



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

Distr.: General
25 July 2019

Original: English

Working Group on the Smuggling of Migrants

Vienna, 11–13 September 2019

Item 2 of the provisional agenda*

Information-sharing on the smuggling of migrants as a form of transnational organized crime, consistent with article 10 of the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, and article 28 of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime

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Background paper prepared by the Secretariat

I. Introduction

1. The present background paper was prepared by the Secretariat to facilitate discussion by the Working Group on the Smuggling of Migrants at its sixth meeting. It sets out a series of issues related to the topic of information-sharing on the smuggling of migrants as a form of transnational organized crime that the Working Group may wish to address in the course of its deliberations and provides background information on the topic, including on the availability of data on the extent of the smuggling of migrants worldwide, underlying challenges, good practices and the previous work of the Working Group on related matters. The paper also lists specific references, resources and tools that States may use to further develop responses to the smuggling of migrants.

II. Issues for discussion

2. The Working Group may wish to address the issues outlined below, among others, when discussing the topic of information-sharing on the smuggling of migrants as a form of transnational organized crime. These issues are intended to

* CTOC/COP/WG.7/2019/1.



generate discussion concerning better practices, as well as the gaps and challenges confronted by relevant stakeholders, in responding to the smuggling of migrants:

- (a) What information is currently collected regarding the smuggling of migrants or that can help to inform an understanding of the smuggling of migrants?
- (b) What are the most important gaps in the current understanding of the nature and scope of the smuggling of migrants at the national, regional and international levels?
- (c) What role can information-sharing play in addressing these gaps?
- (d) What information is required to identify and improve national legal, policy and programmatic responses to the smuggling of migrants?
- (e) How can States parties work together to improve their understanding of the smuggling of migrants within and between their jurisdictions?
- (f) What measures have been taken to monitor policies and combat the smuggling of migrants, consistent with article 28, paragraph 3, of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime?
- (g) What good practices exist at the national level to facilitate the collection of data on the smuggling of migrants?
- (h) What good practices exist at the national level to facilitate information-sharing on the smuggling of migrants?
- (i) What progress has been made in the area of information-sharing on the smuggling of migrants at the regional and international levels?
- (j) How can regional or international organizations facilitate more effective information-sharing efforts?
- (k) Are differences in national legislation having an impact on cross-border information-sharing efforts? If so, what changes can be pursued to facilitate improved information-sharing?
- (l) Can States parties provide examples of tangible benefits they have derived from information-sharing on the smuggling of migrants?
- (m) Have efforts to successfully address the smuggling of migrants led to changes in the practices of organized criminal groups?

III. Background

Available information

3. Research and data collection are critical to effective information-sharing and, more fundamentally, to supporting effective criminal justice system responses to the smuggling of migrants.
4. For instance, without a clear picture of smuggling routes or *modi operandi*, it can be difficult to develop effective interdiction and investigatory strategies. Incomplete data on the nature and scope of the smuggling of migrants similarly impedes the development of prevention efforts and can undermine the development of both formal and informal international cooperation, including information-sharing.
5. In assessing what information is held at the national level and the minimum extent to which it might be shared between States, a point of reference is the current global analysis of related information in the public domain.
6. In 2018, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) released its first *Global Study on Smuggling of Migrants*. The *Global Study* is based on a comprehensive review of available data and information – both quantitative and qualitative – from both national and international sources.

7. Despite improvements, data collection, analysis and research are still insufficient at the national, regional and international levels. The *Global Study* recommends the following specific actions to enhance existing information on migrant smuggling:

(a) Improve data collection systems at the national, regional and international levels;

(b) Maintain adequate administrative records, conduct appropriate surveys, and apply statistical methodologies and draw upon qualitative studies to monitor migrant smuggling patterns and routes, as well as the profiles of smugglers and their *modi operandi*.

