BORDER SECURITY
REPORT

COVER STORY
EUROPE AND THE MIGRATION CRIME-TERRORISM NEXUS

Pandemic: We need a global response to a global crisis!

Confidence is growing that the new COVID-19 vaccines will be available in the new year, and in sufficient quantities to enable the world to start to return to some form of normality. Which of course is a great relief to us all!

But a word of caution. I see very little going on in the way of conversation at the international policy level, about being ready for the next pandemic.

After all, that day may not be as far off as you think.

Coronavirus is capable of mutating and mutating fast. There is some evidence for this in human beings, but there is plenty more evidence in another species.

It has been widely publicised that there have been outbreaks of coronavirus in mink farms in the US and Europe and that the animals are being slaughtered as a precaution.

Nature Magazine reported that a team from University College London has studied 239 viral genomes in farmed animals in the Netherlands and Denmark. They found that the virus had jumped from people to mink on at least seven occasions. They also identified at least 23 mutations that had arisen independently. This suggests that the virus is adapting rapidly to its new host and there is no reason to suppose that it could not jump back again, but in a new mutated form, which may or may not be resistant to any new vaccine.

That's what we do know.

What we don't yet know, is if the virus has spread to any other farmed animals or pets, somewhere in the world and is continuing to mutate.

Therefore, it is entirely possible that we could find ourselves playing a deadly game of whack-a-mole, with new strains of the virus popping up again and again, with untold human and economic cost.

Now to some, this may sound a little alarmist and maybe it is. But, should we not be preparing at least for the possibility.

Whether it is son-of-coronavirus or some other pathogen, a pandemic just like this, or something altogether more deadly, has been predicted for years. COVID-19 should be treated by the global community as a wake-up call.

It is clear that if there is another outbreak, for which we do not have an effective vaccine, isolating the source is the first line of defence. That means being ready to apply an agreed set of restrictions to border traffic and to be ready to close borders. And that means the border community need to be ready.

To do that effectively we need to work together internationally, adopting standard operational procedures, and at the same time. And if we are looking around for a model, then with only 618 cases and 7 COVID-19 deaths, Taiwan surely has shown the way.

Taiwan' success in controlling the virus was based on a fast coordinated response, with early temperature screening at airports, effective methods for quarantine for passengers arriving in the country, digital technologies for identifying potential cases and mass use of facemasks. This early response even allowed Taiwan to avoid a national lockdown. And all this despite the fact that with over 400k people working in China, they were probably the country most directly exposed to the outbreak in Wuhan.

To develop the policies, protocols and procedures, we need policy makers at the highest level to be discussing a roadmap to international agreement, and we need this to be happening now!

Just like global warming, we need a global response to a global crisis!

Tony Kingham

Editor

CONTENTS

BORDER SECURITY REPORT

» p.6

» p.24

» p.28

» p.34

Building Trust and Co-operation through Discussion and Dialogue

Co-Hosted by:

HELLENIC REPUBLIC
Ministry of Migration & Asylum

REGISTER TODAY

Register for your Delegate Pass online Today

Greece lies at the crossroads of East and West, Europe and the Middle East. It lies directly opposite Libya so along with Italy is the primary destination for migrants coming from that conflict zone and is a short boat trip from Turkey, the other principal migrant route for Syrians fleeing there conflict there.

Greece has over sixteen thousand kilometres of coastline and six thousand islands, only two hundred and twenty-seven of which are inhabited. The islands alone have 7,500 km of coastline and are spread mainly through the Aegean and the Ionian Seas, making maritime security incredibly challenging.

The sheer scale of the migrant crisis in late 2015 early 2016 had a devasting impact on Greek finances and its principle industry, tourism. All this in the aftermath of the financial crisis in 2009. Despite this, both Greece and Italy, largely left to handle the crisis on their own, managed the crisis with commendable determination and humanity.

With their experience of being in the frontline of the migration crisis, Greece is the perfect place re-convene for the next meeting of the World Border Security Congress.

The World Border Security Congress is a high level 3 day event that will discuss and debate current and future policies, implementation issues and challenges as well as new and developing technologies that contribute towards safe and secure border and migration management.

The World Border Security Congress Committee invite you to join the international border security and management community and Apply for your Delegate Pass at **www.world-border-congress.com.**

We look forward to welcoming you to Athens, Greece on March 31st-2nd April 2020 for the next gathering of border and migration management professionals.

www.world-border-congress.com

for the international border management and security industry

Confirmed speakers include:

- Jim Nye, Assistant Chief Constable – Innovation, Contact & Demand & NPCC Maritime Lead, Devon & Cornwall Police
- Dr Olomu Babatunde Olukayode, Deputy Comptroller of Customs, Nigeria Customs
- Sanusi Tasiu Saulawa, Deputy Superintendent of Customs, Nigeria Customs Service
- Heiko Werner, Head of Security Group, Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, Germany
- Gerald Tatzgern, Head of Joint Operational Office, Public Security Austria
- Peter Nilsson, Head of AIRPOL
- Wayne Salzgaber, Director, INTERPOL Washington
- Tatiana Kotlyarenko, Adviser on Anti-Trafficking Issues, OSCE
- James Garcia, Assistant Director, Cargo & Biometrics – Global Targeting Advisory Division National Targeting Center – U.S. Customs and Border Protection
- Valdecy Urquiza, Assistant Director – Vulnerable Communities – INTERPOL General Secretariat
- Hans Peter Wagner, National Expert, Senior Chief Inspector, Federal Police
- Mile Milenkoski, Senior adviser, Department for borders, passports and overflights, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of North Macedonia
- Manoj Kumar, Second in Command, Indian Border Security Force
- Rear Admiral Mohammed Ashraful Haque, Director General, Bangladesh Coast Guard Force

---

Supported by:

OSCe Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

European Association of Airport and Seaport Police

AFRICAN UNION ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL COUNCIL, AU-ECOSOCC, NIGERIA

ISIO Multi-International Security Industry Organisation

International Association of CIP Professionals

NS&RC

Media Partners:

BORDER SECURITY REPORT

WORLD SECURITY REPORT

World Security-index.com

Wildlife and forestry crime: Worldwide seizures in global INTERPOL-WCO operation

A month-long police and customs cross border operation resulted in large seizures of protected wildlife and forestry specimens and products, triggering arrests and investigations worldwide.

Focusing on pre-identified routes and hotspots, Operation Thunder 2020 resulted in more than 2,000 seizures of wildlife and forestry products. In total, 699 offenders were apprehended and at least one INTERPOL Red Notice has already been requested based on information gained during the operation. Further arrests and prosecutions are anticipated as ongoing global investigations progress.

Participating countries focused on particularly vulnerable species protected under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), an international agreement aimed at ensuring the international trade in wild animals and plants does not threaten their survival.

"Wildlife and forestry crime is the world's fourth largest illegal trade – a lucrative illegal business with far-reaching and devastating consequences not just for the environment but also for society, public health and global economics," said Jürgen Stock, INTERPOL Secretary General.

"Wildlife and forestry crime often occurs hand in hand with tax evasion, corruption, money laundering and even murder, with organized crime groups using the same routes to smuggle protected wildlife as they do people, weapons, drugs and other illegal products," added Secretary General Stock.

"This Operation clearly shows that success of law enforcement efforts lies in active cooperation amongst all stakeholders," said WCO Secretary General, Dr. Kunio Mikuriya. "In support of the 2020 Customs community's commitment to strive for "Sustainability for People, Prosperity and the Planet", fighting wildlife and forestry crime is not only vital for the preservation of our planet but also for the long-term prosperity of national economies and populations."

"The results of Operation Thunder 2020 show that the vital work of Parties to respond to wildlife crime collectively continues unabated despite the challenging global context," said Ivonne Higuero, CITES Secretary General. "Strong, coordinated responses at all levels are needed to address the activities of transnational organized crime groups involved in wildlife crime and to impact on and disrupt illegal trade chains across range, transit and destination states."

The global COVID-19 pandemic posed a series of challenges to the Thunder 2020 operations, with law enforcement officers needing to comply with a variety of new restrictions and protection protocols. The WCO Environment Programme and INTERPOL's Environment Security Programme coordinated Operation Thunder 2020 entirely virtually, facilitating law enforcement efforts via secured communication and reporting channels.

Moreover, field officers are regularly attacked by poachers and crime syndicates. During this operation, five police officers and three forestry police officers in North Macedonia were attacked – two of them seriously injured – while attempting to prevent illegal logging activities.

In this context, the operation's results demonstrate both the extent to which wildlife and forestry crime has continued throughout the pandemic and the ability of law enforcement to continue to successfully coordinate their actions in global operations.

Thunder 2020 is the fourth in a series of 'Thunder' operations carried out annually since 2017, which have resulted in significant seizures and the arrest of thousands of suspects engaged in the illegal trade of wildlife and timber species. Such coordinated global operations give impetus to a positive feedback loop. Customs can continuously update and refine their risk indicators for improved profiling while police can both investigate new leads that have been generated and build on cooperation with other agencies.

EUROPE AND THE MIGRATION-CRIME-TERRORISM NEXUS

by Rok Derenčin, International Project Manager and Border Security Specialist at DCAF

Following the Arab spring, Europe faced the largest influx of migrants in history, with the number of irregular migrants exceeding 1.8 M in 2015 alone. In the time that followed, more and more people boarded the train toward, what was deemed, a better life. And where many saw a lifeline, others recognised an opportunity for profit. The influx of irregular migrants, who were making their way to Europe

via several routes, had caused an increase in demand for "assistance" in their efforts which was quickly filled by the existing serious and organised crime groups (SOCGs), which already had established smuggling routes, channels of cooperation and networks.

Involvement of SOCGs in migrant smuggling proved to be a major issue as the SOCGs were not only able to quickly take advantage

of the new opportunity but also to adjust to various measures undertaken by law enforcement (LE) services. The smuggling of migrants turned out to be a very lucrative business, promising high profits and low risk for facilitators as risks mostly lay with the irregular migrants who engaged in business with them. Studies show that over 90% of irregular migrants make use of organised crime networks at one point during their travel. A negative side-effect to the fact that the facilitators are not the ones taking the same risks as the irregular migrants, is that they are more prone to taking chances, exposing irregular migrants to unnecessary risk, a fact that became painfully apparent in 2013, when over 350 irregular migrants drowned near Lampedusa, or in 2015, when 71 irregular migrants suffocated in the back of a lorry in Austria.

Over time, migrant smuggling has become the main source of income for many of the SOCGs that were constantly trying to stay ahead of LE services, while expanding their operations. However, the COVID-19 situation presented an additional challenge which forced the SOCGs to somewhat adjust their approach. With majority of European countries closing their borders for travel, a significant drop in the number of irregular migrants was observed (31% in the first six months of 2020, compared to 2019), especially those arriving through the Western Balkans, which meant that the SOCGs were losing profit.

Regional cooperation is of key importance to effectively manage irregular migration. International organisations and EU Member States support the development of a Europe-wide irregular migration management mechanism

As travel and other restrictions started loosening, the SOCGs engaged in a more aggressive approach to facilitating migration, taking full advantage of the media coverage, building upon the urgency of situation and prompting irregular migrants to travel. All in an attempt to make up for some of the losses incurred during the first half of the year, expecting the reinstatement of restrictions in autumn. Therefore, to some extent, the SOCGs started moving from a primarily reactive position, where they took advantage of the migrants' situation, towards a more proactive role, making a greater effort in actively promoting travel and their services, but also taking bigger risks.

In addition, as smuggling is becoming more difficult, its price is also expected to increase and with it the risk of coercion of irregular migrants into various payment schemes in order to pay off the facilitators, such as drug smuggling, guiding other migrants across the border and even sexual or labour exploitation.

As the growing number of irregular migrants traveling to Europe provided an opportunity for SOCGs, it also raised the question of terrorism threat. While enhanced migration flows did provide an opportunity for terrorists to enter Europe more easily, and parallels can be drawn between the number of irregular migrants coming to Europe and the number of terrorist attacks, the connection of terrorism and irregular migration is not absolute. Considering a number of attacks have been executed by irregular migrants, refugees or asylum seekers, who
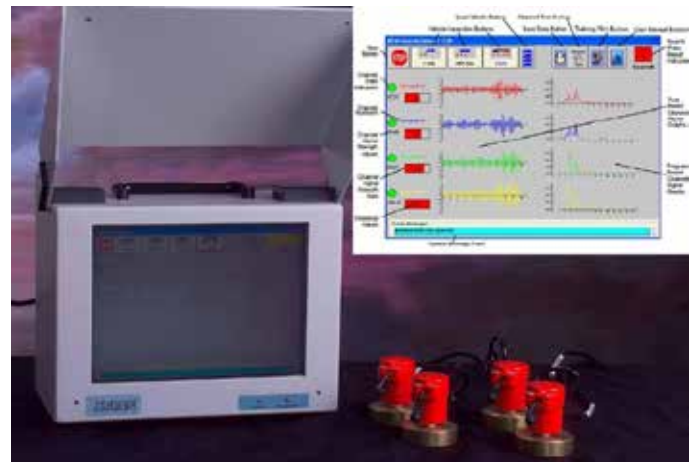
AVIAN Heartbeat Detector™

Borders · Military Installations · Nuclear Facilities · Prisons · Checkpoints Other High Security Installations

In the early 1990s, the United States Department of Energy determined that our country's nuclear stockpiles were capable of being infiltrated by terrorist groups hiding in delivery trucks entering the facilities. In response, **the US DOE and Oak Ridge National Laboratory invented the AVIAN Heartbeat Detector™** to detect the presence of persons hidden in vehicles of all varieties by listening to the subtle movements a beating heart gives off inside of a vehicle. **In field use for over twenty-four years, it has been tested and proven 100% effective by Oak Ridge, Sandia, and Thunder Mountain National Laboratories as well as the United States Military Disciplinary Barracks at Fort Leavenworth.**

The AVIAN Heartbeat Detector consists of an industrial computer loaded with specially developed software, a touch-screen monitor and special sensors. The operator uses the touch-screen to select vehicle type prior to beginning the vehicle scan. The processed data provide the operator with a PASS or SEARCH indication. The completed **process takes as little as 15 seconds** after the sensors are placed on the vehicle and the driver has exited the vehicle.

