

## **National Statement of Australia**

### **Agenda Item 2: Preventing and combatting the smuggling of migrants through international cooperation while addressing its root causes, in line with the provisions of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols thereto**

Australia welcomes today's discussion on preventing and combatting the smuggling of migrants through regional and international cooperation while addressing its root causes.

Australia is committed to bilateral, regional and multilateral cooperation to build effective, coordinated responses to prevent and combat people smuggling. Our experience has illustrated how responses need to be interrelated.

For example, Australia remains deeply concerned about irregular maritime ventures in the Andaman Sea.

Australia and Bangladesh Foreign Ministers agreed in May on the importance of safe migration pathways in the region to curb irregular and unsafe migration patterns, and the ongoing importance of humanitarian support. Australia has committed \$860 million between 2017 and 2025 to the humanitarian response across Myanmar and for Rohingyas and host communities in Bangladesh. Providing life-saving assistance locally also helps prevent irregular maritime ventures.

As Co-Chairs of the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime, Australia and Indonesia regularly engage with countries in our region to develop responses to people smuggling. The Bali Process Senior Official Co-Chairs conducted a joint 'good offices' visit to Bangladesh in March 2024, including visiting Rohingya camps in Cox's Bazar, to observe conditions on the ground and to share relevant information on regional irregular migration trends, and meeting with key Ministries in Dhaka, to discuss opportunities for greater cooperation through the Bali Process.

Consistent training and capacity building for frontline officials is critical. In 2023, the Bali Process Regional Support Office (RSO) trained 348 law enforcement and border and immigration officers, maritime officials and practitioners in countering trafficking in persons and people smuggling across 14 Member States. The RSO incorporated modules on using financial analysis to track and disrupt financial flows associated with smuggling networks in recent workshops, including in the 2023 Regional Training Workshop on Combatting Smuggling of Migrants by Sea.

The RSO has piloted a curriculum for law enforcement and immigration officers to provide them with a set of tools to detect online operations of organised crime, to locate recruitment advertisements posted by smugglers and traffickers, and to analyse these findings to reveal novel insights in support of investigations. The curriculum will be rolled out in 2024 and 2025.