Smuggling routes

8. Recent smuggling trends show that the main identified areas of origin of smuggled persons are the Horn of Africa, West Africa, Central America, some parts of the Middle East and areas in South and East Asia. Those coming from the Horn of Africa typically follow one of four major routes, to the Middle East, Southern Africa, North Africa and Europe.

9. In Asia, smuggling routes vary and include both land and air routes; South Asian migrants may be smuggled by air into Europe, South Africa, Australia or North America. Smuggling within the region is also common.

10. As a destination region, Europe saw a significant number of smuggled migrants arriving from Africa between 2016 and 2017. For instance, 89 per cent of those who arrived in Italy by sea were from Africa, while in Spain, 94 per cent of smuggled migrants who arrived were African. In North America, the overwhelming number of smuggled migrants who arrived at the southern border of the United States of America originated from Mexico and Central American countries.

Sex and age of smuggled migrants and smugglers

11. Young men represent the majority of those identified as smuggled and they typically travel alone. As an example, South Asian smuggled migrants are predominantly between the ages of 18 and 30 years. This is similar to the trends observed along smuggling routes from the Horn of Africa to South Africa, where most men smuggled were between the ages of 18 and 35 years. Smuggling routes from Central America and Mexico into the United States primarily involve men, though it is estimated that between 20 and 25 per cent of those smuggled are women.

12. The profile of those involved in migrant smuggling is varied. As with most forms of crime, migrant smugglers are typically men, and their average age falls between 30 and 35 years. Often, smugglers have the same ethnic background as those they smuggle and, according to more recent trends, many smugglers may have themselves been smuggled in the past. Smuggling enterprises can be sophisticated organized criminal groups or loosely affiliated groups that pool their skills and resources. More sophisticated groups have the ability to operate in larger areas and can make significant profits. The success of smaller, more loosely based organizations is more closely tied to the demand for their services in their communities and the profit attainable may be less significant.

Illicit profits

13. According to available data, in 2016, approximately 2.5 million migrants were smuggled worldwide, with profits from their smuggling estimated at between \$5.5 billion and \$7 billion. Fees charged by smugglers ranged from \$60 to \$47,000 per person and the precise fee charged would depend on various identified factors, including the distance to be travelled, where the person would be smuggled to, the mode of transportation and the difficulty associated with the crossing of borders. It should be noted that this profit range represents a minimum estimate, owing to the limited data available in certain areas.

Crimes committed against migrants

14. Migrants are at risk of being victimized during smuggling operations. The *Global Study* notes that, in 2017, at least 382 migrants were victims of homicide (murder or manslaughter). Additionally, reported crimes against migrants have included all forms of assault, sexual violence, kidnapping and extortion. Migrants can also become victims of trafficking in persons. Of course, the statistics on such crimes do not include those that may have been committed but were not reported, or those for which it may not have been possible to verify whether the victim of crime was a migrant. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) Counter-Trafficking Data Collaborative, a database that includes information on more than 90,000 cases of trafficking in persons, reports that, among the victims assisted, nearly 80 per cent of transnational cases involved crossing at an official checkpoint. Of those, 9 per cent involved the use of forged documents.¹ It is thus plausible that some of those individuals employed the services of smugglers.

Fatalities

15. The dangers associated with migrant smuggling are well-documented. In addition to falling prey to criminals, migrants face a host of other situations that make them vulnerable to death. The causes of smuggling-related death can be linked to many factors, including difficult terrain and weather conditions. Unsafe modes of transportation, including poorly ventilated cargo containers or unseaworthy vessels, pose particular risks. The Missing Migrants Project,² an initiative of IOM, tracks the deaths of migrants and those who have gone missing in the process of migration. According to the Project, in recent years, the overwhelming majority of recorded migrant deaths have occurred in the Mediterranean region. In 2017, 6,280 migrant deaths were recorded; in 2018, 4,737 deaths were recorded. As at 31 July 2019, 1,602 migrant deaths have been recorded around the world. The causes of death in those cases included drowning, hypothermia, vehicle accidents, dehydration, suffocation and shooting.

