The Bali **Process**
on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime

REGIONAL SUPPORT OFFICE OF THE BALI PROCESS
MEETING ON CROSS-BORDER INFORMATION SHARING TO ADDRESS PEOPLE SMUGGLING,
TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS AND RELATED TRANSNATIONAL CRIME

BANGKOK, THAILAND, 20 JUNE 2018

MEETING SUMMARY

1. The Regional Support Office of the Bali Process (RSO) hosted a meeting of stakeholders of the Bali Process to discuss cross-border information sharing to prevent, disrupt and prosecute people smuggling, trafficking in persons and related transnational crime.

2. Held on 20 June 2018 in Bangkok, Thailand, this meeting was funded by the Government of Canada. The meeting brought together representatives from twenty-three countries (Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Belgium, Bhutan, Cambodia, Canada, Germany, Indonesia, Iran, Italy, Japan, Lao PDR, Malaysia, New Zealand, Norway, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Timor-Leste, Thailand, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America) and three organizations (Australia-Asia Program to Combat Trafficking in Persons (AAPTIP), Immigration Control Experts (ICE), and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)).

3. The meeting provided an opportunity for stakeholders to develop a consistent understanding of information sharing. The meeting objectives were to:
   a) Advise stakeholders of availability and benefits of new Bali Process resources for information sharing,
   b) In a series of panel discussions, examine current successes and challenges and the operational value of effective cross-border information sharing in the region, and
   c) Provide an opportunity for stakeholders to develop and strengthen networks with a shared and consistent understanding of information sharing.

4. The meeting introduced newly developed Bali Process resources to enhance knowledge and skills in information sharing:
   a) Bali Process *Guidelines for Information Sharing to Address People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime* (Guidelines), and
   b) A training curriculum and materials based on the Guidelines, including a *Facilitator's Guide* and *Student Handbook*.

Proceedings
5. Mr. Michael Odgers, the RSO Co-Manager (Australia), opened the meeting. He highlighted that information sharing was critical to the delivery of RSO activities and was also one of the four RSO long-term strategies.

6. Counseller Greg Fiddy, International Network Manager at Canada Border Services Agency, welcomed guests and emphasised that partnership, collaboration, and communication are essential to create understanding in information sharing. The Bali Process project to increase information sharing (the Project) has developed the Guidelines in response to this need.

7. Mr. Odgers presented to stakeholders an overview of the Bali Process and introduced a series of activities and resources delivered by the RSO. The RSO draws upon expertise from Bali Process Member States to support the delivery of Bali Process mandates and to keep Member States abreast of emerging issues.

8. Mr. Graeme Jewell, Programme Coordinator at the RSO, provided an overview of the Bali Process project to increase information sharing that delivered the Guidelines and training curriculum. He introduced attendees to the RAAPT Principles of information sharing (Relevance, Accuracy, Accountability, Partnership, and Timeliness) used in the Guidelines to encourage shared terminology and expectations. He added that the Guidelines also provided a paradigm for sharing of information based on its intended use, a template for information requests, a tool for evaluating information, and noted other toolkits in the Guidelines.

9. The first panel discussion focused on successes and challenges in cross-border information sharing and consisted of representatives from the Indonesian Directorate of General of Immigration, the Immigration Control Experts (ICE) Team in Bangkok, and the United Kingdom National Crime Agency.

   Mr. Eike Schroeder from the Embassy of Germany in Bangkok highlighted the ICE Team's training to 887 immigration officials and airline staff across Cambodia, Myanmar and Thailand. He explained that the ICE Team shares information globally in forms of airline alerts, newsletters and reports. Mr. Schroder noted that Bangkok continues to be a major hub for international migration.

   Ms. Saskya Aprilya of the Indonesian Directorate of General of Immigration stated that Indonesia benefited from the memorandum of understanding between Indonesia and the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) on the secure database of stolen passports. Indonesia successfully utilises this database to stop people who used a stolen passport at immigration checkpoints. She added that Indonesia also co-operated with IOM on statistics of asylum seekers and UNODC on trends of people smuggling.

   Mr. Nicholas Cuckson of the United Kingdom National Crime Agency, stationed at the Embassy of the United Kingdom in Bangkok, provided examples on the importance of cross border information sharing, noting that human rights concerns such as personal data protection can pose a challenge to sharing information. He emphasised that, to safely share information, a mechanism to protect personal data is required, often codified in a formal agreement.

   Mr. Wahyu Eka Putra, Immigration Attaché at the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in Bangkok also joined the panel.

10. The panel discussion moved on to effective information sharing. Panel members described that good relationships and partnerships were paramount. All parties involved in information sharing should have clarity in what to share and provide feedback on the information received. Having a formal agreement provides a clear framework for responsibilities. On the other hand, networking with key people brings trust, which can facilitate requests for assistance.

11. Mr. Jewell then presented on the training curriculum associated to the Guidelines. He stated that the curriculum was primarily intended for law enforcement and border agencies. The curriculum includes scenario-based exercises that are aligned with the Guidelines, and emphasised practical benefits of information sharing. He underlined that the Guidelines and training curriculum could be used for one-off

training events or as part of larger training programmes. These new resources can be tailored according to each country and agency's context and priorities.

12. The second panel discussion focused on operational value of cross-border information sharing. Panel members included representatives from the Royal Thai Police, AAPTIP, and UNODC.

   Mr. Gerson Bergeth from UNODC explained how ASEAN countries are assisted in responding to transnational organized crime though the Border Liaison Officer (BLO) Network. The BLO created data standards, combined data on various crimes, established operating procedures, supported cross-border data sharing, and provide technical training. Challenges lay in how to share information regularly and effectively with informal communication.

   Mr. Martin Reeve from AAPTIP reported on the progress of transnational investigative cooperation in the ASEAN region. There has been an increase in the use of common intelligence reporting tools and transnational investigative cooperation was increasingly seen as normal business, although it still required dedicated support from AAPTIP to facilitate bilateral meetings. Mr. Reeve referenced the use of existing tools, such as messaging applications, for information sharing, but reinforced a desire to utilise more secure platforms, for example, INTERPOL's i24/7.

   Pol. Lt. Col. Aroon Promphan of the Royal Thai Police spoke of successful information sharing initiatives in cooperation with Myanmar. The information exchange meetings between Thailand and Myanmar led to immediate actions which resulted in thirty victims of trafficking being rescued, three persons apprehended, and fourteen arrest warrants issued.

   Mr. Glyn Ruddell, Airline Liaison Officer from the Embassy of Australia in Bangkok also joined the panel.

13. The final panel discussion highlighted the use of information technology, such as multimedia and applications, to share information. The panel members highlighted the benefits of these channels as formal communication did not happen regularly, and noted that sensitive information should still be shared through a secure platform to protect operational security and individuals' rights.

14. Mr. Odgers thanked the panel members and attendees before closing the meeting.

Outcomes

15. Stakeholders were advised of the Bali Process resources (the Guidelines and associated training materials) available to enhance the Bali Process membership's capacity for information sharing. This was done within presentations and discussions of current successes and challenges in relation to cross-border information sharing and its operational value.

Next Steps

16. The RSO will support Bali Process Member States and Organizations in their training activities and programmes to boost information sharing to address people smuggling, trafficking in persons, and related transnational crime.