The AVIAN Heartbeat Detector is a **cost effective** method to accurately and quickly search large or small vehicles, regardless of contents, for hidden persons. The **one-screen operation** with icons makes training a simple matter that can be accomplished in less than one hour. The computer system requires little maintenance. **British Immigration, US Homeland Security, Spain's Guardia Civil and National Police, FRANCE MOJ, EDF, Hellenic Police and numerous others, are currently using the Heartbeat Detector** for their security purposes for 20 years.

The cost of the AVIAN Heartbeat Detector is approximately the cost of a single corrections officer or portal security guard. It is accurate and reliable and provides the officer with the capability to rapidly search fully loaded vehicles without moving or disturbing the vehicle contents.

Geovox Security Inc.

were not specifically trained, with attacks themselves done in an unsophisticated manner and lacking clear mission of impact, it is doubtful that terrorist groups engage in the systematic "planting" of terrorists within the migrant groups.

Nevertheless, the enhanced migration did provide an opportunity for terrorists to "hide" in the groups of irregular migrants, and just like them, the terrorists also took advantage of the SOCGs' services along the way. This cooperation, however, is not systematic and remains occasional, as the study, conducted by Europol and Interpol in 2016, argues. Even so, certain parallels between the two exist. A good example of the complexity of the whole "irregular migration-terrorism-organised crime" nexus are the Paris attacks on 13th November 2015.

After the attacks, during which 130 victims lost their lives, it was established that two of the attackers had entered the EU as part of a large influx of refugees arriving from Syria through the Western Balkans. About a month prior to Paris attacks a document forgery group was dismantled in Belgium and when going through their records, links to one of the Paris attackers were found, as well as to the suicide-bomber of the Brussels airport attack in 2016 Although both attacks were claimed by the Islamic State group, the forgers were not prosecuted for terrorism,

Irregular migrants at one of the migrant centres in the WB region, Centres offer temporary shelter, food and water, before they continue their journey towards EU

as only "an opportunistic connection between the two" existed. A Syrian passport, which was believed to be counterfeit, was also found at a stadium after Paris attacks. In addition, the authorities of the Republic of Serbia reported having found the same passport, though with a different picture, on another irregular migrant, stipulating that both individuals could have used the same counterfeiter. What is also possible is that the Islamic State group has in fact its own capacities for production of fraudulent documents.

Aside from document counterfeiting, terrorist groups are known to engage in other types of crimes, such as trafficking of cultural artefacts from the Middle East, which is estimated to generate

$100 million in profit per year, or drug trafficking from Morocco via Spain and from Afghanistan through the Western Balkans, in order to finance their activities. To achieve this, they use existing SOCGs' smuggling networks. Border measures, therefore, really seem to remain one of the key instruments for combating the SOCGs, hindering migrant smuggling and the potential arrival of terrorists to Europe.

It is also interesting to point out that, while the terrorist groups in migrants' origin countries do not support the movement of people, that quickly changes if the migrants are outside the territory that is under their direct control. By employing terrorist attacks on civilians and refugee camps, as

Irregular migrants will have different items in their possession. Some may also engage in petty theft. But a phone is a must, and used to navigate, communicate with smugglers or other migrants, or get information from the internet

was the case in Lebanon, they force people to move, making money from taxation on "safe passages", for example. Like the SOCGs in Europe, the terrorist groups also find themselves in the role of actively promoting migration for profit.

The reality is that, like in any system, the relationships, causality and the dynamics between irregular migration, serious and organised crime and terrorism is very complex, with similarities on modus operandi and links on all sides. What is certain is that all three groups will continue to adjust to the current situation pursuing their goal, whether it is hope for a better life, profit or religion-driven impulses, and that it is impossible to draw a hard line between the activities

of SOCGs and terrorist groups as they are both known to make use of each-other's tactics.

Sources:

Europol-Interpol. (2016). Migrant smuggling networks – Joint Europol-Interpol report; Executive summary. Retrieved from https://www.europol.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/ep-ip_report_executive_summary.pdf

Europol. (2020). EMSC 4th ANNUAL ACTIVITY REPORT – 2020. Retrieved from https://www.europol.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/emsc_4th_annual_activity_report_-_2020.pdf

International Organisation on Migration [IOM]. (2020). Flow monitoring Europe [Web portal]. Available on https://migration.iom.int/europe?type=arrivals

https://www.statewatch.org/media/documents/news/2020/feb/eu-europol-frontex-easo-wb-smuggling-report.pdf

Frontex. (2020). Risk analysis for 2020. Retrieved from https://frontex.europa.eu/assets/Publications/Risk_Analysis/Risk_Analysis/Annual_Risk_Analysis_2020.pdf

EU Help Ukrainian Border Guards and Customs Officers Optimise Work at Border Crossing Points

European experts together with experts of the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine (SBGS) and the State Customs Service of Ukraine (SCS) conducted the first assessment mission at the automobile and railway BCP "Yahodyn-Dorohusk" at the Ukrainian-Polish border. This mission is a step towards improving border and customs control processes and procedures at BCPs and is a part of a large-scale activity under the EU-funded project "EU Support to Strengthening Integrated Border Management in Ukraine (EU4IBM)".

"BCP assessment mission will provide more targeted recommendations for improving border and customs control procedures at BCPs by strengthening interagency coordination and cooperation, which in turn should facilitate more effective border checks and combating illegal cross-border activities and crime", commented Arunas Adomenas, EU4IBM project manager.

During the visit to the BCP, a team of international profile experts of the EU4IBM project and national experts of the SBGS and the SCS conducted a detailed analysis of border and customs control procedures, from entering the customs territory of

Ukraine to leaving the BCP. The evaluation also included an analysis of the processes of registration of passengers, goods and vehicles at automobile and railway BCPs. The main task is to identify gaps and develop recommendations that will reduce time and resources for the relevant processes at BCPs and at the same time ensure a fast and safe border crossing for people and goods. In addition, the assessment team worked on analysing the current situation at the BCP to further develop proposals for model BCPs and gathering information on the availability, condition and needs for technical equipment.

Similar missions were planned to assess air and marine BCPs and will be conducted by a team of project experts in the coming weeks. The relevant missions will result in comprehensive recommendations for improving border and customs checks at border crossing points, developing concepts for model BCPs and assessing equipment and infrastructure needs to be submitted to the SBGS and the SCS in the next few months.

"The results of the assessment at BCPs will contribute to implementation of the national policy on integrated border management in Ukraine, which aims at ensuring the functioning of open and, at the same time, well-controlled and secure borders," said Xavier Camus, Head of "Effective Governance and Democratization" section of the EU Delegation to Ukraine.

The results also provide a basis for more effective national policies on integrated border management, streamlined border control, more accurate risk analysis, better interagency and cross-border coordination and information exchange with neighbouring countries. As a result, Ukrainian citizens will benefit from greater mobility, and national economic operators will benefit from closer economic ties with the globalized world. All this is combined with a higher level of border security and prevention of cross-border crime.

SAHEL REGION: BORDER SECURITY AND AFRICAN UNDERDEVELOPMENT

By Martin Igwe, Coordinator Waansa Nigeria Center for Media and Advocacy

The Sahel regions are those areas of Africa separating the Sahara desert to the north and tropical savanna. Because it was France important territories. it is also called French territories. Senegal, Southern Mauritania. Central Mali, Northern Burkina Faso, Southern Algeria part of Northern Nigeria Central Sudan constitute what is today Sahel region.

A youthful populated territory mainly farmers has become one of the volatile African regions due to porous borders and largely unregulated cross border activities. Terrorist groups have also expanded their activities in recent years. Changes in climatic conditions have made the herdsmen move across Sahel to south of savanna, despite of the fact

that they were welcomed by famers as the cattle and goats fertilize depleted lands. Violence always erupts due to quest for ownership of scarce natural resources.

The Sahel region borders now habours enterprising evil merchant, extremist and criminal networks trafficking in toxic ideologies, weapons and drugs. Politically, rural people in that region have become disgruntled with what they call corrupt and predator internationally imposed economic model that has no priority for the concern of pastorals.

Their government are being accused of exploiting the conflict to their benefit as conflicting parties pay government, royalties. Women also pay for collecting herders grazing livestock's. The pastorals feel that the government also sides farmers hence joining jihadist group who guarantee them

of no tax to traditional leaders and government. This development has destroyed trade activities, worsened unemployment. This negative indices has affected African development., Mitigating climate changes impact on Sahel region by planting trees across is not enough. With the coming of new leadership in Mali, decisions capable of addressing cross border traffic of natural resources in exchange with arms, must be initiated to stop this decades old trade which has created a transnational criminal economy which armed groups and their pocket of collaborators explore to escalate conflict.

African Union, ECOWAS need to constitute a peace and reconciliation panel made up of customary chief, religious leaders, public spirited men and women to monitor the enactment of laws capable of uniting the pastorals

and farmers. The peace panel must hold not only the state as the only framework for action in peace building and conflict resolution in Sahel region.

European Union and other philanthropist who have been making quantum contributions to Sahel region must as a matter of urgency put their resources into locally owned initiatives, informal economic sector development initiatives with long term peace building components. African economy has suffered enough from criminal violence in border lands making life hell for locals and having disastrous effects to political instability and economic prospect of the continent. With the lesson of covid 19.which makes the world unsafe when a particular side is not safe is enough reason to make the world rise up an save the Sahel region. A stitch in time saves Nine!

UNODC Executive Director Calls for Stronger International Cooperation

Ghada Waly, Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), opened the tenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, calling attention to the COVID-19 crisis as an accelerator for criminal activity and urging governments to take a multilateral approach in combating organized crime.

"The pandemic has also heightened the vulnerability of migrants to the risk of human trafficking and migrant smuggling. International cooperation through the Convention against Transnational organized crime is more urgent than ever. We need to come together to prevent exploitation and protect the vulnerable," said United Nations Secretary-General Antònio Guterres in his video message.

The opening session was also addressed by the outgoing President of the 9th session, H.E. Mr. Alessandro Cortese, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Italy, H.E. Mr. Mohamed El-Molla, Permanent Representative of Egypt, and other high-level speakers.

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the adoption of the Palermo Convention and Ms. Waly highlighted

the need for governments to work together in order to amplify the impact of the Convention and its protocols, and protect the most vulnerable.

She said, "Important work lies ahead this week, as we mark the Convention's 20th anniversary by advancing the fight against transnational organized crime, strengthening prevention and enhancing protection of crime victims. We are all gathered here, in person or virtually, because we believe in the power of the Convention and its Protocols to drive solutions to problems that no country can face alone, and to keep our societies safer and able to prosper."

The 10th session follows on from the 2018 session of the Conference, where members agreed on new resolutions for strengthening the implementation of the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, their Parts and Components and Ammunition, and on international cooperation.

The UNODC Executive Director called for stronger international cooperation in the face of the global health and criminality crisis.

"It is essential that the world unites around common frameworks to take urgent action, as criminals are taking advantage of opportunities created by the COVID-19 crisis and new threats are multiplying," she said. "UNODC has supported Convention implementation in over 130 countries, through its global programmes and extensive field office network."

The Convention against Transnational Organized Crime has achieved near-universal ratification, with 190 State parties. The Protocols have achieved a similarly high level of acceptance, with 178 States parties to the Trafficking in Persons Protocol, 149 to the Smuggling of Migrants Protocol; and 119 to the Firearms Protocol.s.

Students design technology tools to tackle human trafficking

A group of students from Colombia has taken the top prize in the first-ever global technology competition to develop data-based solutions to combat human trafficking.

The four-person "Aleph Mind" team from Universidad de los Andes and Universidad Nacional de Colombia was among the 158 participants from 13 countries who

took part in last month's online DataJam.

The online event was organized by Pasos Libres, a Colombian organization that aims to prevent human trafficking through innovative technologies, together with technology company IBM and with the support of anti-trafficking experts from UNODC.

Traffickers Supplying Conflict Zones with Weapons and Explosives Disamred in Spain

An investigation that involved the Spanish National Police (Policía Nacional), Mossos d'Esquadra and the Spanish Tax Agency (Agencia Tributaria) and supported by Europol, led to the dismantling of a large organised crime group involved arms trafficking and money laundering. The operational action took place on 12 November in the Spanish provinces of Alicante, Barcelona and Valencia.

The criminal network, made up of Latvian, Spanish and Ukrainian members, illegally transported Russian weapons and explosives in commercial ships from Ukraine mainly to conflict zones in North Africa and the Middle East, subject to international embargoes. The illegal shipments were concealed in cargo ship transporting legally sourced armaments. The arm traffickers transported weapons and heavy armament, including tanks, through the Mediterranean. The criminal group was well-developed and carried out complex criminal activities internationally, including breaking a ship's captain out of prison, who had been detained for arms trafficking by Greek authorities. Cracks in the group's security started to show and a dispute between the group's leaders over the control of their maritime activities led to their downfall.

Results in brief: 7 suspects arrested; 7 house searches carried out; 18 properties worth about €10 million seized; 50+ financial products frozen.

The criminal activity generated large profits, which were introduced into the legal economy. The criminal network had set up a well-organised money-laundering scheme which enabled them to invest their criminal proceeds in legal businesses. The profits were sent to tax havens before being sent to countries with lower financial accountability. The assets were then transferred to bank accounts in European countries, mainly Switzerland and the United Kingdom. From there, the criminals transferred the money to Spain where it was used under the camouflage of legal commercial activity. This scheme allowed them to invest the criminal profits in properties and finance their luxury lifestyles.

Complex investigation to catch the arms traffickers

Europol supported the investigation since its beginning in 2018. The complexity of the criminal activities required the involvement of experts in different fields, including economics, weapons, technology and commercial and international maritime transport.