Past discussion on information-sharing by the Working Group on the Smuggling of Migrants

16. The Working Group has discussed information-sharing in relation to the smuggling of migrants on at least three separate occasions, in the context of the following related topics:

- (a) Challenges and good practices concerning cooperation and coordination, including the sharing of intelligence and other information, in response to the smuggling of migrants;³
- (b) Good practices in informal cross-border cooperation and information-sharing;⁴
- (c) Criminal justice responses, including international cooperation, in investigations and prosecutions of perpetrators of migrant smuggling operations.⁵

17. A review of the related background papers and recommendations adopted by the Working Group resulting from those discussions demonstrates the ongoing importance placed by States parties on information-sharing and the contribution it can

¹ *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2018* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.19.IV.2), p. 47.

² See <https://missingmigrants.iom.int/>.

³ See CTOC/COP/WG.7/2012/5; for the relevant recommendations on this topic, see CTOC/COP/WG.7/2012/6, paras. 7, 9–10, 26, 38–41, and 43–54.

⁴ See CTOC/COP/WG.7/2013/4; for the relevant recommendations on this topic, see CTOC/COP/WG.7/2013/5, paras. 6 and 9.

⁵ See CTOC/COP/WG.7/2018/2; for the relevant recommendations on this topic, see CTOC/COP/WG.7/2018/3, para. 8 (a)–(k).

make to facilitating successful anti-smuggling initiatives. The following are some of the key thematic linkages identified by the Working Group in its discussions to date on information-sharing and its relation to various aspects of a comprehensive response to the smuggling of migrants:

(a) *Improved knowledge base.* Information-sharing, including on data and trends, provides the building blocks for the design and implementation of comprehensive anti-smuggling initiatives;

(b) *Capacity-building.* Success in the fight against the smuggling of migrants requires technical expertise and capacity on the ground. Immigration officials, police officers and other criminal justice system actors require the necessary knowledge and tools to successfully identify and respond to the smuggling of migrants. Information-sharing, including between States parties, is one way to strengthen such capacities;

(c) *Investigations and prosecutions.* Information-sharing supports successful investigations and prosecutions. Information-sharing in the context of active investigations and prosecutions can take many forms. For example, police-to-police cooperation in the collection of evidence can help to improve investigatory efficiency. Mutual legal assistance, as envisioned in article 18 of the Organized Crime Convention, is also a form of information-sharing and is critical to the success of many investigations and prosecutions that have transnational elements. Information-sharing on successful strategies to investigate and prosecute cases involving the smuggling of migrants also supports capacity-building efforts;

(d) *Strengthened legal regimes.* Sharing information on national legislative experiences can facilitate strengthened criminal justice systems and support efforts to ensure that criminals cannot take advantage of gaps in national legal systems;

(e) *More effective prevention.* The ability to share intelligence and information between States parties can help to inform the development of more effective prevention strategies by enabling a more comprehensive understanding of the myriad factors contributing to the smuggling of migrants, including push and pull factors, trends in strategies employed by smugglers and the links they may have to organized criminal groups, whether domestic or transnational.

Examples of information-sharing mechanisms

18. The Working Group on the Smuggling of Migrants provides an important forum for the sharing of detailed practices regarding national responses to the smuggling of migrants. Other intergovernmental forums and mechanisms, in particular at the regional and interregional levels, also provide opportunities for the enhanced sharing of operational and time-sensitive information. They include the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime, focused on the Asia-Pacific region and comprising more than 49 members, including States and international organizations; the Budapest Process, covering a region comprising more than 50 States and stretching from Europe to the Silk Road region; and the European Union-Horn of Africa Migration Route Initiative (Khartoum Process), which is a forum for political cooperation among countries along the migration route between the Horn of Africa and Europe.

