linkages to INTERPOL's global network, and c) INTERPOL tools and technologies relevant to the Joint Period of Action. It was an interactive session with several participants asking follow-up questions on how they can engage further with INTERPOL.
8. After lunch, Julian Rinckes, Field Crime Manager, Investigations Support and Liam Clinton, Detective Senior Sergeant, National Criminal Investigations Group with the New Zealand Police led an interactive practical exercise in which teams attempted to establish the identity of a people smuggling crime group and gather evidence against them. Participants were divided into teams and worked through the paper based investigation for the rest of the afternoon as well as the morning of Day Two. The exercise required teams to make written requests for information based on the paper-based investigation and conduct an actual search of a hotel room. The exercise concluded with each team reporting back on what their investigation revealed, including the identity of the main organiser.

9. Following the conclusion of the practical exercise on Day Two, the participants reconvened to further plan for the Joint Period of Action. Collectively, the group confirmed the goals and objectives of the Joint Period of Action:

- Disrupt trafficking in persons and people smuggling networks
- Identify the scope and scale of trafficking in persons and people smuggling networks
- Conduct investigations, apprehend key offenders, and identify criminal proceeds
- Collect and share evidence and intelligence to underpin increased prosecution action
- Increase collaboration with other countries and agencies (e.g. INTERPOL)
- Build inter-agency cooperation at national levels
- Develop best practices as well as capacity building and training opportunities
- Work more closely with INTERPOL NCBs and draw on their tools and technologies

10. Discussions among participants in this session also revealed a number of common linkages and trends among the participating countries, including:

- Increasing number of investigations related to trafficking in persons and people smuggling
- Increasing focus on trafficking for the purposes of labour exploitation in a range of economic sectors and activities, such as agriculture, construction, fishing, domestic work, and cybercrime, specifically in regard to the online commercial sexual exploitation of children. Victims were also being trafficked for forced marriage
- Use of fraudulent and/or fraudulently obtained documents in trafficking in persons and people smuggling
- Involvement of a wide range of agents / facilitators / brokers in trafficking in persons and people smuggling
- Involvement of corrupt officials, including police, customs, consular and embassy officers, border control, immigration, and other persons with 'influence'
- Increasing recognition that trafficking in persons and people smuggling thrive because they are low risk, high profit crimes and that measures to combat these crimes must include the tracing and confiscation of the financial assets of those involved
- Increasing collaboration and information sharing through mutual legal requests via formal and informal channels
- Growing engagement with INTERPOL's General Secretariat, NCBs, and their tools and technologies
- Need for ongoing capacity building and training of relevant officials to respond to trafficking in persons and people smuggling

- Need to harmonise trafficking in persons and people smuggling laws with international instruments
11. During this session, each country identified a current investigation to be the focus of the Joint Period of Action. Countries also nominated a focal point responsible for liaising with participating countries, progressing operational activities under the Joint Period of Action, and reporting back to the Working Group co-chairs.
  12. INTERPOL suggested that each focal point speak to the head of their NCB and ask that requests made during the Joint Period of Action are prioritised. A common header would be used: Bali Process Joint Action. The New Zealand and Australian Police as well as the Working Group co-chairs also offered their support to participating countries during the Joint Period of Action.
  13. The final session involved a review of the draft media strategy to ensure a coordinated communications approach among participating countries. A draft media release was discussed, during which a number of indicators were identified to assist with outcome reporting.

### **Next Steps**

14. The next steps in relation to the Joint Period of Action were identified as follows:
  - *Refine Joint Period of Action Concept of Operations* – Report back to the Co-Chairs by 25 September 2015
  - *Carry out Joint Period of Action in respective countries* – 28 September to 28 October 2015
  - *Report back on Joint Period of Action activities* – To co-chairs by 30 October 2015
  - *Issue media releases on Joint Period of Action* – Beginning of November 2015
  - *Convene debrief meeting on Joint Period of Action* – mid to late November 2015