Europol facilitated the information exchange and supported the case with operational analysis. During the action day, Europol provided support by deploying an expert to Spain to crosscheck operational information against Europol's databases and provide links to investigators in the field. Europol also provided technical support for the analysis of the seized electronic devices.

Spain Takes Down Terrorist Cell Recruiting Online for So-Calles Islamic State

Europol supported the CGI of the Spanish National Police (Comisaría General de Información de la Policía Nacional) in arresting three suspects linked to a terrorist cell actively recruiting and indoctrinating young people. The individuals, among which feature the alleged leaders of the cell, were arrested as a result of house searches carried out in San Sebastian and Pasaia in northern Spain. They are believed to have created the terrorist structure to carry out jihadist terrorism in support of the so-called Islamic State.

This terrorist cell was very active online, disseminating a large amount of jihadist propaganda with the purpose of recruiting and indoctrinating young people. The content included a variety of violent visuals displaying minors involved in Islamic State jihadist combats and promoting them as role models. The suspects used social media accounts to disseminate propaganda. They created multiple profiles on social media networks, which counted numerous followers. Two of the accounts created accumulated over 10 000 followers.

During planned meetings, the youngest members received physical training and mental conditioning to carry out jihadist terrorism. The terrorist cell enabled the regular practice of contact sports and provided handbooks on the use and handling of weapons such as knives and firearms.

352 Stolen Vehicles Seized in Jad Mobile 3 Operation Spanning 22 Countries

A total of 352 stolen motor vehicles have been seized on their way to their final destination as a result of the Joint Action Day (JAD) 'Mobile 3' supported by Europol. A further 1,077 stolen vehicles parts have been confiscated, and dozens of forged or falsified vehicles documents seized.

Some 44,548 checks were carried out against various databases during this two-week long operation carried out in the framework of the European Multidisciplinary Platform Against Criminal Threats (EMPACT). Led by the European Border and Coast Guard Agency FRONTEX, this operation focused on checks on border crossing points and in-land activities in 17 EU countries and 5 countries in the Balkan region.

In close cooperation with private industry, including the car industry, boats/vessels manufacturers, rental and leasing companies as well as the use of Europol databases, the border control officers at the external EU border prevented many vehicles and boats from being smuggled overseas. As an example the Greek Police seized 15 vehicles from rental companies which criminals attempted to smuggle out from the EU.

Poland and Spain Take Down International Drug Trafficking Network Associated With Krakow Football Hooligans

A three-year-long investigation culminated last month in 13 arrests in Poland and Spain of the alleged members of a large drug trafficking network operating in multiple European countries. Supported by Europol and Eurojust, the Polish Police Central Bureau of Investigation (Centralne Biuro Śledecze Policji), Polish Border Guard (Straż Graniczna), Spanish National

Police (Policía Nacional) and the British Regional Organised Crime Units joined forces during series of coordinated action days between May 2019 and September 2020 to bring down the gang.

166 arrested in crackdown against organized crime in Southeast Europe

Tackling illegal immigration and the trafficking of firearms and drugs was the focus of an operation supported by INTERPOL and Europol to combat organized and serious international crime originating from Southeast Europe.

The four-day operation, coordinated by the European multidisciplinary platform against criminal threats (EMPACT) and led by the Spanish Guardia Civil, saw 33 countries team up during joint action days (JADs).

Nearly 9,000 law enforcement officers were involved in the operation and included police officers, land, sea and air border guards and customs agents. INTERPOL played a key role in the Southeast Europe JADs, leveraging expertise from Project Millennium – aimed at combating organized crime in the Balkans among other regions – as well as resources from the INTERPOL Criminal Data Management Department and INTERPOL Firearms Programme.

During the span of the action week, more than 390,000 individuals and 44,000 vehicles were checked at cross border locations and suspected illicit trafficking hotspots.

In total, countries participating in the JADs performed nearly 14 million searches on INTERPOL databases during the four days, resulting in more than 5,000 hits.

Convicted people smuggler caught in South America

Brazilian Federal Police have caught a Turkish fugitive convicted of smuggling migrants to the United Kingdom from Belgium thanks to swift, concerted action by INTERPOL and national authorities.

In November 2017, the fugitive, whose initials are VK, was sentenced by a Belgian court to eight years in prison for his involvement in an international smuggling ring. The group targeted migrants of Syrian nationality and charged hefty fees to organize their illegal travel to the UK by sailboat, putting the lives of men, women and children at risk.

He escaped justice before ever serving his sentence and had been on the run from Belgian authorities since 2018.

Building a solid foundation for measuring the impact of cybercrime

To effectively tackle the multifaceted and imperceptible nature of cybercrime, criminal justice authorities need a good understanding of the scale, types and impact of the crime. For this reason, the Council of Europe and INTERPOL have jointly developed the Guide for Criminal Justice Statistics on Cybercrime and Electronic Evidence to support countries develop a clearer vision of the global problem.

The key goal of this joint effort is to help criminal justice authorities worldwide acquire the statistics on cybercrime and electronic evidence by providing good practices and recommendations. Statistics enable the authorities to shape effective policies and operational responses. This guide lays out the agenda for compiling criminal justice statistics with key steps for data collection, analysis and cooperation among multiple stakeholders.

"Well-defined statistics produced in collaboration with criminal justice authorities will not only provide valuable insights into the changing environment, but also strategic indicators for measuring the effectiveness of policies and activities," said Alexander Seger, Head of the Cybercrime Division of the Council of Europe.

"How countries approach cybercrime and electronic evidence at the national level has a real impact on available options on global cooperation. It also serves as the cornerstone for developing tailored operational responses to reduce the global impact of cybercrime," said Craig Jones, INTERPOL's Director of Cybercrime.

Innovation and technology in addressing security challenges and crises across OSCE and Asian Partners for Co-operation focus of OSCE roundtable

Analysis of the complex security challenges, currently being faced, as well as sharing best practices and innovative approaches was the focus of the OSCE roundtable discussion. The event titled "Leveraging innovation and technology to address 21st century security challenges and crises across the OSCE and Asian Partners for Co-operation" .

"The COVID-19 health crisis illustrates the complex nature of security. The repercussions of this pandemic will affect and have an impact, directly or indirectly, on most sectors of our society," said Alena Kupchyna, OSCE Co-ordinator of Activities to Address Transnational Threats. "A co-ordinated response, co-operation and concerted efforts across the OSCE and its Asian Partners for Co-operation is expected, sought and feasible."

The event provided a platform to share innovative practices in preventing and combating Human Trafficking across the OSCE and Asian Partners for Co-operation. Experts from Australia's Department of Home Affairs, EUROPOL, the International Organization for Migration Japan, Border Services of Afghanistan as well as the OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings shared their expertise."

OSCE and UNODC train participants from Kazakhstan on the use of targeted financial sanctions to disrupt terrorist networks

Strengthening the capacity of government officials from Kazakhstan to counter terrorism financing was the aim of an online training course. The training course focused on applying targeted financial sanctions to terrorists and terrorist organizations, pursuant to UN Security Council resolutions 1267 (1999) and 1988 (2011), to disrupt terrorist networks. During the course, participants were actively engaged through a range of interactive exercises and knowledge tests.

The event aimed at enhancing the capacity of Kazakhstan to combat terrorist financing and strengthen compliance with international standards in this area. In particular, UN Security Council Resolutions, the Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering (FATF)'s standards, UN norms and OSCE commitments to promote human rights-based approaches in countering terrorist financing.

OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan supports development of returned migrants, building their professional and entrepreneurship capacities

Strengthening the capacity of government officials from Kazakhstan to counter terrorism financing was the aim of an online training course that took place from 3 to 6 November. The event was organized by the OSCE's Transnational Threats Department, the OSCE Programme Office in Nur-Sultan, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime's Global Programme against Money Laundering (UNODC/GPML), the UNODC Regional Office for Central Asia and the Monitoring Team of the UN Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning ISIL (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups undertakings and entities.

The training course focused on applying targeted financial sanctions to terrorists and terrorist organizations, pursuant to UN Security Council resolutions 1267 (1999) and 1988 (2011), to disrupt terrorist networks. During the course, participants were actively engaged through a range of interactive exercises and knowledge tests.

The event aimed at enhancing the capacity of Kazakhstan to combat terrorist financing and strengthen compliance with international standards in this area. In particular, UN Security Council Resolutions, the Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering (FATF)'s standards, UN norms and OSCE commitments to promote human rights-based approaches in countering terrorist financing.

OSCE

Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

First Multi-Stakeholder Consultation on Regional Reviews of Global Compact for Safe, Regular, and Orderly Migration

The first informal multi-stakeholder consultation was held in preparation for the regional review of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration (GCM).

The consultation focused on the progress made in the implementation of the GCM within the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) region and was structured around two roundtables: i) Progress and challenges in the implementation of the GCM in the UNECE region; and ii) Best practices for stakeholder engagement in the GCM implementation.

"This event builds on the Compact's explicit recognition that non-governmental partners are vital contributors to a collective commitment to achieving well-managed migration founded on cooperation and full respect for human rights," said Michele LeVoy, Director of the Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants (PICUM) and rapporteur for the event. "This consultation is an opportunity for civil society and other stakeholders to share realities on the ground, but also their concerns for the wellbeing of migrants in the region and how these can be effectively addressed," she concluded.

Growing Humanitarian Needs Among Migrants Rescued off Mauritanian Coast

Around 400 migrants have been intercepted or rescued off the coast of Mauritania since mid-October. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) has recorded an increase in attempted crossings on the West Africa route and is appealing for more support to

ensure rapid and adequate assistance to migrants.

IOM, in coordination with the Government of Mauritania, the French Red Cross and the Mauritanian Red Crescent, has been providing migrants, among them survivors of several shipwrecks, with urgent medical assistance, food assistance and core relief items including blankets, clothes and hygiene products. It is unclear how many lives were lost after a series of tragic shipwrecks in the West Africa route.

The migrants were on board seven boats, some of which capsized, others were intercepted, off the coast of Nouadhibou, northern Mauritania, after departing from other West African coastal countries.

Partnerships Prove Vital in Getting Stranded Migrants Home in Central Asia

Uzbekistan, a landlocked Central Asian country, has been a global crossroads since ancient times. It continues to be, often along routes forged by silk and spice merchants plying their trade via camel caravan.

Today, it has emerged as one of the world's most active transit points for migrants stranded by the global COVID-19 pandemic.

Since the start of the COVID-19 crisis, IOM and its many partners helped over 3,000 people – mainly Tajik nationals – to move through Uzbekistan from neighbouring Kazakhstan as well as from the Russian Federation and points even farther afield.

In recent days, IOM staff at the Zhybek-Zholy border crossing between Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan addressed a sudden demand from the Uzbek

government for negative COVID-19 tests for a group of 102 stranded migrants.

"Many of these people had been travelling for days with little food, no clean clothes, and certainly no resources to pay for COVID-19 tests," explained IOM's head of office in Tashkent, Sanjar Toshbaev. "They had lost their jobs and were on their way home to an uncertain future." Temperatures along the border remain quite hot during the day but very cold at night-time, noted Toshbaev.

Conclusions of the Chairperson of the Frontex Management Board

The Management Board of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex) met today at the request of the Commission in an extraordinary session to discuss the Rapid Border Intervention ongoing in the Eastern Mediterranean, and in particular, the allegations of so-called pushbacks recently reported in the media.

The Management Board takes note of the report of the Executive Director on the "Rapid Border Intervention in the Eastern Mediterranean" and of the fact that the Executive Director will ask further legal interpretations of EU regulations' provisions related to the operational activities at sea.

In this context, the Management Board stresses that all operations of Frontex have to be carried out in full compliance with the applicable legal requirements, and in particular with fundamental rights, notably the principle of non-refoulement. To that aim, the Management Board asks the Executive Director to ensure that the internal reporting system is solid and effective in order to allow for an immediate follow-up in case of incidences. Furthermore, it supports the proposal of the Executive Director to beef-up the training in fundamental rights and to provide this training not only to Frontex-deployed staff, but also to the staff of the ICCs.

Based on the initial proposal of the Executive Director to set up an evaluation committee, the Management Board concludes that urgent action is needed in order to investigate all aspects related to the matter. It decides to set up a sub-group to the Management Board to further consider these aspects, in line with the distribution of responsibilities under the EBCG-Regulation. The mandate of this sub-group will be elaborated in view of the discussion at the next Management Board meeting, and should among others also contribute to clarify existing arrangements raised on the interpretation of EU regulations' provisions related to operational activities at sea and the concerns raised by Member States about "hybrid threats" affecting their national security at external borders.

The Management Board expects that, pursuant to Article 46 of Regulation (EU) 2019/1896 on the European Border and Coast Guard, the Executive Director will suspend or terminate any activity, in whole or in part, if he considers that there are violations of fundamental rights or international protection obligations that are of a serious nature or are likely to persist. The Executive Director is asked to inform immediately the Management Board and the Fundamental Rights Officer of the Agency of any substantiated allegation that would come to his knowledge.

The Management Board expects also that, in case such allegations would involve staff of the Agency, the Executive Director will take without delay all appropriate action.

The Management Board calls on the Executive Director and the Fundamental Rights Officer ad interim to complete as soon as possible all the necessary steps to operationalize the fundamental rights framework as provided for in Regulation (EU) 2019/1896.

ICMPD Turkey has continued to support Turkey's anti-trafficking response through targeted capacity building and awareness raising

Trafficking in human beings (THB) is a global phenomenon. Turkey has continuously improved its anti-trafficking response since early 2000s to prevent this crime and to support victims of trafficking and persons at risk. After its establishment in 2013, the Directorate General of Migration Management (DGMM) under the Ministry of Interior became the main coordinator institution in the identification, protection of trafficked persons and provision of support services to the victims.