19. The following are some of a wide range of platforms, mechanisms and arrangements by which practitioners currently share and/or access information concerning the smuggling of migrants across different jurisdictions:

(a) A UNODC data hub on the smuggling of migrants is under development and will be launched in 2019. The data hub will provide a means to collect and disseminate information on the smuggling of migrants, including the *modi operandi* of smugglers, information on why people choose to use smugglers to migrate, the routes taken, the human and financial costs associated with such smuggling and law enforcement responses. The data hub will focus on countries in West and North Africa, as well as Europe. It is the first initiative to combine the results of crime research on

irregular migration by means of systematic data collection in origin, transit and destination countries;

(b) The UNODC Voluntary Reporting System on Migrant Smuggling and Related Conduct has been in operation since 2013 under the auspices of the Bali Process. The Voluntary Reporting System helps participating States share data and facilitates analysis of the migrant smuggling phenomenon with a view to strengthening responses through evidence-based data. A total of 26 countries participate in the system, which covers South-East Asia, as well as other regions. The tool offers approximately 500 separate reports and includes information on such matters as the routes and means of transportation used to smuggle migrants and profiles of both smugglers and those smuggled;

(c) In October 2016, UNODC launched, as a component of the UNODC knowledge management portal known as Sharing Electronic Resources and Laws on Crime (SHERLOC), the Smuggling of Migrants Knowledge Portal. The portal includes a case law database, a database of national legislation and an annotated bibliography providing information on key articles and publications on the smuggling of migrants. The case law database is aimed at enabling judges, prosecutors, policymakers, the media, researchers and other interested parties to broaden their knowledge of how various States use their laws to combat the smuggling of migrants, with the goal of enhancing the global criminal justice response against that phenomenon. The database is an essential tool for increasing the visibility of successful prosecutions, identifying global patterns and promoting awareness of the realities of the smuggling of migrants;

(d) The Ibero-American Network of Specialized Prosecutors against Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants of the Ibero-American Association of Public Prosecutors provides a forum for prosecutors to share information both on actual cases and on strategies to successfully address such crimes;

(e) The West African Network of Central Authorities and Prosecutors against Organized Crime supports regional information-sharing and training on migrant smuggling, trafficking in persons and organized crime to enable more effective investigations and prosecutions;

(f) The Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime promotes regional cooperation, policy dialogue and information-sharing to address those issues. Currently, work is being undertaken to develop guidelines for Member States to standardize immigration intelligence reports with a view to facilitating the sharing of intelligence information between Member States in a clear, concise and consistently-prepared manner;

(g) The European Migrant Smuggling Centre, housed within the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (Europol), supports European Union member States in targeting and dismantling complex and sophisticated criminal networks involved in the smuggling of migrants;

(h) The International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) Specialized Operational Network against People Smuggling is an international law enforcement network bringing together experts from more than 120 countries to share intelligence on threats, trends, routes and *modi operandi*;

(i) The IOM Global Migration Data Portal provides comprehensive migration statistics and access to migration data from around the world.

IV. Guidance for response

20. Article 27, paragraph 1 (e), of the Organized Crime Convention obliges States parties to exchange information on criminal means and methods used. The types of information to be exchanged in relation to the smuggling of migrants are explained in article 10 of the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air,

supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, which encourages information-sharing between States parties on a broad range of matters, notably, in relation to the following:

(a) Embarkation and destination points, as well as routes, carriers and means of transportation, known to be or suspected of being used by an organized criminal group engaged in conduct as set forth in article 6 of the Smuggling of Migrants Protocol;

(b) The identity and methods of organizations or organized criminal groups known to be or suspected of being engaged in conduct as set forth in article 6 of the Smuggling of Migrants Protocol;

(c) The authenticity and proper form of travel documents issued by a State party and the theft or related misuse of blank travel or identity documents;

(d) Means and methods of concealment and transportation of persons, and the unlawful alteration, reproduction or acquisition or other misuse of travel or identity documents used in conduct as set forth in article 6 of the Smuggling of Migrants Protocol, and ways of detecting them;

(e) Legislative experiences and practices and measures to prevent and combat the conduct as set forth in article 6 of the Smuggling of Migrants Protocol;

(f) Scientific and technological information useful to law enforcement authorities, so as to enhance their ability to prevent, detect and investigate the conduct as set forth in article 6 of the Smuggling of Migrants Protocol, and to prosecute those involved.

