



Pacific Immigration Development Community

Apia, Samoa: 13-15 February 2019

PIDC EXECUTIVE SEMINAR TO COMBAT HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND PEOPLE SMUGGLING

Introduction

The PIDC Executive Seminar to Combat Human Trafficking and People Smuggling (HTPS) was held in Apia, Samoa from 13-15 February 2019. The Seminar was coordinated and facilitated by the PIDC Secretariat and supported by experienced experts from the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), United Nations Office for Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Bali Process Regional Support Office (RSO), UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), International Labour Organisation (ILO), EU-ACP Migration Action Technical Assistance for PIDC (EU-ACP) and experts from the PIDC Membership.

The Seminar was attended by 30 participants, representing immigration departments from the Governments of Australia, Cook Islands, Fiji, French Polynesia, Kiribati, New Zealand, Nauru, Niue, Papua New Guinea, Palau, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu.

A participant from the Pacific Dialogue, a Fiji based civil society organisation also facilitated sessions during the seminar.

The Seminar was opened by Mr. Agafili Shem Leo, Chief Executive Officer of the Ministry of the Prime Minister and Cabinet of Samoa. The Chief Executive Officer welcomed participants and noted that this was the first human trafficking and people smuggling seminar hosted by PIDC since obtaining its legal entity status in 2016. He reiterated the objectives of the seminar and the need for participants to use the opportunity to share experiences and build their understanding of trends and methods of human trafficking and people smuggling in the region.

Mr Leo reinforced the need for immigration officers to share information and identify commonalities in business requirements and approaches to human trafficking and people smuggling operations in the Pacific. Participants were challenged to use this opportunity to share knowledge and experiences, and make strong recommendations to support the development of a draft regional HTPS framework.

Objectives

The purpose of the seminar is to:

- allow Members and Stakeholders to share experiences to establish a regional context on the scope of Human Trafficking and People Smuggling in the Pacific;

- map activities and programmes delivered in the region by Members and Stakeholders to combat Human Trafficking and People Smuggling;
- support Members to develop a Regional PIDC Framework to combat Human Trafficking and People Smuggling and coordinate PIDC and stakeholder efforts to avoid duplication of activities;
- identify possible collaborative programmes and activities to support Members; and
- identify key national activities to be undertaken by Members to combat Human Trafficking and People Smuggling.

SEMINAR OUTCOMES

Supplementary activities through the PIDC typically arise from ideas generated at workshops and seminars, which are presented in the form of an Outcomes Summary – a document formulated by Seminar participants and agreed upon for publication on the PIDC website.

The Outcomes Summary represents a tentative plan for future action (e.g. further workshops and other collaborative projects) and in-principle agreement to the high-level concepts discussed throughout a seminar.

All plans for future action, such as workshops, projects and other activities, must be endorsed by the PIDC Board or Members at the Regular Annual Meeting. Although the Outcomes Summary does not represent a firm commitment to future action, it does represent in-principle agreement to progress the ideas contained in the Outcomes Summary.

Outcomes as agreed upon by Seminar participants

General Comments

1. Participants at the PIDC Executive Seminar to Combat Human Trafficking and People Smuggling:

- (a) **expressed** appreciation for the support provided by PIDC and its partner organisations; the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), International Organisation for Migration (IOM), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Bali Process Regional Support Office (RSO), ACP-EU Migration Action and International Labour Organisation (ILO) in hosting the seminar on human trafficking and people smuggling;
- (b) **acknowledged** and **thanked** with appreciation the Resource Persons and experts from IOM, UNODC, UNHCR, RSO, ILO, the ACP- EU Migration Action and the Pacific Dialogue (Fiji based civil society organisation);
- (c) **recognised** the value of holding regional fora to discuss the specific and unique needs and operating environments of immigration agencies in Pacific Islands Countries and Territories;
- (d) **encouraged** the PIDC Board and Secretariat, to continue supporting the implementation of further consultative forums to combat Human Trafficking and People Smuggling in the PIDC Membership; and
- (e) **acknowledged** the increase in people movement and irregular migration into the region and the challenges posed on immigration agencies border control systems and processes;

General Recommendations

2. To combat human trafficking and people smuggling, Participants further:

- (a) **agreed** that the development of a draft regional framework on Human Trafficking and People Smuggling was a useful approach to ensure regional efforts contributed to and supported national activities;
- (b) **agreed** that where appropriate, Members needed to develop National Action Plans to coordinate national activities noting that implementation and monitoring were crucial;