Other stakeholders, including the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services (MoFLSS), within the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) with key roles and responsibilities for Turkey's anti-trafficking response have contributed to Turkey's efforts.

UNODC & Ethiopia Join Forces to End Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants

Every year, thousands of men, women, and children are trafficked and exploited. Trafficking in Persons (TIP) is a serious crime and a grave violation of human rights, a scourge that burdens every region in the world.

Several criminal groups engaged in these illicit activities now operate within Ethiopia. They are particularly active in the trafficking of domestic and foreign victims, either for forced labour or sexual exploitation. These groups are also involved in smuggling of migrants (SOM) — to, from, and through Ethiopia.

To support Ethiopia in their fight against TIP, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has actively contributed to developing regulations for the country's new Proclamation on countering Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants 1178/2000.

As part of the UNODC regional project on Enhancing Effective and Victim-Centred Criminal Justice Responses to Trafficking in Persons in Eastern Africa — funded by the U.S. Department of State Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons — a Drafting and Consultation Workshop was convened to offer support, following a request by Ms. Feteya Seid, Head of the National Partnership Coalition on Migration Secretariat.

UNODC organized the workshop that was hosted by local officials, bringing together expert prosecutors from the National Anti-Human Trafficking and Smuggling of Migrants Task Force Secretariat, the Legal Studies, Drafting and dissemination Directorate, representatives from the Ministry of Labour, and UNODC experts.

The continued close collaboration between the Federal Office of the Attorney General and UNODC, including through the recent workshop, reflects the long-standing and effective partnership established between UNODC and the Government of Ethiopia. In his remarks during the closing ceremony, His Excellency, Mr. Tesfaye Daba Wakjira, Deputy Attorney General, expressed deep appreciation for the technical assistance provided by UNODC throughout the legislative reform process over the past five years.

Mr. Tesfaye Daba Wakjira also noted the need to maintain and strengthen the ongoing cooperation between UNODC and the Government of Ethiopia, especially in achieving the common goals as outlined in key international instruments and national policy documents in relation to countering transnational organised crime.

The closing sessions were also attended by Mr. Nebiyu Feleke, Resident Legal Advisor of the Department of Justice at the U.S. Embassy in Ethiopia; while Mr. Johan Kruger, Head of Transnational Organized Crime, Illicit Trafficking and Terrorism Programmes for Eastern Africa represented UNODC via video conferencing.

Ethiopia legislation drafting workshop TIPIn his closing remarks, Mr. Kruger commended the Government of Ethiopia for its commitment to fully incorporate the provisions of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) and its supplementary Protocols: "The work being done over the past three weeks is a testament to the commitment by the Government of Ethiopia to counter Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants. UNODC will continue to support the Government of Ethiopia to give effect to the Proclamation and its regulations in order to effectively prevent, investigate and prosecute these crimes, including through effective international cooperation in criminal matters."

Leveraging Innovation and Technology to Address 21st Century Security Challenges and Crises across the OSCE and Asian Partners for Co-operation

In early November, the OSCE held a virtual roundtable which brought together expert speakers from across the OSCE and Asian Partners for Co-operation regions.

With speakers from Canada via Austria and Afghanistan to Japan, and many countries in between, the conversation encompassed much of the globe.

The event held over two days consisted of four sessions.

Session One: Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on Trafficking in Human Beings - Sharing Innovative Practices of Preventing and Combating Human Trafficking across the OSCE and Asian Partners for Co-operation

Trafficking in human beings is one of the most pressing and complex crimes in the OSCE participating States and Asian Partners for Co-operation. Human trafficking, whether for sexual or labour exploitation, is a very complex crime to detect in 'normal' times. The coronavirus pandemic made the investigation of human trafficking cases even more challenging pushing victims further from possible detection and assistance. The complexity of obstacles associated with combating this crime means that anti-trafficking actors have to adopt innovative measures in order to effectively overcome them. During this session, the participants discussed how new technology tools could prevent and counter human trafficking by detecting both offenders and victims. The panel elaborated on how co-operation among OSCE pS and Asian PfC on countering human trafficking can amplify shared expertise on addressing this major security threat.

Session Two: Enhancing Regional and International Security Co-operation by Sharing Good Practices and Innovative Approaches to Combat Terrorism in the OSCE and Asian Partners for Co-operation.

The panel analysed good practices, innovative tools, as well as viable mechanisms enhancing international co-operation against terrorism in the OSCE and Asian PfC. This session underlined the importance of building a broader community network to support the prevention of violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism (VERLT) and enhanced multi-agency co-ordination, including with actors beyond law enforcement and criminal justice institutions. Discussions explored how the OSCE and Asian PfC can achieve better leverage on capacity-building programmers to effectively combat terrorism related threats. Additionally, the panel elaborated on effective mechanisms of preventing and countering the use of Internet for terrorist purposes.

Session Three: Strengthening and Advancing International Co-operation in Border Security and Management during Crisis

This session assessed how well prepared border agencies were in dealing with the current health crisis and will provide guidelines for a more efficient crisis response and contingency planning. The session focused on enhancing the base-level co-operation between border agencies, customs services, sanitary agencies and other security sector actors in a systematic manner. It touched upon Integrated Border Management (IBM) and its focus on international co-operation as a viable tool for early warning and risk assessment.

Session Four: Leveraging Technology in Addressing Transnational Security Threats and Crises in the OSCE pS and Asian PfC.

In the final session the panel explored the possibilities of using and combining the existing and new technologies (Biometrics, API/PNR Systems, e-passports, automated border gates, national and international databases) in an effort to facilitate cross-border movement and prevent transnational crimes and terrorism. The participants also discussed protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms in development and application of the listed technologies. Additionally, the participants explored best ways of leveraging modern technologies in dealing with crises similar to the current one triggered by COVID-19.

You can download a report on the recommendations and outcomes of the Roundtable at: www.border-security-report.com/osce-roundtable

2020 Death Toll in West Africa Sea Route Tops 500 Amid Uptick in Departures

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) is extremely concerned about the increase in deaths recorded on the West Africa route to the Canary Islands.

So far this year, IOM's Missing Migrants Project has recorded more than 500 deaths, most of them during the months of October and November——amid increased departures from the coasts of West African countries, including Senegal. The loss of life this year is already more than double compared to 2019, when IOM recorded 210 deaths.

The recorded data, however, represent a minimum estimate. The Organization fears the actual total of lives lost is higher.

 "IOM faces numerous challenges in collecting data on the West Africa route, especially when we receive reports about boats disappearing without a trace," says Frank Laczko, Director of IOM's Global Migration Data Analysis Centre (GMDAC).

The latest shipwreck was recorded this week (15/11), off the coast of Cabo Verde, where 66 migrants, including three children, arrived on a damaged boat. According to government sources and survivors, more than 130 people initially boarded the vessel before its engine exploded. Some 60 people are reported to have perished during this tragedy. Those onboard were, except for two migrants from The Gambia, all Senegalese.

IOM works closely with local partners in the communities and verifies reports and data about such tragedies with survivors, family members and community members. IOM, as an Intergovernmental Organization, also coordinates its efforts and responses with Governments, and confirmed the account of the shipwreck involving about 200 people shared in its press release dated 29 October. Such data are pivotal in contributing to an informed migration-related policy and enable a more human-centred and needs-based approach to migration management.

To date in 2020, over 18,000 migrants have arrived in the Canary Islands after long and dangerous journeys across the Atlantic. At least 12,000 of them arrived in the months of October and November. Most migrants are arriving from West African countries. COVID-19 impacts, including food insecurity, are among the factors believed to be driving these departures.

While these figures depict a seven-fold increase compared to the 1,550 arrivals during the same period of 2019 (January-November), IOM believes that the situation remains manageable through solidarity and a human rights-centred policy and approach.

LESSONS FROM COVID-19 IN RESPONDING TO TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS IN TIMES OF CRISIS

Report by Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking Republic of the Philippines

To better understand the impact of COVID-19 on human trafficking and responses to it in the Philippines, ASEAN-Australia Counter Trafficking convened two online roundtable consultations with key stakeholders

The purpose of this Policy Brief was to capture and consolidate the experiences shared and insights offered by these counter-trafficking stakeholders in the Philippines. It addressed areas of counter-trafficking from identification and referral through to prevention, with particular attention given to the challenges of victim assistance, both as a standalone issue, as well as one that interrelates with all other areas of counter-trafficking work.

Impact of the crises on human trafficking

Lessons from COVID-19 in responding to trafficking in persons in times of crisis, with a particular focus on victim assistance 10

Barely any area of human activity is untouched by COVID-19. In the human trafficking context impact has been felt quickly and deeply as vulnerability to trafficking increases while capacity to address it retracts. Experts pointed to a range of intersectional vulnerability factors, including the economic, structural, gender, criminal and health dimensions that interact in complex ways as the crisis unfolds, and that human traffickers take ready advantage of. The fact that these vulnerabilities existed before the current crisis, and are exacerbated by it now, speaks to the need for States to address underlying vulnerability to trafficking in persons as a core component of crisis resilience.

Impact ofthe crises on human trafficking response

While human trafficking morphs in complex ways in the current climate of COVID-19, capacity to respond is also impacted. As with the vulnerabilities discussed above, many of the challenges that practitioners raised during the consultation process also pre-date the crisis but have become more fraught now in the midst of it. Discussions traversed the range of emerging challenges in counter-trafficking work, from identification and referral, through to investigation and prosecution, repatriation and reintegration as well as prevention.

On the other hand, it was also noted that notwithstanding acute challenges presented by these realities, the changed circumstances have also presented

opportunities to strengthen counter-trafficking response. Here it was pointed out that some measures put in place in responding to COVID-19 have also been to the benefit of counter-trafficking response too, including through effective and efficient multi-agency engagement with new partners who are responding to the crisis, to respond also to human trafficking.

Underpinning all these discussions was a firm commitment to the fact that the emergence of new challenges in assisting victims of trafficking does not change the nature of those obligations. In that spirit, practitioners offered examples of how they are working to innovatively overcome obstacles in theirwork and adapt theirworking methodologies, to ensure that victims continue to be assisted.

Discussions traversed the range of emerging challenges in counter-trafficking work, from identification and referral, through to investigation and prosecution, repatriation and reintegration as well as prevention. Of note was the fact that different sectors people are trafficked into and otherwise exploited in, have been affected by the crisis in quite different ways, requiring that responses also be nuanced to specific sectors and experiences within them.

Overarching policy considerations

In addition to the policy considerations that emerge in relation to the COVID-19 crisis

specifically, the following six considerations are offered in support of strengthening resilience of counter-trafficking response in the event of any crisis, regardless of its nature, whether pandemic, natural disaster, conflict or otherwise.

In Conclusion

The COVID-19 pandemic and the fallout from it continue to unfold. At the same time, it is clear that this is not the last crisis that the world will face. In this sense, the Philippines is as much pre-crisis as it is in the midst of one. A key conclusion to be drawn from that reality, is the need for counter-trafficking stakeholders to take the opportunity to look beyond the immediate crisis to prepare for the next one, in whatever form it may take, whether it is another pandemic, a natural disaster, conflict, violent extremism or something else.

The recovery efforts in the wake of COVID-19 offer opportunities to invest in resilience to the next crisis. Being prepared for crises requires that National Action Plans and policies be readily adaptable to the specifics of new and complex challenges, and that comprehensive legislation and policies are put in place to respond to crises in a way that upholds human rights commitments, including (but not only) to victims of human trafficking.

Indeed, a failure to uphold human rights obligations during times of crisis, can serve to add another set of problems to existing ones, by

exacerbate the harms suffered as a result responses taken.

Crisis preparedness also requires a significant allocation of funding to build capacity of those who are on the frontines of a given crisis, so that they are attuned to human trafficking, can identify situations of risk, and trigger appropriate referrals of potential trafficked victims at times when counter-trafficking actors may not have direct access to people vulnerable to trafficking.

Both state and non-state counter-trafficking stakeholders have been affected by the crises and responses to it. They have also shown remarkable ability to adapt theirworking methdologies, to effectively collaborate, and to sustain their activites to changed circumstances. In some cases, the need to adapt has revealed the extent of stakeholder capacity to scale up services to reach more people than was the case before the crisis, and to put in place measures that were called for prior to the crisis, but whose

barriers have only been effectively overcome now as a result of it. It is hoped that these positive achievements will not be dismantled once the crisis has passed, but will be maintained and sustained as part of a comprehensive and victim-centered approach to human trafficking.

The lessons learnt by stakeholders in the Philippines from the COVID-19 pandemic about what has worked, what has not and how their efforts could be better supported, should be documented, considered and disseminated for the benefit of others working to prevent trafficking, protect its victims and prosecute its perpetrators before, during and after any future crisis. To that end, this Policy Brief and the discussions that took place to inform it, are offered in that spirit of forward-looking learning.

The full report can be downloaded at www.border-security-report.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Philippines-Trafficking.pdf

More than a ton of cocaine hidden between sacks of corn seized on ship from Brazil

The cocaine traveled hidden among almost 3,500 tons of corn transported by a ship bound for Cádiz and stopover in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria

The ship had been intercepted in Brazil weeks before, where 1,524 kg of cocaine were also seized by agents of the Receita Federal and the Federal Police of Brazil

In a joint operation between the National Police, the Guardia Civil and the Tax Agency, more than 1,200 kilograms of cocaine hidden in a ship loaded with corn from Brazil have been seized. The cocaine traveled hidden among almost 3,500 tons of corn transported by a ship bound for Cádiz and stopover in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria. The ship had been intercepted in Sao Sebastiao (Brazil) weeks before, where 1,524 kg of cocaine were seized by agents of the Federal Receita and the Brazilian Federal Police.

The ship UNISPIRIT from Brazil was intercepted some 50 nautical miles from the island of Gran Canaria, and escorted to the port. After a meticulous inspection carried out by agents of the Guardia Civil, the National Police and Customs Surveillance of the Tax Agency,

1,210 kg of cocaine were found hidden between sacks of corn.