21. Article 28, paragraph 2, of the Organized Crime Convention requires States parties to consider developing and sharing analytical expertise concerning organized criminal activities with each other and through international and regional organizations. It also provides that common definitions, standards and methodologies should be developed and applied, as appropriate, for that purpose.

22. At its sixth session, the Conference of the Parties to the Organized Crime Convention adopted resolution 6/3, in which it:

(a) Urged States parties to consider the importance of bilateral and multilateral cooperation, including cooperation at the regional level and with neighbouring countries, in order to strengthen border control, conduct joint investigations, exchange operational information and intelligence and develop training programmes for relevant actors;

(b) Encouraged States parties to use existing operational databases, such as the databases of INTERPOL, to exchange information, including on persons convicted of or suspected of committing any of the crimes as set forth in article 6 of the Smuggling of Migrants Protocol and information on lost or stolen documents, in accordance with domestic law;

(c) Encouraged States parties to exchange information on best practices to promote cooperation to the fullest extent possible to prevent and suppress the smuggling of migrants by sea, in accordance with the international law of the sea, in order to implement article 7 of the Smuggling of Migrants Protocol.

23. The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration⁶ emphasizes the importance of accurate and disaggregated data as a basis for evidence-based policies, as well as the need for the provision of accurate and timely information. For example, in the Global Compact, States are urged to “enhance collaboration between State units responsible for migration data and national statistical offices to produce migration-related statistics, including by using administrative records for statistical purposes, such as border records, visas, resident permits, population registers and other relevant sources, while upholding the right to privacy and protecting personal data”.

⁶ General Assembly resolution 73/195, annex.

Objective 9 of the Global Compact specifically addresses the response to the smuggling of migrants, noting specific actions to be taken by States, including the following:

(a) Use transnational, regional and bilateral mechanisms to share relevant information and intelligence on smuggling routes, *modi operandi* and financial transactions of smuggling networks, vulnerabilities faced by smuggled migrants, and other data to dismantle the smuggling networks and enhance joint responses;

(b) Facilitate cross-border law enforcement and intelligence cooperation in order to prevent and counter the smuggling of migrants with the aim of ending impunity for smugglers and preventing irregular migration, while ensuring that counter-smuggling measures are in full respect for human rights;

(c) Take measures to prevent the smuggling of migrants along the migration cycle, in partnership with other States and relevant stakeholders, including by cooperating in the fields of development, public information and justice, as well as training and technical capacity-building at national and local levels, paying special attention to geographic areas from which irregular migration systematically originates.

V. Key tools and recommended resources

24. The tools and resources listed below are all available on the UNODC website (www.unodc.org).

Global Study on Smuggling of Migrants

25. As noted above, the first *Global Study on Smuggling of Migrants* provides insight into all aspects of the crime, including trends, smuggling routes, and profiles of smugglers and those smuggled.

Migrant Smuggling in Asia and the Pacific: Current Trends and Challenges

26. The 2018 publication *Migrant Smuggling in Asia and the Pacific: Current Trends and Challenges* builds upon a previous volume published in 2015 and provides updated data and research on the smuggling of migrants in the region. It includes detailed information on smuggling trends in all subregions, including push and pull factors, the conditions faced by those smuggled and profiles of smugglers. Covering 40 countries and territories, the report expands upon the geographical scope of the previous report to include the Pacific region and gives an updated overview of the smuggling of migrants in the region as a whole.

