



Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime

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Working Group on the Smuggling of Migrants

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Draft Report

Addendum

II. Recommendations (*continued*)

C. Recommendations on smuggling of migrants by air and its facilitation through document fraud

Recommendation 11

States parties should draft guidelines for practitioners to develop their capacities in identifying forged documents and provide them with the needed equipment.

Recommendation 12

States parties should establish three expert groups for different forms of migrant smuggling (air, sea and land) to have periodic meetings in order to share experience, best practices and techniques of investigations.

Recommendation 13

States parties should adopt strict procedures in airports to combat smuggling of migrants by air.

Recommendation 14

States parties should use the barrier model to break the business model of migrant smuggling.

Recommendation 15

States parties should exchange relevant information on individuals entering countries who are hosting international sporting or other major events, with a view to reducing the opportunities for migrant smugglers.

Recommendation 16

States parties should analyse the outcome of work by investigative bodies and summarise promising practices, with a view to making such information available to the general public, and all government and non-governmental agencies in order to raise awareness.



Recommendation 17

States parties should analyse information found on websites and other online resources that provide advice on how it might be made easier for migrants to enter a given State Party.

Recommendation 18

States parties should, consistent with domestic and international law, consider gathering and sharing the biometric information of travellers in order to improve the identification of smuggling routes and the detection of criminal organizations that facilitate travel through document fraud.

Recommendation 19

States parties should share information from the interdiction of shipments of so-called “feeder” documents that contain identities used repeatedly by smuggling organizations to facilitate travel by air in order to enhance the ability of relevant authorities to identify and detect individuals travelling with fraudulent documents.

Recommendation 20

States parties should call upon appropriate partners, including UNODC, to continue providing technical assistance to identify and remedy vulnerabilities that could enable the smuggling of migrants by air, including by considering contributing to, or increasing their contributions to, the AIRCOP programme.

Recommendation 21

States parties should expand their cooperation with commercial air carriers to detect individuals travelling with fraudulent documents, and to identify travel patterns and routes utilized by smuggling organizations.

III. Summary of deliberations (*continued*)

1. Discussions on agenda item 3 commenced with presentations by two national experts. The first panellist was Mr. Rohan Coelho, International Network Manager, Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA), on behalf of The Western European and Others Group. The second panellist was Dr. Mohamed Ezzat, Chief Prosecutor at the International Cooperation Division of the Office of the Prosecutor General (Egypt), on behalf of the African Group.
2. Mr. Coelho provided an operational perspective, outlining Canada’s efforts to combat migrant smuggling. He emphasized that migrant smuggling is not a homogenous criminal activity as push and pull factors, the price of the trip, routing of travel, documents used and status upon arrival can all vary significantly in any particular instance.
3. He noted that migrants themselves can be a valuable source of information regarding increasing knowledge on smuggling incidents by air as well as more broadly smuggling networks and new *modus operandi*. Such information can be shared domestically as well as internationally, as appropriate. Mr. Coelho also noted the value of liaison officers, who can be integrated with other nations’ officers to form immigration enforcement teams. He provided examples of experiences in countering fraudulent documents, including through the National Document Centre. He concluded by noting strategies undertaken in Canada to combat fraud, including the importance of communication, data analysis and information-sharing, document security, training and capacity-building assistance.
4. In the presentation that followed, Dr. Ezzat outlined Egypt’s national legal framework to combat smuggling of migrants, including its constitution, legislation (particularly Law number 82 of 2016), two national strategies, and guiding plans. He

noted that, while the most common form of migrant smuggling from Egypt in recent years has been by sea, an increase in smuggling of migrants by air is noticeable. Dr. Ezzat reflected on changing modalities and a range of illegal means used by organized criminal groups engaged in smuggling. Dr. Ezzat provided examples of cases where forged documents and websites have been used to obtain visas, noting that biometric passports are one means Egypt uses to detect fraudulent documents. He outlined many efforts to overcome challenges presented by this form of smuggling, including awareness-raising among vulnerable groups, as well as law enforcement and prosecutorial authorities. Practical guides produced in collaboration with UNODC and IOM have been effective in raising awareness. He also outlined how memorandums of understanding with a number of countries facilitate mutual cooperation and exchange of information to eradicate criminal networks involved in smuggling of migrants.

5. After these presentations, the panellists exchanged additional information with the participants in response to several questions and comments regarding specific measures undertaken to respond to smuggling of migrants by air. A number of these questions and comments focused on promising practices as well as ways to strengthen cooperation bilaterally, as well as regionally and multilaterally.

6. In the discussion that followed, speakers expressed a commitment to disrupt the smuggling of migrants by air, stressing the intrinsic connection between this form of smuggling and document fraud. Many speakers noted complex methods used by smugglers to avoid detection by border officials, including fraudulent passports and visas, organized visa fraud, and abuse of online visa systems.

7. In combating such challenges, speakers shared promising practices to minimize the movement of improperly documented passengers and reduce the use of international airports as a hub for organized crime. Many speakers highlighted the importance of information-sharing as critical in detecting, investigating and prosecuting smuggling of migrants by air. Speakers noted the value of sharing intelligence data and images of genuine, false and forged documents; of collaboration between airport authorities; and of creating networks of specialists who are able to detect key individuals and networks involved in smuggling of migrants. Several speakers highlighted the value of national institutions to combat smuggling of migrants, as well as databases and document centres to facilitate information exchange, including to frontline officers. One speaker reflected on the scarcity of data concerning smuggling of migrants by air, noting the value of the UNODC issue paper on smuggling of migrants by air (2010) as a tangible source of information on this form of smuggling. Another speaker highlighted the implementation of UNTOC and the Smuggling of Migrants Protocol as a means to facilitate international cooperation to combat the crime.

IV. Organization of the meeting

B. Statements (*continued*)

8. Under agenda items 2 and 3, statements were made by representatives of the following parties to the Smuggling of Migrants Protocol: European Union, Indonesia, New Zealand, Russian Federation, Senegal, Sudan.

9. Under agenda items 2 and 3, statements were made by representatives of the following states signatories to the Smuggling of Migrants Protocol: Sri Lanka, Thailand.

10. The observer for INTERPOL, an intergovernmental organization, also made a statement.