1,524 kilos previously intervened at its origin

Two weeks earlier, the ship had already been inspected in the Port of Sao Sebastiao (Brazil) by the Receita Federal and the Federal Police of Brazil, while they were loading 4,000 tons of corn bound for Cádiz (Spain). On that occasion 1,524 kilos of cocaine hidden inside 15 contaminated bags loaded with approximately 100 kilograms of cocaine were intervened, distributed in various packages.

At the beginning of the month the ship continued its route to Spain, planning to make a stop at the port of Las Palmas before arriving in Cádiz. However, there were suspicions that there was still a hidden drug inside. The Brazilian Federal Police notified the Spanish Security Forces and Bodies that the ship had departed under strange circumstances and without the inspection started in Brazil having ended. For this reason, he asked the agents of the National Police, Guardia Civil and AEAT that the cargo be re-examined when it arrived in our country.

New inspection in Spain

Thus, a joint operation was launched to verify this and the ship UNISPIRIT was intercepted some 50 nautical miles from the island of Gran Canaria. From there, he was escorted by the National Police, Guardia Civil and Customs Surveillance agents. In this second inspection, carried out between October 16 and 21, Spanish agents found twelve new bags of contaminated corn, with a total of 1,210 kilos of cocaine, each bag containing approximately 100 kilograms of the drug distributed in several packages..

SEF develops an inspection operation in Madeira

Under the fight against illegal immigration and trafficking in human beings, the Immigration and Borders Service (SEF) has carried out, yesterday, in the Autonomous Region of Madeira, an inspection in several sports clubs, in which 26 citizens have been identified, seven of which of foreign nationality.

It has been determined that five of the seven foreign

athletes were not holders of a residence permit for the professional activity they developed.

In addition, during the operation information has been gathered allowing the identification of about three dozen of foreign nationals (athletes and employees) who, over the last two years, entered in the country with no visa for the activity they were about to develop.

ASEANAPOL Virtual Dialogue on Tackling Illicit Drug Trafficking Issues During Pandemic

While drug trafficking remains as one of the main threat to the national security and with the aim of enhancing its existing cooperation on tackling Transnational Organized Crimes (TOC) together with its initiatives in areas of common interest in South East Asia region, an inaugural dialogue between ASEANAPOL Secretariat and Narcotic Enforcement Department / Agencies of ASEANAPOL Member Countries (AMCs) was held.

The dialogue, which was hosted virtually by ASEANAPOL Secretariat, commenced with an opening remark by the Honourable Police Major General Do Van Hoanh, Director General of the Office of Investigation Police Agency, Ministry of Public Security, Viet Nam cum the Current Chairman of ASEANAPOL and followed by the speech from the Executive Director of ASEANAPOL Secretariat, Deputy Assistant Commissioner Jim Wee. In his introductory remarks, Police Major General Do Van Hoanh shared

the trafficking activities situation worldwide in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and reiterated his desire as a Current Chairman of ASEANAPOL for an agreement by consensus from all AMCs on the matters that will discuss in this platform especially on the most practical method to fight against Illicit Drug Trafficking.

By thanking on the motivational remark by the Current Chairman of ASEANAPOL, the Executive Director of ASEANAPOL Secretariat then delivered his opening speech by emphasizing Secretariat office roles during pandemic situation by initiating a concept note focusing on the issues of tackling against Illegal Drug Trafficking which will be further deliberated amongst the respective Narcotic Crime Enforcement Department/ Division of AMCs during the platform.

This two-hour dialogue session then continues with a concept note presentation by the Director for Police Services of ASEANAPOL Secretariat, Senior Superintendent Joni Getamala and followed by the country overviews on tackling the trafficking drug issues during pandemic of COVID-19 by the delegation from Narcotic Crime Department / Agencies of each AMCs.

Significant issues were discussed and the session was indeed fruitful in that it harmonisers in order to streamline strategic coordination and flexible mechanism strategic plan towards optimizing global response to evolving threats.

ABF deploy covert technology to combat illegal activity in the Torres Strait

New underwater technology has been successfully deployed across the Torres Strait to combat illegal activity in the region, particularly illegal foreign fishing.

The technology was deployed by Maritime Border Command (MBC), a multiagency body within the Australian Border Force (ABF), in partnership with the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisations (CSIRO) which developed it.

A total of five hydrophones were dropped to the ocean floor by the ABF Storm Bay in strategic locations across the region.

In simple terms, a hydrophone is an underwater microphone that can be used in real time to listen to vessel traffic and behaviour to assist in detecting activity such as illegal fishing and the movements of vessels involved in other illicit activities. About 15cm long, the hydrophone is attached to a larger mooring device and submerged underwater so it remains completely covert.

Rear Admiral, Commander MBC, Lee Goddard, said the pivotal new technology would be vital in assisting MBC in its mission to protect Australia's maritime domain, particularly in regards to illegal foreign fishing.

More than 665 Kilos of Marijuana Hiiden in Monte Weed

Members of the "Jardín América" Section of the Gendarmerie, when carrying out reconnaissance tasks

in the vicinity of the town of Colonia Polana, found traces of trails created between yerbales and pines. A few meters into the makeshift trail, officials were alerted by the sounds of branches cracking.

The gendarmes, notice how a person begins to move away to avoid apprehension. In the place they observe bags with 921 packages with a brownish plant substance inside.

With the knowledge of the Federal Prosecutor's Office of Oberá and in front of witnesses, the area was secured and the shipment was transferred to carry out the Narcotest field tests in Squad 11 "San Ignacio". The shipment reached a total weight of 665 kilos 135 grams of cannabis.

Drugs Seized in Container Destined for Canada

Agents of the National Police Intelligence Directorate seized 87 packages with alleged cocaine, which were hidden inside three briefcases in a container located inside a Panamanian Pacific Port.

It was learned that the contaminated container came from Nicaragua to Panama transit and final destination Canada.

Four million three hundred and fifty thousand dollars is the approximate market value of this seized drug, which causes so much damage worldwide, which is why intelligence actions against transnational organized crime are carried out daily in all ports and airports in the country.

50 Kilograms of Heroin Captured in Date Boxes by Customs Enforcement Teams

The vehicles coming to the customs gate by the Esendere Customs Enforcement Smuggling and Intelligence Directorate were subjected to risk analysis within the framework of efforts to combat drug trafficking. a truck loaded palm coming from Iran to Turkey was considered risky.

The Customs Enforcement teams, who took action after the truck arrived at the customs gate, sent the truck for x-ray scanning. In the x-ray scan, suspicious density was found in the legal load of the truck. After this point, the truck was taken to the search hangar and its load was unloaded. When the dogs reacted to the date boxes on

the truck, which was also searched with narcotic detector dogs, the boxes were opened and searched. In the search, it was determined that transparent date packages were placed in the upper section where the date boxes were divided into two parts, but the drug packages were hidden in the closed compartment under the boxes.

As a result of the attention and diligent work of the Customs Enforcement teams, a total of 50 kilograms of 150 grams of heroin drugs with a market value of 25 million lira were seized in 115 packages in date boxes.

While the truck driver related to the incident was detained, the vehicle was seized.

AGENCY NEWS AND UPDATES

India-Bangladesh border sees spike in wildlife smuggling

The highly porous India-Bangladesh border in south Bengal has witnessed a spurt in wildlife smuggling this year, a top official of the Border Security Force has confirmed.

While in 2018, the BSF's south Bengal Frontier had seized 22 such consignments, in 2019 the number went down to 13. This year, however, despite the pandemic and the lockdown when infiltration had dropped, the BSF has seized at least 25 consignments till October.

The last in the line is the rescue of 13 white cockatoos on Thursday which are native of Indonesia and were being smuggled into India through the international border in North 24 Parganas district.

"There has been a rise in animal trade, mostly birds, in this year. We are trying to analyse the trend. There has been no specific reason which has come to light so far. The BSF is alert and keeping a watch," said SS Guleria, DIG of BSF's south Bengal frontier.

Azerbaijan establishes outposts on liberated Iranian border

Azerbaijan has established outposts in areas liberated from Armenia's occupation near the Iranian border as clashes over the Nagorno-Karabakh region continue despite fresh diplomatic attempts for a cease-fire.

The Azerbaijani flag was hoisted over the Soltanli, Khalafli, Khudafarin and Gumlag outposts in the Jabrayil and Zangilan districts, and the nation's soldiers started to work from there.

Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev announced that the border between his country and Iran was completely secured after the liberation of the Agbend settlement.

Ukraine Border Guards Successfully Complete Demining Course

The professional training in the specialty "Demining" completed at the Training Centre of the National Guard of Ukraine. For the first time, border guards were among those who studied. Nine border guards attended the demining courses.

The module (cycle) of training of deminers included conducting practical demolition works, organizing demining of the area, detecting and neutralizing explosive objects, searching and neutralizing improvised explosive devices and substances.

The course lasted 36 working days, during which border guards studied the theory and in practice learned to install single mines, minefields, make passages in them, check the area for mines and explosive barriers.

During the training, the servicemen of the State Border Guard Service acquired knowledge about the electric and fire method of demolition and destruction of structural elements with the help of explosives.

Iran and Pakistan discuss border cooperation

Foreign Minister of Iran Mohammad Javad Zarif met with Pakistan Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa and discussed bilateral ties and border cooperation.

On arrival at the Army Headquarters in Rawalpindi the visiting dignitary was presented guard of honour and laid floral wreath at Yadgar-e-Shuhada to pay homage to martyrs.

After the ceremony, two high-ranking officials held talks on important issues, including the fight against terrorism, strengthening border cooperation,

defense and expanding military relations between the two neighboring countries.

In this important meeting, the two sides also reviewed the latest security developments in the region, especially the situation in Afghanistan, and shared each other's views.

Zarif and General Bajwa stressed the need to expand comprehensive cooperation between Iran and Pakistan, especially in the field of security and the protection of common borders, which is called the border of peace and friendship between the two countries.

Rio Grande Valley Border Patrol Seizes Over $1M of Dangerous Narcotics

Rio Grande City (RGC) agents working in La Grulla, Texas, working near the river discovered two abandoned bundles of marijuana. A thorough search of the area revealed five subjects in the immediate vicinity of the bundles. The five subjects were determined to be citizens of Mexico and El Salvador who had illegally entered the country. The marijuana weighed approximately 93 pounds with an estimated street value of over $74K.

The Falfurrias Border Patrol Checkpoint, agents referred a commercial Greyhound bus for inspection. A service K-9 alerted to an abandoned black duffel bag located in the cargo area of the bus where three bundles were concealed inside a wooden chessboard and tortilla press. The contents of the bundles tested positive for methamphetamine and fentanyl. The bundles weighed approximately 35 pounds and have an estimated street value of $960K.

Additionally, agents working at the Falfurrias Border Patrol Checkpoint seized over 200 bottles of non-prescribed Xanax.

Man arrested over meth in portable medical shower

An investigation into the importation of approximately 20 kilograms of methamphetamine resulted in the arrest of a 42-year-old man from Western Sydney.

The methamphetamine was concealed inside the pieces of a portable disinfectant tunnel – a device people walk through to have water or disinfectant sprayed on them – that was sent from Iran.

The concealment was detected when Australian Border Force (ABF) officers in Sydney examined the air cargo consignment. The pieces of the device included a water pump, fuse box, tubing and a stand that was covered in fake grass. ABF officers found a white granular substance hidden inside some of this equipment, which presumptively tested positive to methamphetamine.

Human Smuggling Attempts Result in 102 Apprehensions

In 24 hours, Rio Grande Valley agents

foiled four human smuggling attempts, arresting 102 illegal aliens.

Rio Grande City agents received information of a possible stash house located in Roma, Texas. Border Patrol and the Roma Police Department arrived at the residence and discovered 46 subjects illegally in the country being held in the home. The subjects in the residence were determined to be from Mexico, Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala.

Weslaco agents working in San Juan, Texas, in coordination with San Juan Police Department, investigated information regarding an active illegal alien stash house. Law enforcement personnel discovered a total of 52 subjects, all determined to be illegally present in the United States. The subjects were citizens of Mexico, Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua.

Officers from the Podlasie Border Guard Unit revealed cigarettes without Polish excise stamps worth PLN 4.3 million

Border Guard officers detained a truck for inspection in Żubryn (Szypliszki commune). According to the documentation, the driver, a Polish citizen, was supposed to transport mineral wool. During a detailed inspection of the truck, it turned out that there were illegal cigarettes inside the trailer. Border Guard officers secured

a total of 303 thousand. packs of cigarettes. The 45-year-old truck driver was temporarily arrested by a court decision for three months. He is facing a heavy fine or imprisonment for up to 3 years. As evidence in the case, a truck with a semi-trailer worth a total of PLN 100,000 was also secured.

Eleven Syrian and Iraqi citizens with Bulgarian identity documents found by border guards at PTF Nadlac II

Border guards at the Nadlac II Border Crossing Point found eleven Iraqi and Syrian citizens who tried to leave the country illegally, using Bulgarian identity cards belonging to other people.

The drivers of the means of transport, two Bulgarian citizens, are being investigated for migrant trafficking.

The border policemen interrupted the trip of the persons in question, being taken to the headquarters of the institution for investigations. Following the verifications, it was established that the eleven men are citizens of Syria and Iraq, eight adults aged between 18 and 46 and three minors, aged between 14 and 16, asylum seekers in our country.

The border guards are investigating the crimes of migrant trafficking for the two drivers and false identity and attempted illegal crossing of the state border for the eleven citizens of Syria and Iraq.

Guardia Civil dismantles two criminal groups that trafficked in protected species

More than 300 species of reptiles with the highest international protection have been seized, as well as weapons from the Second World War, with a valuation of more than 800,000 euros

The Guardia Civil has detained and investigated a total of 21 people who regularly engaged in the breeding, possession, trade and trafficking of protected reptiles, including turtles valued at around €30,000, regardless of the established legal requirements.

