REGIONAL SUPPORT OFFICE
THE BALI PROCESS

Fifth RSO Constructive Dialogue

Countering People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime

Priorities for Regional Cooperation

Wednesday 20-Thursday 21 January 2027; Bangkok, Thailand

CONCEPT NOTE

Background

The Regional Support Office of the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime (RSO) was established in 2012 to provide technical support to Bali Process Members and to strengthen cooperation as relates to people smuggling, trafficking in persons and related transnational crime.

The RSO Constructive Dialogue is the annual meeting of the RSO, bringing together senior officials from Member States of the Bali Process, Member Organisations, and Observer States and Organisations for two days of dialogue and knowledge exchange.

Priorities for Regional Cooperation

Delegates at the Fourth RSO Constructive Dialogue, which took place over 27-28 January 2026, affirmed that timely, accurate, and actionable information sharing remains a cornerstone of effective regional cooperation, and that principles of multilateral cooperation are more important than ever. They also identified the growing challenge posed by transnational crime groups' polycriminality, which affords these networks diversified revenue streams and the agility to shift tactics, requiring equally coordinated and integrated responses to disrupt their operations.

Delegates further promoted pathways that strengthen safe and orderly migration management across the region, recognising that this spans the full continuum of government responsibility, from border management and victim protection, through to labour mobility and reintegration support for returnees. Participants pointed to concrete measures across this continuum, including streamlined visa and work permit processes, stronger bilateral agreements, enhanced protections for migrants and trafficking victims, and accessible reintegration support. Participants reflected on progress towards implementing the 2023 Adelaide Strategy for Cooperation, highlighting the need for migration frameworks to keep pace with evolving demographic, economic, environmental and human pressures, and to promote shared responsibility across the region in addressing them.

Building on efforts to address shared priorities since the Fourth RSO Constructive Dialogue, as well as marking 25 years since the Bali Process was established and 15 years of the RSO, the Fifth RSO Constructive Dialogue will be themed Priorities for Regional Cooperation. Member States will be invited to take stock of progress against the Adelaide Strategy for Cooperation since the Fourth

RSO Constructive Dialogue and identify forward-looking priorities that will inform regional efforts to counter people smuggling, trafficking in persons and related transnational crime.

Beyond providing a platform for Member States to share national updates, the RSO will create space for senior officials to engage directly with counterparts and the RSO on shared priorities across the meeting agenda and through the facilitation of bilateral engagements in the margins of the Dialogue.

Objectives

The Objectives of the Fifth RSO Constructive Dialogue are to:

- Provide platform to Bali Process Members, Working Groups and regional actors to connect with the RSO and one another, share information, showcase progress and promising practices, and set priorities for cooperation in addressing people smuggling, trafficking in persons and related transnational crime.
- Take stock of progress against the Adelaide Strategy for Cooperation and identify opportunities to strengthen partnerships that directly support effective cross-border cooperation and address systems gaps at both national and regional levels.
- Mark 25 years of the Bali Process, reflecting on promising practices and partnerships that have advanced regional cooperation, and consider how emerging threats necessitate and shape the RSO's workplan and the next 25 years of regional cooperation

Member State interventions

Members are invited to share updates relating to:

- Strengthened national and regional systems and partnerships that promote effective migration management and enhanced responses to counter transnational crime, people smuggling and trafficking in persons, for example through policy enhancements, evidence generation, law enforcement cooperation, cross-border mechanisms, or refining processes and ways of working; and
- Forward-looking priorities for strengthening systems and partnerships at both the national and regional level, anticipating emerging risks and ensuring systems remain adaptive to the evolving nature of people smuggling, trafficking in persons, and related transnational crime.

Ahead of the Dialogue, the RSO intends to engage with Member States to better understand their priorities, identify areas of shared interest and opportunities for cooperation, and use these insights to inform the agenda and facilitate connections among participants.

An Outcome Report outlining Collective Efforts and a two-page outcome summary document will be produced following the Fifth RSO Constructive Dialogue to provide a snapshot of proposed national and regional efforts to strengthen partnerships and future regional cooperation.

Participation and format

Participants will be drawn from senior executive service level, with delegation leads being at Minister-Counsellor level and equivalent roles that support international cooperation on efforts to counter people smuggling, trafficking in persons and related transnational crime. Regional experts and actors working on these topics from Bali Process Member and Observer Organisations and wider regional and thematic experts will also be invited to participate.

- A session on **Building Regional Security Systems: Priorities for Coordinated Responses to Transnational Crime** will invite updates on the frameworks, mandates and information architecture that connect law enforcement, financial intelligence, and border agencies in responding to polycriminal networks, including how systems designed around single crime types can be adapted to match networks operating across cybercrime, financial crime, and document fraud simultaneously.

- A session on **Strengthening Migration Governance: Priorities for Regional Cooperation Between Most-Affected Countries** will invite updates on the institutional and legal architecture connecting migration management across states sharing a route or border, including how cooperation arrangements, information-sharing mechanisms, and public messaging function as parts of one system rather than isolated national measures.

- A session on **Deepening Prevention and Protection Systems: Priorities for Whole-of-Society Responses** will invite updates on the referral pathways and institutional architecture connecting government, civil society and private sector actors across a trafficking case, from identification and screening through to protection and reintegration, as a single, whole-of-society system.

Insights from border and immigration officials at the Fifth RSO Border Forum (7–8 October 2026, Bangkok) will also be presented by the RSO to support consideration of opportunities for action and prioritisation of efforts.

Expected Outcomes

Expected outcomes from the Fifth Constructive Dialogue are that:

- Promising partnership practices in the Bali Process region are shared and built upon, strengthening national and regional responses to people smuggling, trafficking in persons and related transnational crime.
- Member States identify shared priorities and potential partners for future collaboration, creating a foundation for voluntary follow-up beyond the Dialogue.

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- Connections and networks across Member States and Organisations are strengthened, creating pathways for further partnership and actionable ideas to improve national systems and regional mechanisms.
- An Outcome Report is produced, capturing progress made, promising practices, identified partnership opportunities, and collectively identified ideas to address enduring challenges and barriers, informing the implementation of the RSO Strategic Work Plan.

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