Toolkit to Combat Smuggling of Migrants

27. The UNODC *Toolkit to Combat Smuggling of Migrants* provides guidance, showcases promising practices and recommends resources in various thematic areas to assist countries in implementing the Smuggling of Migrants Protocol. Among the tools comprising the *Toolkit*, tool 1 provides an overview of the crime of smuggling of migrants, tool 5 sets out the legislative framework for criminalizing the smuggling of migrants and tool 7 covers law enforcement and prosecution.

Assessment Guide to the Criminal Justice Response to the Smuggling of Migrants

28. The UNODC *Assessment Guide to the Criminal Justice Response to the Smuggling of Migrants* contains a standardized and cross-referenced set of measures designed to enable government officials in immigration, customs and law enforcement agencies, as well as United Nations agencies, other organizations, various industry actors and individuals, to conduct comprehensive assessments of national systems in order to identify areas of technical assistance, assist in the design

of interventions that incorporate international standards and norms on the prevention and suppression of the smuggling of migrants, and assist in training on those issues.

Basic Training Manual on Investigating and Prosecuting the Smuggling of Migrants

29. The UNODC *Basic Training Manual on Investigating and Prosecuting the Smuggling of Migrants* is a practical guide and training tool for criminal justice practitioners around the world. Individual modules are designed to be readily adapted to the needs of different regions and countries and can serve as a basis for upgrading or supplementing the training programmes of national training institutes. Module 1, on concepts, and module 7, on legislative issues, are relevant to the criminalization of the smuggling of migrants and related conduct. Module 5 addresses covert investigative techniques.

In-depth Training Manual on Investigating and Prosecuting the Smuggling of Migrants

30. The UNODC *In-depth Training Manual on Investigating and Prosecuting the Smuggling of Migrants* builds on the *Basic Training Manual* to promote a common understanding of relevant concepts and encourages States parties to adopt a mutually reinforcing approach in their responses to the smuggling of migrants as a form of transnational organized crime. The *Manual* offers a practical approach to the investigation and prosecution of the smuggling of migrants by providing promising practices relevant to all countries of origin, transit and destination, regardless of their legal systems. Module 10 addresses special investigative techniques, while module 14 covers common legal issues in the investigation and prosecution of the smuggling of migrants.

Legislative Guides for the Implementation of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols Thereto

31. The main purpose of the UNODC *Legislative Guides for the Implementation of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols Thereto* is to assist States in implementing the Organized Crime Convention and its Protocols. The *Legislative Guides* address, inter alia, criminalization and other measures to combat money-laundering and corruption, as well as other provisions of the Organized Crime Convention. An updated version can be found under the heading “Legislative guide” on the SHERLOC knowledge management portal (<https://sherloc.unodc.org>).

International Framework for Action to Implement the Smuggling of Migrants Protocol

32. The UNODC *International Framework for Action to Implement the Smuggling of Migrants Protocol* is a technical assistance tool to help States parties and non-State actors to identify and address gaps in their response to the smuggling of migrants, in accordance with international standards. It draws on international instruments, political commitments, guidelines and best practices to propose a comprehensive approach to preventing and combating the smuggling of migrants. Part two of the *Framework for Action* contains an overview, in the form of four tables, on the following topics: prosecution and investigation; protection and assistance; prevention; and cooperation and coordination.

Model Law against the Smuggling of Migrants

33. The aim of the UNODC *Model Law against the Smuggling of Migrants* is to assist States in implementing the Smuggling of Migrants Protocol by facilitating the review and amendment of existing legislation and adoption of new legislation using model provisions. Its chapters cover the criminalization of the smuggling of migrants, protection and assistance measures in respect of smuggled migrants, coordination and

cooperation between agencies, cooperation in respect of the smuggling of migrants at sea, and processes related to the return of smuggled migrants.