The animals came from countries in America, Asia, Africa and Oceania and were imported illegally and introduced into Europe for breeding or marketing.

In order to release species specially protected by international conventions, the detainees made use of falsified documentation or whitewashed with documents of other similar animals from authorized breeding or possession.

SEF detains four citizens accused of the crimes of assisting unlawful immigration and falsification of administrative documents

The Portuguese Immigration and Borders Service (SEF) has detained one national and three foreign nationals, and

six others have been made defendants, accused of the crimes of assisting unlawful immigration, falsification of administrative documents and false declarations.

Under the operation "Coroa Branca", SEF has carried out searches to the premises of an immigration advisory firm which, allegedly, and using social networks, was seeking out clients, mostly Hindustani living in other European countries, promising them an easy acquiring of the residence permits in Portugal.

Evidence relating to the possible illegal acquiring of hundreds of residence certificates has been gathered, all issued by a parish council of Lisboa, and, similarly, supporting evidence of the acquiring of the Tax Identification Number for non-resident foreign nationals, using the services of a national who was, in every certificate, the tax representative. In addition, an important amount of money has been apprehended.

BOC-Zamboanga with Partner Agencies Intercept Php 120M Worth of Smuggled Cigarettes in Tawi-Tawi

The BOC-Port of Zamboanga, together with its partner agencies, intercepted more than P120 million-worth of smuggled cigarettes.

The operation stemmed from a call received from a concerned citizen about a certain vessel allegedly carrying smuggled cigarettes. This prompted Customs Zamboanga to conduct an operation vis-a-vis M/L Nur 1 which was then departing from Indonesia en route to Indanan, Sulu.

Guided by the Intelligence Group, the information was then relayed to the Customs personnel in Taganak Island, Tawi Tawi for validation and coordination.

The BOC's anti-smuggling operation team, in collaboration with the Naval Intelligence and Security Unit (NISU) Zamboanga, Naval Forces Western Mindanao, Armed Forces of the Philippines, Philippine Coast Guard, Philippine National Police, Philippine Marines, Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency, and other intelligence operatives planned and executed a successful anti-smuggling operation on said vessel.

This resulted in the seizure of more or less 3,000 boxes of undocumented cigarettes estimated to be worth P120 million. The seized goods were then turned over to the BOC for verification of volume and amount of smuggled cigarettes..

Dismantling of a criminal organization in Kos with action in the illegal trafficking of immigrants from Turkey to Greece

The dismantling of a criminal organization that was active in the illegal trafficking of migrants from Turkey to Greece - their stay in Kos and then facilitated their promotion inland, was carried out by the officials of the Kos Port Authority, with the assistance

of Klimonou KE officers of the BD Police Directorate of Dodecanese, ie the Security Department KO with the Crime Prevention and Suppression Team of EL.AS. (OPKE) and executives of the Directorate of Security and Protection of Maritime Borders, after appropriate use of information and conducting a coordinated large-scale police operation on the island of Kos.

Taiwan contributes to biggest drug bust in Thailand history

Taiwanese investigators have cooperated with Thailand law enforcement authorities to help make the largest drug seizure recorded in the Southeast Asian country.

Thailand Justice Minister Somsak Thepsutin announced 11,650 kilograms of ketamine were seized at a warehouse in Chachoengsao Province. This followed a tip-off from Taiwanese officials about a recent smuggling case from Thailand to Taiwan.

Thepsutin said the bust was the largest quantity of drugs seized in Thailand and was jointly conducted by the Office of the Narcotics Control Board and the Narcotics Suppression Bureau. He said the two main suspects, both Thai nationals, were arrested before they could ship the drugs overseas.

The authorities said the market value of the seized drugs was an estimated US$960 million.

SOUTH EAST ASIA TACKLE DRUG AND WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING DURING PANDEMIC

East and Southeast Asia customs authorities announce results against drug and wildlife trafficking during the pandemic

A recently concluded joint operation among countries in Asia, the UNODC and the Regional Intelligence Liaison Office Asia Pacific (RILO-AP) of the World Customs Organization (WCO) has resulted in the disruption of criminal networks, as well as insights into the methods used to overcome COVID related border restrictions and transportation limitations.

Between May and September this year, customs authorities of 15 countries and territories (Australia, Bangladesh, Brunei, Cambodia, China, Hong Kong SAR, India, Lao PDR, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, New Zealand, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam) conducted an operation to disrupt the trafficking of drugs and wildlife products with the support of UNODC and

Credit: Viet Nam Customs

the RILO-AP. Mekong Dragon Operation II follows a coordinated campaign among the 6 countries of the Mekong region in 2019 that was known as Mekong Dragon that resulted in the confiscation of several consignments of drugs and the investigation of connected organized criminal groups. Earlier this year authorities form China and Viet Nam approached the UNODC and RILO AP about a second operational phase with expanded geographic coverage and including protected species products.

Support to Mekong Dragon II cross-border information exchange was provided by the UNODC and RILO-AP to ensure no delays and follow-up. "Major transnational organized crime groups in the region have been largely resilient to COVID-19 – they do not follow the rules countries have to follow, and in some respects the pandemic has been an advantage for them", remarked Jeremy Douglas, UNODC Regional Representative for Southeast Asia and the Pacific. He

added, "It was important for UNODC to facilitate cooperation and advise along the way. We are now pushing for post-seizure investigations so governments identify related financial transactions and methods of money laundering, pursue the confiscation of assets, and move to the prosecution of networks."

The four months of the operation resulted in 284 cases across 9 countries and territories and the confiscation of: 1,983 kg of illicit drugs; 108 tons of precursor chemicals; 1,892 kg and 1,567

endangered wildlife products; 82 live wild animals; 145 tons and 999 m3 of protected timber. Seizures of controlled drugs represented 88% of the total number of cases.

The largest number of seizures took place in China and Hong Kong SAR, mirroring legal trade volumes and the movement of shipping containers and parcels. "The Mekong Dragon Operation is a successful example of international cooperation in the fight against transnational organized crime" said Deputy Director-General Wang He from the Anti-Smuggling Bureau of China Customs. "However, our job is not complete until the organizations involved in these criminal activities are dismantled and secured to justice."

"Mekong Dragon II has been an exceptional platform for cooperation, and we are grateful to the UNODC and RILO AP for the support" remarked Mr. Nguyen Hung Anh, Director of Anti-smuggling and Investigation

Credit: China Customs

Credit: Cambodia Customs

frontline of combatting trafficking both drugs and precursors, and also of protected species. They play an indispensable role in the region, and they have delivered despite COVID-19" commented Mr. Hyungmin BAEK, head of WCO RILO for Asia and the Pacific.

Department of Viet Nam Customs. "At the same time, the operation is the start of a larger effort, and we will build on what has been done and continue to pursue criminal syndicates."

Analysis of intelligence and information from Mekong Dragon II is being led by RILO-AP and a detailed summary will be released in the near future. "Customs authorities in Asia-Pacific are truly at the

UPCOMING WEBINARS

A GREAT LINE UP OF INTERNATIONAL EXPERTS SPEAKERS DELIVER HIGHLY RELEVANT AND INFORMATIVE DISCUSSIONS FOR THE BORDER MANAGEMENT COMMUNITY.

Smuggling & Trade in Illicit Goods, Antiquities and Endangered Species

Weds 25th Nov - 8.30am EST / 1.30pm UK / 2.30pm CET

Webinar: API/PNR - Future Systems to Fight a Global Pandemic (Part 2)

Weds 2nd Dec - 9am EST / 2pm UK / 3pm CET

Webinar: Air Travel in the Post COVID World

Thurs 10th Dec - 9am EST / 2pm UK / 3pm CET

CRDFGLOBAL
Webinar: Maritime Domain Awareness: Implications for National, Economic, Border, and Environmental Security

Wednesday 16th December - 9am EST / 2pm UK / 3pm CET

For more details and to register visit **www.border-security-report.com/webinars**

SMARTER BORDER SECURITY ENABLED BY PERSISTENT AIRBORNE SURVEILLANCE AEROSTATS

Investigating how aerostate deliver elevated awareness in global geo-conflict zones
By Matthew J. McNiel, Global Vice President, TCOM, L.P.
TCOM, L.P. is a global leader providing elevated solutions to enhance situational awareness.

Increasing geopolitical tensions in global geo-conflict border security zones, from the South China Sea to the Iran-Saudi Arabia conflict and the Russia-Ukraine and former Eastern Europe NATO allies have made the need for reliable and cost-effective persistent airborne surveillance imperative for effective C5ISR's doctrine for military and law enforcement decision makers.

As they seek to monitor, identify, and prepare to respond when a real or perceived threat becomes imminent to their strategic interests.

Most critically, effective persistent airborne surveillance must operate in multiple environments. Border security can mean protecting critical infrastructures, maritime ports, entire maritime areas against

missiles, and in the air. Adding to that complexity is the presence of largely populated

areas in multiple countries proximate to the conflict zone, making it challenging to select one tool or method to create a compelling operational 'Common Operating Picture' for defense and border security decision-makers.

 or example, according to recent media reports, it was widely reported that regional states in the South China sea, such as the Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore, Vietnam, Taiwan, Japan, and Korea, are actively increasing their proactive vigilance. Wisely, they are also considering an all-of-the-above approach for their defenses for ensuring full elevated awareness with optimized intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) for land, air, and sea domains.

The importance of Persistent Airborne Surveillance for Border Security has become a topic of debate among military leaders as they contemplate, which ISR platform delivers the most effective solution for their needs.

One of the ISR platform that is getting renewed and growing attention is Persistent Airborne Aerostats. These lighter-than-air platforms deliver a battle-tested All-in-One system engineered to operate for weeks and months with the latest ISR technology. They can be used to monitor and gather

intelligence from a highly reliable platform hovering over strategic border security points to collect data from the most advanced ISR sensors.

One of the critical attractions of airborne surveillance aerostats is their strategic affordability. While a remote base is unlikely to be able to use a satellite for surveillance and might only be able to call upon a large UAV occasionally. The advantage of the systems is their

ability to loiter in a set position for long periods at a relatively nominal cost.

For border security applications, elevated-awareness aerostats offer persistent surveillance solutions with unique advantages over traditional ground-based radar and onboard surveillance

systems. For example, when naval vessels are moored or transiting port waters, they are subject to

individual surveillance and security challenges. Threats such as small, fast-moving boats are not easily detectable using traditional ship-mounted cameras or ground-based radar. Conversely, aerostat systems act as a "virtual fence" along coastlines, around vessels, or the port perimeter

by providing continuous, real-time monitoring of activities from an aerial perspective. The system can detect threats at greater range and in the blind spots of traditional surface-based sensors, providing security forces with more time to think, react, engage, and neutralize threats at a port.

Aerostats are also ideal for maritime borders deployment, on land borders or directly from a vessel at sea. These aerostats can be assembled and deployed in a very short period and manned by a minimal crew. This allows commanders to use the aerostat

system in areas or when escorting a High-Value Unit (HVU). The aerostat system can carry payloads, including day/night EO/IR cameras, radars, communications relays, and electronic warfare packages. The aerostat can be deployed from the deck of a vessel or a static location such as a dock or onshore mooring station. The larger size aerostat systems have a greater capacity that allows systems to operate at higher altitudes for greater surveillance range while remaining aloft for up to two weeks at a time, ensuring persistent round-the-clock surveillance for highly trafficked areas and maritime borders.

For example, as South China Sea neighboring countries consider different monitoring options, aerostat systems offer several key competitive advantages over other platforms. The first is cost. Aerostat systems require comparably minimal maintenance, resulting in an exceptionally low hourly operational cost. This allows users to obtain highly accurate, real-time surveillance data at a remarkably low total cost of ownership. Secondly, aerostat systems are capable of being on station for weeks at a time. This ensures that there are fewer lapses in coverage due to refueling or unexpected mechanical issues. Third and perhaps most importantly, aerostats payloads are easily reconfigurable, allowing the platform to be retrofitted to accommodate the

latest ISR technologies in 'minutes' compared to 'months' and without the need to re-qualify the airframe for the safety of flight. For example, aerostat systems could function as a versatile platform for ISR payloads, including electro-optical/infrared cameras, radar, video, communications relays, and even cellular data and Wi-Fi. Operators can easily swap out a wide variety of actionable surveillance data and communications options to meet different missions using the aerostat system's rapidly reconfigurable "Plug and Play" architecture.

Notwithstanding, Unmanned aerial systems (UAS or, more colloquially, drones) are tremendously useful military assets capable of a variety of non-military applications – from monitoring hurricanes to surveying flood and wildfire damage. Despite their proliferation and ubiquity, there remains room for one unmanned airborne system that predates even manned powered flight – Aerostats. Aerostats are lighter-than-air systems that use gases like helium to become airborne without lift-inducing wings or propulsive thrust. From their elevated perspective, governments and other operators can effectively and efficiently monitor thousands of square miles of land, sea, and air. During the more than 150 years since then, no one has invented a lower-cost platform to provide persistent aerial surveillance. Aerostats stay aloft for weeks at a time, with minimal cost,

crew, and maintenance, backed up by manned aircraft and drones only when necessary.

From an ISR perspective, border security officials recognize that Aerostats systems have the payload size, weight, and power capacity to support high-performance radars that can detect aircraft operating well beyond the coverage of ground-based radars. For example, with advanced maritime radar, a single sea surveillance system can track maritime targets at distances of 60 nautical miles and cover thousands of square miles for weeks at a time. In addition to the radar, the aerostat can simultaneously support passive surveillance payloads like COMINT, SIGINT, and ELINT, thermal imaging, optical sensors, and communications payloads at the lowest possible hourly cost for an airborne asset. The early detection and direct communications

with air and sea assets afford the critical window of time to evaluate the situation, coordinate forces and engage.

