

UNTOC Working Group on the Smuggling of Migrants

5-6 October 2023

INTERPOL statement

Topic:

a) Emerging knowledge and practice regarding the prevention and response to the smuggling by sea.

Chairperson(s),

Distinguished delegates,

Over the last years, irregular migration flows have regained force in different parts of the globe, with many origin, transit, or destination countries seeing record numbers at their borders. Migrants in vulnerable situations continue to turn to smugglers to facilitate their journey, putting their lives at risk in the search of better living conditions. Tragically, these journeys are often by sea, which is still the most dangerous path for irregular migration.

INTERPOL supports its membership to address collectively the great challenges posed by the smuggling by sea. As part of its specialized investigative, analytical, and operational support, INTERPOL facilitates intelligence and case-sharing platforms, the hosting of bilateral and multilateral meetings for the furthering of investigations, the facilitation of operations and the development of a global crime analysis file, through which we generate analytical reports to identify smuggling patterns.

INTERPOL also provides access to the INTERPOL Specialized Operational Network against migrant smuggling (ISON) to law enforcement officers from specialized units around the world; and promotes their engagement in investigative support meetings and operations.

To deliver a holistic approach, INTERPOL partners with other international organizations such as IOM and UNODC, who complement police efforts by providing migrant and victim assistance, and judicial support through specialized prosecutor networks, respectively.

The joint approach developed by INTERPOL and UNODC through project Turquesa, and the multiple operations where the two organizations have joined forces, is a good practice of collaboration to

effectively target the smuggling of migrants. Previous editions of this operation have seen countries such as the Dominican Republic, Turks and Caicos and Curacao in the Caribbean, and the United States in North America, detecting and safeguarding migrants being smuggled by sea.

Beyond the dismantling of organized criminal groups and the detection of thousands of smuggled migrants and victims of trafficking, these operations have a lasting impact by reinforcing interagency and international cooperation. Through project Turquesa, we aim to continue strengthening this cooperation as well as countries' abilities to prosecute migrant smuggling cases and to fight against this crime in a sustainable way.

As such, in order to strengthen the prevention of and response to the smuggling by sea, the Working Group may elect to support the following recommendations.

- Encourage Member States to consider the use of INTERPOL policing capabilities, in particular by strengthening the collaboration between specialized units and INTERPOL National Central Bureaus, including through the INTERPOL Specialized Operational Network against migrant smuggling (ISON) network.
- Encourage Member States to engage in INTERPOL Global and Regional Operations to tackle migrant smuggling and use these platforms to strengthen international police cooperation.
- Encourage Member States, as part of their ongoing investigations, to share intelligence via INTERPOL's channels.
- Encourage Member States to contribute to INTERPOL's analytical files and databases with a view to identify new trends, threats, and criminal organizations.

These recommendations are fully aligned with previous resolutions on this topic, in particular CCPCJ resolution 30/1 (2021) which encourages Member States to support the efforts of INTERPOL and other partners to strengthen the capacity of States to prevent, criminalize, investigate and prosecute the smuggling of migrants; and which calls upon States to share information through INTERPOL.

I thank you for your attention.