



Press Release: Royal Thai Embassy, Washington, D.C.

Result of the 2nd Special Meeting on Irregular Migration in the Indian Ocean

- Thailand proposed an Action Agenda to address irregular migration in the Indian Ocean for affected countries.
- Thailand's proposal to implement a multimedia regional information campaign, with IOM's support, was welcomed.
- Thailand announced the intention to contribute 100,000 USD to IOM to support the regional information campaign initiative.

The 2nd Special Meeting on Irregular Migration in the Indian Ocean was held on 3-4 December 2015 in Bangkok. Participants from 18 countries and 6 related international organizations focused on 3 general areas of discussions: (1) current situation and challenges of irregular migration; (2) follow up on the progresses made after the Special Meeting on 29 May 2015; and (3) the way forward to address contributing factor of the problem through the promotion of safe migration and development of sustainable livelihood.

Thailand, as chair of the meeting, tabled a draft Action Agenda on concrete actions to address the problem of irregular migration in the Indian Ocean for the five most affected countries. The five countries will meet again in February 2016 on the sideline of the Bali Process Ad Hoc Group Senior Officials Meeting in Thailand to discuss the draft Action Agenda.

UNHCR, IOM and UNODC provided an overview of current situations and trends, the challenges of migration management, and the challenges of combating smuggling and trafficking in persons in the Asia and Pacific region. Representatives from the European Union gave an overview of the current migration situation in Europe.

The ASEAN Secretariat as well as Australia and Indonesia, as co-chairs of the Bali Process, updated participants on the progresses made under different regional mechanisms to address irregular migration in the Indian Ocean. Some of the major undertakings include progress on the establishment of ASEAN Trust Fund to assist those affected by irregular migration, the recent signing of the ASEAN Convention Against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, and progress made under the Bali Process's Working Groups on Trafficking in Persons and on Disruption of Criminal Networks involved in People Smuggling and Trafficking in Persons.

Representatives of the five most affected countries, namely Bangladesh, Myanmar, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand also met on 3 December 2015 to discuss on ways to address the problem of irregular migration collectively, in a comprehensive and sustainable manner. During the meeting on 4 December 2015, the five countries briefed the participants on the efforts and measures each country was undertaking. These efforts include, cooperation between the Government of Myanmar and the UNODC and Bangladesh's active cooperation with countries in the region to assist Bangladeshi migrants to return homes.

The Meeting welcomed the proposal made by Thailand to implement a multimedia regional information campaign, to be undertaken by the five most affected countries with the support of the IOM, to raise awareness of the risks and danger of irregular migration and send a strong message to criminal network operating in the region of the seriousness of countries involved to combat people smuggling and trafficking of persons. During the meeting, Thailand also announced the intention to contribute 100,000 USD to IOM to support the above-mentioned initiative.

Washington, D.C.
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