Same when it comes to protecting and monitoring land borders from above. For example, aerostats have monitored the southern U.S. Border to help combat illegal immigration and narco-terrorism, and human trafficking rings. Their persistent presence provides a deterrent effect not seen with other airborne surveillance platforms; in the Southwest, smuggling attempts

by small planes have been virtually eliminated, and in the Caribbean, smuggling by "go-fast" boat has been sharply curtailed. In many cases, the mere presence of Aerostats has greatly influenced the actions of smugglers, who have quickly changed, relocated, or ceased their illicit activities altogether. They are well aware that Aerostats carry highly-effective intelligence-gathering

sensors, and that if their smuggling attempts are seen, then they will be quickly intercepted by manned or unmanned aircraft.

Aerostats are a proven capability that readily accept innovative technologies, so will remain at the forefront of persistent surveillance as new electronic sensors that submit the new form of data become available. These new ISR sensors and other technologies can be more easily integrated and quickly fly aboard Aerostats, avoiding the lengthy and expensive airworthiness certification efforts necessary to fly new technology on manned and unmanned aircraft. Aerostats are the ideal airborne testbed to prove the value of, and work out any issues with, new technologies as they become available.

Moreover, aerostats are highly resilient and suited for harsh operating conditions. Due to the inert nature of Helium gas with which the aerostat is inflated,

aerostat systems do not combust and are highly durable in flight. The proof is in the battlefield. For example, aerostat systems deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan during combat have been documented to remain aloft and functional even after being hit by direct gunfire. The low pressure within the aerostat hull allows the system to stay aloft even when punctured.

 As border security in global hotspots becomes a critical ISR issue, military decision-makers consider using a multi-mode surveillance approach; aerostats stand out in their potential to serve as eyes in the sky in the South China Sea, the Persian Gulf, and the Former Eastern Europe-Russia border security disputes that have been immersed in perceived threats and real conflict. They are easy to deploy, operate in multiple environments are efficient and

technology-agnostic. Aerostat systems need little time to deploy and have lower maintenance requirements at a

substantially lower hourly operational cost than conventional aircraft and drones. Moreover, aerostats offer wide viewing angles and high resolution for more precise identification of small objects and surveillance of larger areas. In short, aerostats enable true persistent, real-time border security ISR at an affordable cost.

Sponsored Feature

SPECTRA
Group

US LITTORAL BORDER PROTECTED WITH SLINGSHOT™

Intelligence divisions of both the Department of Homeland Security and the Justice Department have actionable information that a small element of Islamic extremists is attempting to infiltrate the US through Eastern Canada. Their plan is to utilize small watercraft to cross from Canada into northern upstate New York where the St. Lawrence River and Lake Ontario meet.

Based on this intelligence, the Customs and Border Patrol department of DHS, along with their New York State Police partners, have planned a tactical intercept operation to capture and detain the suspects.

Due to the vast distances across upstate New York and Lake Ontario, line of sight radios are not reliable or effective among the dense forest or the long distances. Secondly, Federal and New York State Law Enforcement agencies utilize different tactical radios that are not compatible when operating in line of sight modes.

The on-scene commander from CBP makes the tactical decision that commercial satellite communications is a more effective way to C2 and coordinate among the various agencies and across the expanse of terrain. Spectra Group's SlingShot/LTAC system is chosen to provide the COMSATCOM solution for this intercept operation.

SlingShot allows all elements at the Federal and State levels to operate on a single tactical voice network that stretches from Watertown in the west to Massena to the north and back to the New York State Capitol in Albany to the south. A single spot

beam over that area is sufficient to provide the COMSATCOM coverage required.

Around the Globe, users of the award-winning SlingShot system recognise the unique communications edge this game-changing technology offers.

Conceived to meet demanding Special Forces requirements, SlingShot is a unique, low size, weight and power (SWaP) system that enables existing UHF and VHF tactical radios to work Beyond Line of Sight (BLOS) and on the move By utilising Inmarsat's L-band tactical satellite service (L-TAC), SlingShot allows a net to be created over 1000s of miles, delivering a comprehensive range of tactical and operational network capabilities. SlingShot provides voice and data capability for Command and Control (C2), encrypted if required, to support wide-ranging mission-critical applications. With greater capability compared to traditional systems, guaranteed channel availability, and virtually no increase in the training burden, SlingShot is rapidly redefining tactical communications.

What does SlingShot offer Border Security Operations in the littoral environment?

SlingShot allows coastal and offshore border security operations to run seamlessly with all agencies and platforms enjoying the all-informed radio net provided by SlingShot, extending their existing radios' range of operation over 1000s of miles. Multiple agencies

SlingShot's omni-directional antenna and low power requirement uniquely enables Beyond Line of Sight Communications on The Move on all platforms. Greatly improving Command and Control for Border Security operations.

can talk on land, airborne, or at sea. The Communications On The Move capability also allows all operationally deployed elements to communicate without the necessity to pause and acquire the satellite – essential when tracking fast-moving vessels that are attempting to evade being seen.

Simplicity, reliability and versatility ensure that SlingShot provides maximum utility with minimum cost, time and training burden

With a small external appliqué that connects directly to the users' existing radio and requires no configuration, SlingShot eliminates the need for re-equipping and demands minimal training, reducing the cognitive burden on the operator. SlingShot's reliability as a communications system stems from

the provision of critical voice; when the user transmits, the assigned channel instantaneously transfers the message to an all-informed network, exactly like a radio net. This is the significant difference between SlingShot and other range-extension systems that provide either an on-demand channel, where a channel is provided only if available, or Voice over IP (VoIP)/ Radio Over IP (RoIP), where there is no guarantee of the IP network providing a circuit when needed, therefore giving no guarantee that the message will get through.

With no reliance on additional infrastructure, SlingShot enables high tempo operations in remote locations

BLOS communications have traditionally been complex and time-consuming to establish, particularly

when operating without recourse to conventional fixed infrastructure. Until now, military satellite technology and High Frequency Radios have been the principle means used to establish BLOS communications. However, the UHF TACSAT antennae required are large and must be pointed towards the satellite to establish a communications link, compelling the user to remain stationary in order to communicate.   With its omnidirectional antennae, optimised to be man-portable or easily fitted to vehicle, maritime and aviation platforms, SlingShot allows teams to communicate instantly and on the move.

Unlike many traditional communications systems, SlingShot is not limited by terrain or degraded by weather and darkness; so critical lines of communication can be relied upon 24 hours a day, from virtually any platform or location.

SlingShot offers the key defining capability of providing a collaborative network for interoperability; permitting seamless inter-agency communications between individuals or organisations. By creating a unified L-Band net SlingShot can provide the foundation for complex operations supported by any number of discrete agencies.

WorldBorderSecurity.net

World Border Security Network (**WorldBorderSecurity.net**), a global network for agency officials at the borders.

The purpose of the network is to encourage and facilitate inter-agency co-operation and communication. Members of the network will be able to:

• communicate securely
• share information
• share documents
• share best practise

• view past presentations
• keep up-to-date with the latest technology developments
• share training opportunities
• and more...

WorldBorderSecurity.net is open to all World Border Security Congress government agency delegates past and present.

Access is restricted to government and intergovernmental personnel; border, customs, immigration agency officials and specialist law enforcement officers.

Non-delegate agency officials will also be welcome but by member invitation only.

EUBAM and its Partner Services hold the 2nd Arms Working Group meeting

EUBAM and representatives of law enforcement agencies from Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova, supported by Europol, Frontex and OSCE held, in a video-conference format, the second operational meeting of the Arms Working Group.

The participating agencies discussed the implementation of the 2020 Action Plan and challenges faced during the coronavirus pandemic. The participants also presented proposals for the activities in 2021 and expressed their confidence that the activities planned will considerably boost the international cooperation and heighten their operational capacity in counteracting this phenomenon.

Moreover, the parties shared their experience and information on significant cases of weapons, ammunition, and explosives (WAE) trafficking and presented the most recent trends, modi operandi as well as the best investigation practices.

WCO Releases an Upgraded New Version of the WCO Cargo Targeting System

World Customs Organization
CARGO TARGETING SYSTEM

The WCO Cargo Targeting System (WCO CTS) has completing an important phase in its ongoing development with the release of a new upgraded version of the system.

Over the past 3 years, with the support of United States Export Control and Related Border Security (EXBS) Program, the WCO has continuously improved the WCO CTS application culminating in the release of this latest enhanced version. At the same time the WCO has completed WCO CTS deployments to Maldives, Sri Lanka and Philippines, provided additional assistance to WCO CTS deployments in Chile, Georgia, Jamaica, Kenya and Ukraine and rolled out air cargo targeting capability to all user countries.

All countries will now be upgraded to the latest

version of the WCO CTS which will ensure the highest levels of performance and security are maintained into the future. The most obvious change will be the introduction of a new user interface which gives the system a fresh new look and builds on its core values of effectiveness, ease of use and sustainability.

Mr. Pranab Kumar Das, the WCO Director of Compliance & Facilitation welcomed the upgrade of the WCO CTS saying "The WCO is committed to providing its Members with an effective, sustainable cargo risk assessment and targeting capability that meets the highest international standards. This new version of the WCO CTS demonstrates this commitment and will be welcomed by the growing number of countries implementing it."

The WCO CTS is a cargo manifest risk assessment and targeting solution developed by the WCO for Customs administrations across the globe. It allows those adopting the solution to implement international best practice cargo risk assessment and targeting including key pillars of the WCO's SAFE Framework of Standards to Secure and Facilitate Global Trade. The WCO CTS has already been successfully implemented by many Customs Administrations in countries that vary widely in their size, level of economic development and cargo volumes.

Georgian Coast Guard Assessment Teams Pass Level 2 Assessment of NATO Certification Program

The boarding teams of the Coast Guard Department of the Border Police of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia have passed the first stage of the second level of NATO certification assessment [SEL-2]. The assessment process was part of a visit by HMS DRAGON, a naval vessel of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Two Coast Guard boarding teams joined the NATO Operational Concept Evaluation and Feedback Program (OCC E&F) in 2017. The group certification process involves two levels and four steps [SEL1, NEL1, SEL2, NEL2] and aims to increase the level of interoperability with the NATO Navy. The assessment process is scheduled to be completed in 2021, after which the Georgian Coast Guard will have boarding units trained, equipped and certified to participate in NATO naval operations. Since 2019, Coast

Guard vessels, Dioscuria and Ochamchire have also been involved in the process.

In parallel with the evaluation process, the process of modernizing the equipment of the boarding groups is underway. The personal equipment of the representatives of the tactical units was updated. The teams were equipped with special means of detection and communication, as well as chemical, biological, radiation and nuclear hazards detection. Weapons were also renewed - Soviet-made weapons were replaced with modern, NATO-standard weapons.

The process of equipping the boarding groups was carried out with the active support of the US Export Control and Border Security Program (EXBS) and the Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA).

Operation IRINI inspects a vessel in application of the UN arms embargo on Libya

Operation EUNAVFOR MED Irini boarded and inspected the Merchant Vessel (MV) MEDKON SINOP in application of the United Nation Security Council's Resolution 2292 of 2016 concerning the arms embargo on Libya, whose validity was extended until 5 June next year.

The MV MEDKON SINOP is a Panama flagged General Cargo and departed from Ambarli in Turkey on 18 October and was heading to Misurata in Libya. The boarding team of the French Frigate Latouche-Tréville, acting in the framework of Operation EUNAVFOR MED IRINI, boarded the vessel in international waters, 135 nautical miles North of Benghazi, Libya.

The boarding team examined the available documentation on board and inspected the cargo (in containers) on a random basis. Nothing suspicious was found and the boarding team returned to its unit allowing the vessel to proceed on its way.

The procedure went smoothly and the boarding took place in a collaborative atmosphere of both the master and the crew. All recommended COVID-19 precautions were observed during the boarding.

Operation Irini is a part of the EU's commitment to support the Berlin process, restore stability in Libya and bring peace to its population.

From May 4, when the Operation started its activity at sea, Irini assets have patrolled the central Mediterranean and performed 990 hailings and made 33 friendly approaches (visits on board of merchant vessels). The Operation has monitored suspect vessels at sea in more then 16 ports and landing points.

By monitoring 25 airports and landing strips, it detected 120 suspect flights possibly carrying military related cargos back and forth to Libya. Operation Irini is contributing to the UN arms embargo and the prevention of oil smuggling with 16 special reports to the United Nations Panel of Experts concerning both sides of the conflict in Libya, in an impartial manner. These results were possible thanks to SatCen (European Union Satellite Centre), which provided more than 298 sets of satellite images at Irini's requests.

This is the second boarding since the start of the Operation IRINI.

Broad common approach needed to tackle abuse via sham marriages

A broad common approach, involving administrations such as civil registries and consulates, is instrumental to tackling the fraud and abuse perpetrated by Organised Criminal Groups (OCGs) via sham marriages. In addition, further enhancement of judicial cooperation and the coordination of investigations at EU level will give extra impetus to the fight to thwart those arranging marriages of this kind. These are the main recommendations made by Eurojust, the European Union Agency for Criminal Justice Cooperation, in a report which was adopted.

The report gives an overview of casework on how human trafficking and migrant smuggling networks lure mainly women into exploitation and even physical abuse via marriages of convenience. It also states that the lack of harmonised national legislation may be exploited by OCGs, who often try to circumvent asylum and migration laws and 'shop around' before concluding marriages in jurisdictions which apply the lowest penalties or where these acts are less perceived.

Eurojust Vice-President and National Member for Italy, Mr Filippo Spiezia, said: 'Combatting migrant smuggling is one of the priorities for Eurojust, as it is a heinous crime which exploits vulnerable people. Due to our unique role as coordinating Agency, we have been able to provide this extensive analysis and make recommendations to react and tackle the criminal phenomenon of sham marriages. By doing so, we can help action to be taken more proactively, in line with the role we would like to play in fighting cross-border crime.'

The number of complex cases involving sham marriages, for which the assistance of Eurojust is requested by national authorities, has more than doubled over the last ten years. Last year alone,

Eurojust was involved in 185 cases of migrant smuggling, four of them specifically concerning sham marriages. In seven cases a special Joint Investigation Team (JIT) was set up, with financial support provided by the Agency.