- (c) **recognised** that development of NAPs required thorough planning, wide stakeholder consultation and the need for an agreed lead agency to lead and drive the consultation and NAP development process;
- (d) **agreed** that where appropriate regional and international agencies should look to support Members to develop National Action Plans to combat human trafficking and people smuggling;
- (e) **recognised** that the majority of PIDC Members did not have guiding policies and procedures to address irregular arrivals and the investigation of people smuggling and human trafficking cases; and **agreed** that support needed to be provided to develop these documents;
- (f) **recognised** the need for immigration agencies to combine efforts and resources with national and regional partner agencies to disrupt and deter human traffickers and people smugglers from operating in our borders;
- (g) **noted** that a number of PIDC Member countries have successful experiences of inter-agency cooperation and coordination which Members could use as reference points.
- (h) **encouraged** PIDC Members to adopt Interagency structures to address Human Trafficking and People Smuggling;
- (i) **supported** the development and delivery of specialised training packages for immigration officers especially for investigation and media engagement skills;
- (j) **encouraged** joint training programmes for customs, police, and partner law enforcement agencies delegated to undertake immigration roles under Members' respective laws;
- (k) **noted** that victims of trafficking required special treatment and there was a need to deliver specialist "Victim of Trafficking" training programmes to immigration officers.
- (l) **encouraged** PIDC to continue strengthening Members' capacity to share information throughout the PIDC Membership;
- (m) **requested** PIDC to coordinate and strengthen information circulation in the Pacific and **encouraged** Member immigration agencies to continue working together to disrupt Human Trafficking and People Smuggling operations; and
- (n) **recognised** the need to increase visibility of modern-day trafficking and smuggling to increase the general public's understanding of the elements and indicators of human trafficking and people smuggling.

- (o) **recognised** that majority of PIDC Members do not have centralized databases for proper documentation and information dissemination of human trafficking and people smuggling;
- (p) **recognised** that monitoring and collecting people movement data in the Pacific high seas and sea ports continues to be a challenge for immigration and law enforcement agencies in the Pacific;
- (q) **requested** PIDC to continue supporting Members' data management processes through the PIDC data collection prototype programme to encourage Members to work toward centralising data collection on human trafficking and people smuggling;
- (r) **agreed** that cases bearing indicators of Human Trafficking should be afforded a separate data field in national and PIDC collection plan templates;
- (s) **recognized** that the technical assistance provided by the ACP-EU Migration Action was expected to strengthen PIDC's data collection process;
- (t) **encouraged** Members to support and contribute to PIDC's revised Annual Collection Plan survey to inform the 2018 Irregular Migration Report; and
- (u) **encouraged** participants at this workshop to take back lessons and recommendations from this seminar to their home nations to improve national processes and systems that will complement and strengthen their HTPS processes.

PIDC Specific Recommendations

3. In addition, Participants **recommended** that PIDC through its Board and the Secretariat:
 - (a) **finalise** the draft regional framework for human trafficking and people smuggling to be presented to the PIDC Board and 2019 RAM for Members' endorsement;
 - (b) **consult** with regional and international partner organisations to support Members seeking to develop National Action Plans for human trafficking and people smuggling;
 - (c) **explore** the development of a human trafficking and people smuggling investigation specialist course/programme package for immigration officers in the Pacific;
 - (d) **recognise** that most Members do not have national human trafficking and people smuggling training packages and depend on PIDC and partner organisations to provide specialist training programmes;
 - (e) **strongly recommend** that PIDC should work towards developing human trafficking and people smuggling training packages that can be sustained into the future;

- (f) **work** with PIDC Members to collate Members' responses to the 2019 Annual Collection Plan Survey programme;
- (g) **seek** funding options for the implementation of future workshops for PIDC Members, and partner law enforcement colleagues such as police and customs including training and secondment opportunities in human trafficking and people smuggling operations;
- (h) **develop** a network of practitioners in the PIDC Membership that can provide advice and guidance on human trafficking and people smuggling issues to the PIDC Membership when required or needed; and
- (i) **seek** to ensure outcomes from the seminar are reflected in the PIDC Secretariat workplan.