

# **Papua New Guinea Country Statement**

**On**

## **Smuggling of Migrants, Trafficking in Persons and Contemporary Forms of Slavery, and Issues of Appropriate Identification and Protection and Assistance to Migrants and Trafficking Victims**

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Madam Chair and Distinguished Delegates;

Papua New Guinea joins members of this forum to acknowledge the increasing problem of smuggling of migrants; trafficking of persons and other contemporary forms of slavery in the Asia Pacific region. We all know that the perpetrators prey on the vulnerable situation of the victims to gain profit at the expense of the welfare and life of the latter.

Papua New Guinea also acknowledges the ongoing challenges countries in the region face in combating these hideous crimes. However, we recognise the progress and achievements made by individual countries through the hard work of their law enforcement agencies and their policy and legislative reform programs at the national level and or collectively in various sub-regional and regional avenues.

Madam Chair;

We do not need any more anecdotal evidence to prove the prevalence globally of migrant smuggling; trafficking of persons and other forms of modern day slavery. What we require now is global responses. The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration is a step in the right direction.

Madam Chair;

Papua New Guinea remains committed to regional and global efforts in combating any forms of inhuman treatment of migrants. Due to our geographical position in our region, the bridge between Asia and the Pacific, Papua New Guinea is a transit country for some migrants and

a destination country for others.

Madam Chair;

In recognition of the progress made at sub regional, regional and globally in addressing the many issues relating to migration, Papua New Guinea has taken steps at the national level to carry out legislative and policy reforms which are not only aimed at facilitating regular migration but also to combat irregular migration, particularly aimed at combating human smuggling and trafficking in persons and related transnational crimes. The Papua New Guinea Government has taken a holistic approach in this area by criminalizing acts of people smuggling and trafficking in persons necessitated by the legislative amendment of the Criminal Code. The same law also has provisions which provide protection for victims of trafficking.

Subsequently, a National Human Trafficking Committee was established to strengthen the country's response by promoting cooperative efforts, information sharing and partnership amongst concerned stakeholders from all sectors of society. This initiative culminated in the development of a PNG Human Trafficking National Action Plan 2015-2020 and the Standard Operating Procedures.

Madam Chair;

The SOP contains clear and precise guidelines on victim identification; referral procedures and protection mechanism under the Papua New Guinea law in consultation with relevant international conventions. A wider nationwide awareness was carried following the legislative and policy reforms to inform the citizens on issues of human smuggling and trafficking in persons and how they can respond appropriately.

Madam Chair;

At the sub-regional and regional level, we maintain our commitment to achieve the broader objectives of the Bali Process, that is, to combat people smuggling, trafficking of persons and related transnational crimes. Of particular note is the recent resolve at the Bali Process Government and Business Forum in Perth, Australia where Ministers pledged to work together with private sectors to eliminate any forms of modern day slavery in supply chains.

Papua New Guinea is also actively involved in the work of Pacific Immigration Directors Conference, among other things, to share

information and ideas, learn new skills and techniques, develop policies and programs aimed at enhancing regional approach to issues of migration.

Madam Chair and Delegates;

In conclusion, I reaffirm my Government's commitment to the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, and for this relevant agenda the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. We will support any efforts to enhance global migration governance including promoting orderly and regular migration and to protect the rights of migrants, especially those who fall victims to transnational organized crimes. It is our view that we must create more legal pathways to manage regular and irregular migrants alike whilst at the same time where it is appropriately so, make allowance for states to exercise their prerogative to return irregular migrants.

Thank you Madam Chair and Distinguished Delegates