

5th JOINT PERIOD OF ACTION PLANNING WORKSHOP
BALI PROCESS WORKING GROUP ON THE DISRUPTION OF PEOPLE SMUGGLING
AND TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS NETWORKS

BANGKOK, THAILAND

2 – 3 JULY 2019

CO-CHAIRS' STATEMENT

1. The Governments of Fiji and New Zealand co-chaired the 5th 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 2 – 3 July 2019 in Bangkok, Thailand. The workshop was co-chaired by Detective Inspector Aiyaz Ali, OIC Organised Crime Unit, from the Fiji Police Force and Nicola Hogg, General Manager from Immigration New Zealand.
2. Seven countries—Australia, Fiji, Indonesia, Malaysia, New Zealand, Thailand, and Vietnam—attended the workshop. Representatives from the Bali Process Regional Support Office, the International Organization for Migration, and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime attended as observers.
3. The 5th Joint Period of Action will take place over the next six months, culminating in a debrief workshop. During this period, two or more countries will simultaneously target the same people smuggling or trafficking syndicates operating in their countries through information exchange and co-ordinated investigative efforts.

Achievements from the 4th Joint Period of Action

4. Co-Chairs reflected on successes from the 4th Joint Period of Action in 2018 with ten countries participating. In addition to gathering significant intelligence on people smuggling and trafficking syndicates, the 4th Joint Period of Action included the following achievements:
 - A joint investigation between New Zealand and Fiji resulting in the arrest of a Fiji national with charges including 17 counts of human trafficking;
 - Indonesia, with support from Australia and New Zealand, identifying seven new suspects by progressing its financial investigation into Captain Bram's people smuggling syndicate;
 - Sri Lanka arresting a male suspect believed to be trafficking Sri Lankan nationals to Malaysia; and
 - Vietnam, working with Australia and Malaysia, to deter and detect networks involved in trafficking Vietnamese nationals, including minors, for the purposes of sexual servitude.

Proposed investigation plans for the 5th Joint Period of Action

5. Countries provided an overview of investigations nominated for the 5th Joint Period of Action. The following plans have been provided to the co-chairs during the 5th Joint Period of Action:
 - **New Zealand and Vietnam:** Co-operation to identify emerging risks within the smuggling and/or trafficking areas and the correct focal points in Vietnamese enforcement to engage with and begin a more robust preliminary investigation.
 - **Indonesia and Malaysia:** Information-gathering plan to obtain more intelligence on human smuggling syndicates out of Malaysia
6. Participants identified key challenges to progressing investigations. These included language barriers between victims and investigators, resourcing physically remote and long-term investigations, co-ordinating among multiple domestic agencies, and encouraging and maintaining co-operation from victims over the course of investigations.
7. The Bali Process Regional Support Office (RSO) informed participants of the resources available to assist countries in furthering and conducting investigations, particularly in relation to cross-border information sharing. RSO Co-Manager, Michael Odgers, shared details of the RAAPT Principles of Information Sharing—relevance, accuracy, accountability, partnership, and timeliness. While some countries have existing and comprehensive Memorandums of Understanding on information sharing, not all do, and the RAAPT Principles provide a helpful baseline to build upon.
8. Participants were encouraged to use the guides, handbooks, and quick reference tools available on the Bali Process website (www.baliprocess.net/regional-support-office/resources/), many of which have been translated into multiple languages for ease of use.

Long-term disruption opportunities and victim management

9. Participants discussed the value of information campaigns as a way to raise awareness among the general population of trafficking and people smuggling, and to encourage reporting to official authorities. Social media was discussed as an important channel through which to reach both the general population and migrant worker communities. Some countries found that investigations and prosecutions can be leveraged to generate national media interest in the crime and its long-term impacts; others noted the value of engagement with business partners on supply chain management to both prevent and identify abuse.
10. A key discussion point was understanding countries' different approaches to victim management and support during investigations that have indefinite timelines. Some of the challenges included navigating victim complicity, the multi-faceted and wrap-around nature of trauma support, follow-up and reintegration for victims who choose to return home, and managing victim expectations around timelines and outcomes.

Next steps

11. The Co-Chairs outlined next steps under the 5th Joint Period of Action:
 - Countries to submit final investigation plans and Co-Chairs to distribute to Working Group participants,

- Co-Chairs to report on investigation plans to the Bali Process Senior Officials Meeting on 22-23 July 2019, and
- Participating countries to submit mid-term updates to Co-chairs by the end of October 2019.

12. The Co-Chairs thanked participating countries for their ongoing commitment and support for the Working Group. They reiterated the support that was available to help progress investigations and were looking forward to mid-term updates from participants.