

New Zealand country statement

Tēnā koutou, Tēnā koutou, Tēnā koutou katoa

Co-Chairs, Ministers, distinguished delegates, it is a great pleasure to be here today and I would like to extend New Zealand's thanks to the Indonesian government for hosting this important event.

New Zealand is proud to be an active member of the Bali Process, and I would like to applaud the Indonesian and Australian Co-Chairs for their ongoing commitment to, and support of, the Bali Process. We recognise the instrumental role this forum plays in addressing the complex challenges of people smuggling, trafficking in persons, and related transnational crime in the Asia-Pacific region.

Coming together again for these discussions is an indication of our collective commitment and desire to collaborate, in the spirit of regional cooperation, to address these challenges.

It is worth reflecting for a moment on the Sixth Bali Process Ministerial Conference in 2016 where Ministers endorsed the first ever Bali Process Declaration. The 2016 Declaration was a landmark toward reinvigorating coordinated efforts to tackle the challenges of irregular migration faced by our region. We committed ourselves to dealing with protection issues, promoting regular migration pathways, and countering criminal networks.

For New Zealand, we have been working hard to achieve these goals. We continue to lead the Working Group on the Disruption of People Smuggling and Trafficking in Persons Networks, alongside our Co-Chair Malaysia. Through trust and enhanced operational cooperation between countries, the Working Group has dismantled a number of human trafficking and people smuggling networks operating in our region.

Efforts to strengthen law enforcement cooperation are only one part of a comprehensive approach to migration management. Planning, preparedness and protection are equally important parts. We are mindful that this meeting is taking place during a period of unprecedented flows of asylum seekers, displaced persons, and other irregular migrants.

The issues that bring us together are global and prove as a reminder that we must work collectively, and in a practical manner. Our region continues to face large-scale movements of vulnerable people. To this end, New Zealand has strongly supported the establishment of the Bali Process Consultative Mechanism and its Taskforce on Planning and Preparedness to enable more predictable and effective responses to forced migration.

Much of this work is being supported through the Regional Support Office. The RSO continues to play a critical role in facilitating cooperation among Bali Process member states. New Zealand is pleased to support the RSO through a two year secondment and funding support to address irregular migration through effective information campaigns.

But today's meeting is not all about looking back. We are here to discuss current challenges, responses and the forward priorities of the Bali Process.

The Bali Process needs to adapt to our changing circumstances, which is why the establishment of the Government and Business Forum is so important. So much more can be achieved when government and business work together. Businesses have the power to influence change within supply chains, to drive up standards, and remove the profitability of trafficking and slavery.

New Zealand is committed to working with the private sector, and in particular our business leader Rob Fyfe, to implement the recommendations being introduced later this morning.

New Zealand also support the efforts of the Bali Process to strengthen collaboration with civil society and other regional entities to identify and protect victims, raise awareness, and share best practices. By working together, we can establish innovative and effective solutions to address human trafficking and modern slavery.

Distinguished Co-Chairs, New Zealand welcomes the new initiatives in the 2018 Declaration. The priority areas being advanced today will provide us with new momentum to carry forward this important agenda. We also remain committed to the set of principles and pledges of the 2016 Bali Declaration, and reaffirm the importance of a regional comprehensive approach to addressing irregular migration in the region.

Thank you.