Smuggling of Migrants Knowledge Portal and case law database

34. In October 2016, UNODC launched, as a component of the UNODC SHERLOC knowledge management portal, the Smuggling of Migrants Knowledge Portal. The portal includes a case law database, a database of legislation and an annotated bibliography providing information on key articles and publications on the smuggling of migrants. The case law database is aimed at enabling judges, prosecutors, policymakers, the media, researchers and other interested parties to broaden their knowledge of how various States use their laws to combat the smuggling of migrants, with the ultimate goal of enhancing the global criminal justice response. The database is an essential tool for increasing the visibility of successful prosecutions, identifying global patterns and promoting awareness of the realities of that crime. The database currently consists of more than 800 cases involving the smuggling of migrants from 43 jurisdictions. The Knowledge Portal can be accessed online at <https://sherloc.unodc.org/cld/en/v3/som/>.

The Concept of “Financial or Other Material Benefit” in the Smuggling of Migrants Protocol: Issue Paper

35. Recognizing the critical importance of a common understanding of the internationally agreed definition of the smuggling of migrants, UNODC has undertaken a study on the “financial and other material benefit” element of that definition. The issue paper contains an examination of legislation and case law among a broadly representative group of States in order to gain a comparative perspective on how that aspect of the definition has been understood and applied. Particular attention is paid to the experiences and views of practitioners involved in investigating and prosecuting the smuggling of migrants and related crimes.

Issue Paper: Organized Crime Involvement in Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants

36. In partnership with the Institute for International Research on Criminal Policy of Ghent University, Belgium, the study entitled *Issue Paper: Organized Crime Involvement in Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants* investigates the involvement of organized criminal groups in trafficking in persons and the smuggling of migrants. The purpose of the study is to help develop appropriate criminal justice responses to trafficking in persons and the smuggling of migrants as forms of organized crime that require a knowledge-based response.

Issue Paper: Corruption and the Smuggling of Migrants

37. The aim of the UNODC publication *Issue Paper: Corruption and the Smuggling of Migrants* is to assist policymakers and practitioners in preventing and addressing corruption related to the smuggling of migrants. Rather than reviewing all successful practices in the prevention of the smuggling of migrants, it focuses more narrowly on the prevention of corruption activities that facilitate the smuggling of migrants or defeat efforts to control it. The issue paper contains a review of the available evidence on the links between corruption and the smuggling of migrants, including the ways in which corruption facilitates the smuggling of migrants and undermines efforts to control it. It covers different forms of corruption associated with the smuggling of migrants in both the public and private sectors and contains examples of migrant smuggling cases involving corruption.

The Role of Organized Crime in the Smuggling of Migrants from West Africa to the European Union

38. The UNODC report entitled *The Role of Organized Crime in the Smuggling of Migrants from West Africa to the European Union* contributes to a better

understanding of the underlying mechanisms and actors involved in the smuggling of migrants and serves as a basis for policy reforms in the West African countries that it covers. The report is aimed primarily at decision makers and law enforcement and judicial officials, but also at a wider audience interested in irregular migration.

Digest of Organized Crime Cases

39. The aim of the UNODC *Digest of Organized Crime Cases* is to provide policymakers and criminal justice practitioners with an analysis of concrete cases and related good practices. The *Digest* explains all the stages of the criminal justice response, including legislation, investigation, prosecution and adjudication, as well as international cooperation. Through the use of illustrative cases, the *Digest* describes the successes of and difficulties encountered by practitioners and reflects the current situation with regard to global efforts to combat organized crime.

Mutual Legal Assistance Request Writer Tool

40. The UNODC Mutual Legal Assistance Request Writer Tool is designed to assist States in drafting requests for international cooperation and assistance. It can be used by persons with virtually no previous knowledge of or experience in drafting assistance requests. It guides users, step by step, through the request process for each type of mutual assistance using a series of templates, consolidates all data entered and automatically generates a correct, complete and effective request for final editing and signature. The Tool can be adjusted to any country's substantive and procedural law, enables users to retrieve information on treaties and national legislation and features a case-management tracking system for incoming and outgoing requests.