JITs have proven to be an effective way of investigating sham marriage cases, allowing a smoother exchange of information and evidence-sharing among the authorities involved. Often other, related and serious forms of crime, which are not evident when looking at the case from the national perspective only, are revealed. More frequent use of the JIT instrument is another recommendation made in the report.

Eurojust can play a central role in identifying links between different criminal activities of OCGs in several jurisdictions, within or outside the EU. Sham marriages often appear as isolated acts, connected only to relatively minor offences, such as document fraud or administrative violations where the penalties are modest. However, in many cases they are part of a broader criminal fraud scheme, including money laundering, document counterfeiting and people smuggling or human trafficking, where high profits are made on the back of the victims.

In the efforts to combat sham marriages, Eurojust can facilitate investigations and assist with the coordination of joint prosecution strategies, to prevent the risk of a case being prosecuted in two countries, the so called ne bis in idem principle, which could lead to acquittal of the suspects. An occasionally partial transfer of proceedings can also lead to better protection of the victims.

These victims are lured into what seems to be "easy money", but instead become trapped in a web of exploitation and abuse. Sham marriages are also a direct abuse of the fundamental right to freedom of movement within the EU while also creating, for instance, unwarranted access to the European labour market and social security benefits in the Member States. Since 2012, the EU has therefore firmly stressed the importance of effective cooperation in tackling marriages of convenience, the arranging of which has recently been identified by the European Commission as one of the three main forms of facilitating irregular migration into the EU. The Eurojust report goes deeper into the assistance provided between 2012 and 2020 to the present day.

ICMPD and Tajikistan formalise and deepen their relations

The Ministry of Labour, Migration and Employment of Population of the Republic of Tajikistan informed ICMPD that the government gave its approval to the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with ICMPD. This was the positive news that ICMPD received at an online meeting with a high-level delegation from Tajikistan, headed by the Labour Minister Ms. Gurlu Jabborzoda.

The MOU will become the cornerstone of a deeper, more targeted cooperation and pave the way for the establishment of a Migrant Resource Cenweeks. The Migrant Resource Centre is to be established under the framework of the "Improving Migration Management in the Silk Routes Countries" project, funded by the European Union.

WCO Releases an Upgraded New Version of the WCO Cargo Targeting System

As a result of the risk analysis studies conducted within the scope of anti-smuggling activities, two trucks entering The WCO Cargo Targeting System (WCO CTS) has completing an important phase in its ongoing development with the release of a new upgraded version of the system.

Over the past 3 years, with the support of United States Export Control and Related Border Security (EXBS) Program, the WCO has continuously improved the WCO CTS application culminating in the release of this latest enhanced version. At the same time the WCO has completed WCO CTS deployments to Maldives, Sri Lanka and Philippines, provided additional assistance to WCO CTS deployments in Chile, Georgia, Jamaica, Kenya and Ukraine and rolled out air cargo targeting capability to all user countries.

All countries will now be upgraded to the latest version of the WCO CTS which will ensure the highest levels of performance and security are maintained into the future. The most obvious change will be the introduction of a new user interface which gives the system a fresh new look and

builds on its core values of effectiveness, ease of use and sustainability.

Mr. Pranab Kumar Das, the WCO Director of Compliance & Facilitation welcomed the upgrade of the WCO CTS saying "The WCO is committed to providing its Members with an effective, sustainable cargo risk assessment and targeting capability that meets the highest international standards. This new version of the WCO CTS demonstrates this commitment and will be welcomed by the growing number of countries implementing it."

The WCO CTS is a cargo manifest risk assessment and targeting solution developed by the WCO for Customs administrations across the globe. It allows those adopting the solution to implement international best practice cargo risk assessment and targeting including key pillars of the WCO's SAFE Framework of Standards to Secure and Facilitate Global Trade. The WCO CTS has already been successfully implemented by many Customs Administrations in countries that vary widely in their size, level of economic development and cargo volumes.

AMO Seized 489 Pounds of Cocaine near Vieques, Puerto Rico; Three Men Arrested

A U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), Air and Marine Operations (AMO), Caribbean Air and Marine Branch Coastal Interceptor Vessel (CIV) crew arrested three U.S. Citizens, and seized 489 pounds (222 Kilos) of cocaine. The estimated value of the seized cocaine is $5.8 millones.

A Fajardo Marine Unit crew responded to a report of a suspicious vessel operating near Vieques, Puerto Rico. Marine Interdiction Agents (MIA) identified a dead in water lights-out vessel near the shore that relocated to a

nearby beach area, and observed three individuals moving suspected contraband from the vessel to the shore.

AMO agents arrested three U.S. Citizens and recovered six large duffel bags, a backpack, and the suspect vessel.

Local Puerto Rico Police Department authorities aided transport of suspects, 190 bricks of cocaine, and the vessel to Isabela Segunda Vieques, Puerto Rico. AMO transferred custody of men and evidence to the Homeland Security Investigations for prosecution and investigation.

BORDER MANAGEMENTS ANNUAL GATHERING

EVENT PREVIEW

NEW DATES

8th-10th JUNE 2021
Athens, Greece
www.world-border-congress.com

After the disappointment of COVID postponement of the 2020 World Border Security Congress (WBSC), the organisers are delighted to be able to announce new dates for the WBSC to reconvene in Athens, Greece on the 8th-10th June 2021.

Whilst there is no need for explanation for the postponement of the face-to-face congress this year, the organisers have decided not to go down the virtual route. This was because they believe that the fraternal community nature of WBSC is at the very heart of what makes it such an important event for the global border community, and why it attracts more than 250 delegates from over 50 countries each year.

Therefore, with the continued support of the Greek Ministry of Immigration & Asylum, the organisers look forward to meeting old friends and new in Athens in June 2021 and continuing to develop cooperation, collaboration and networking opportunities for international border community.

Since our last congress, in March 2019, the world has changed, and once again the border management community is in the front line of those changes.

Unprecedented national lockdowns and border closures have happened the world over and new technologies have been rushed into service.

Co-hosted by:

HELLENIC REPUBLIC
Ministry of Migration & Asylum

Changes in the traveller information requirements have been put in place unilaterally by individual countries and continue to evolve.

What is certain is that the pandemic has changed forever, international travel and therefore border management.

Added impetus has now been attached to implementing and enhancing Advanced Passenger Information (API) sharing.

All this against a backdrop of continued issues of mass migration, human trafficking, drug smuggling and terrorism.

There is much to be discussed, and this year's Word Border Congress will be one of the first opportunities for the border community to gather together to discuss the challenges going forward.

The World Border Security Congress is a high level 3 day event that will discuss and debate current and future policies, implementation issues and challenges as well as new and developing technologies that contribute towards safe and secure border and migration management.

We need to continue the discussion, collaboration and intelligence sharing.

The World Border Security Congress

is the premier multi-jurisdictional transnational platform where the border protection, management and security industry policy-makers and practitioners convene to discuss the international challenges faced in protecting borders.

Co-hosted by the Ministry of Immigration & Sylum and supported by the Organization for Security & Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the European Association of Airport and Seaport Police (EAASP), the African Union Economic, Social and Cultural Council (AU-ECOSOCC), National Security & Resilience Consortium, International Security Industry Organisation and International Association of CIP Professionals, the World Border Security Congress remains the premier multi-jurisdictional global platform where the international border management and protection policy makers and practitioners and community gathers to share views, thoughts and challenges.

As well as the 3 day main congress agenda, the event will also have a series of Closed Agency Only Workshops and opportunities for delegates to visit Athens International Airport of Piraeus Seaport during the Site Visits being hosted. Great opportunities to gain insights into how operational and technological aspects combine for successful border security, migration and cargo management.

Register your interest to attend the event at www.world-border-congress.com/registration.

We look forward to welcoming you to Athens, Greece on 24th-26th November 2020.

Silver Sponsor:

Shuttle Bus Sponsor:

Lanyard Sponsor:

Delegate Folder Sponsor:

Welome Reception Sponsor:

Networking Recxeption Sponsor:

Water Bottle Sponsor:

Further details can be viewed at **www.world-border-congress.com**.

Closed Agency Workshops

FOR BORDER AGENCIES, AGENCIES AT THE BORDER AND GOVERNEMTN OFFICIALS ONLY

The World Border Security Congress aims to promote collaboration, inter-agency cooperation and information/intelligence sharing amongst border agencies and agencies at the border to better engage and tackle the increasing threats and cross border security challenges that pertain to today's global environment.

Border agencies and agencies at the border can benefit from the 'Closed Agency Only Workshops', hosted by the Ministry of Citizen Protection, Organization for Security & Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and International Organization for Migration (IOM) with a series of behind closed door discussion and working group opportunities.

This years Closed Agency Only Workshop topics are:

Challenges of Inter-Agency And International Information Sharing
Chair: TBC
Legacy information systems, lack of trust, lack of sharing mechanisms, lack of a designated international agency all contribute to a lack of information sharing. Integrated Border Management (IBM) is based on the premise that agencies and the international community need to work together to achieve common aims that benefit all parties. Information sharing becomes increasingly effective as border management agencies gather, collate and share more data, but how is this to be achieved.

Disrupting People Trafficking Routes
Chair: International Organization for Migration (IOM)
Human trafficking is one of the largest criminal enterprises in the world. It is a multi-billion dollar criminal business on a global scale. This is because human trafficking is a high profit, low risk enterprise that is also a low priority for most law enforcement agencies, meaning apprehension of perpetrators is low and sentences are often minimal compared that of major crimes. What can be done to disrupt trafficking routes and gangs?

Biometrics - next steps
Chair: Organization for Security & Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)
Biometrics are here to stay and are an increasingly valuable tool in making borders secure. But what are the next steps and developments and implementation in biometric technology and how biometrics is lawfully used to help on the border, considering aspects such as GDPR and travel document security.

Register online at **www.world-border-congress.com/agency-reg**

Tuesday 8th June 2021 : 9.30am - 12:30pm

The Social Affairs and Health Cluster Committee in conjunction with Committee on Political Affairs of the AU-ECOSOCC, will be hosting a Workshop on the margins of the Congress to understudy the situation and proffer necessary solutions that will address the issues of Migration in Africa.

Africa is continuously losing its young, vibrant human resources and future through irregular migration, leading through the path of death to Europe and other developed Nations. This has continued to lead to loss of thousands of lives, brain drain and depletion of Africa's human resources.

The situation has become a global topical issue with Africa at the receiving end. We believe that the time has come for us to look inwards. The Workshop therefore is expected to identify the root causes, share experience with local and international development partners and civil society organizations with a view to curbing irregular migration of African youths and even families to Europe.

The Side Event with the theme "Migration - Creating Opportunities for Young People In Africa" will be highly interactive with Keynote presentations, Panel discussions centered on a meaningful dialogue among participants and stakeholders.

Delegates of the World Border Security Congress are entitled to participate in the AU-ECOSOCC Workshop "Migration - Creating Opportunities for Young People In Africa".

Register online at **www.world-border-congress.com**

Congress Programme

World Border
Security Congress
8th -10th JUNE 2021
ATHENS, GREECE

Tuesday 8th June

1:30pm - 2:00pm **MINISTERIAL OPENING AND WELCOME**

2:15pm - 3:30pm **OPENING KEYNOTE**
Mr Notis Mitarachi, Minister of Migration & Asylum of Greece
Chief of Greek National Police*****
Chief of Hellenic Coast Guard*****
TBC

4:00pm - 5:30pm **Plenary Session - The Latest Threats and Challenges at the Border**
With the final collapse of the so-called IS Caliphate, returning foreign fighters are a particular challenge for the next few years, but mass migration, transiting terrorists, cross border organised crime, human trafficking, small arms, weapons of mass destruction and drug smuggling will continue to be areas of major concern for the global border community.

Latest threats and challenges in the Central Asia
Sharipov Zafar, Tajik Border Troops & Abdulloev Khairullo, Tajik Customs Service, Tajikistan

Insider Threats at Ports
Peter Nilsson, Head of Airpol

Senior Representative, INTERPOL Washington

Senior Representative, Greek National Police

David Bannister, Chief Inspector - Counter Terrorism Border Operations Centre, Counter Terrorism Policing – National Operations Centre (CTP-NOC)*

Carlos Dettleff Beros, General Director for Borders, The National Department of State Borders and Boundaries, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Chile

Wednesday 9th June

9:00am - 10:30am **Plenary Session - Continuing efforts against foreign**
terrorist fighters, irregular migration and human trafficking
How we deal with foreign terrorist fighters, irregular migration and human trafficking are inextricably linked. Because it is through clandestine trafficking networks that foreign fighters will attempt to return to their countries of origin or to other destinations. They may also attempt to return through conventional travel networks by the use of forged or lookalike documents. Or they may hide among genuine refugees as we have already seen. These experienced fighters pose a real threat to their communities. API and PNR are part of the answer but what else can we do to meet this challenge?

The use of API/PNR data to fight trafficking in Human Beings and people smuggling
Valdecy Urquiza, Assistant Director - Vulnerable Communities - INTERPOL General Secretariat

Alvaro Rodriguez-Gaya, Head of Strategy, European Migrant Smuggling Centre, EUROPOL

Strengthening National Referral Mechanisms to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings - Tatiana Kotlyarenko, Adviser on Anti-Trafficking Issues, OSCE

Gerald Tatzgern, Head of Joint Operational Office, Public Security Austria

The fight against illegal migrants and corruptions on border crossing points - Ph. D. Vladimir Pivovarov, National coordinator for integrated border management, Ministry of Interior, North Macedonia

AIG Moses Ambakina Jitoboh mni, Assistant Inspector General of Police, Nigeria

Achieving Effective Border Security in Africa through Youth Engagement - Jude Gabriel Imagwe MON, Chief Executive, Advance for World Unity

9.15AM - 10.30AM **Technology Workshop**
See some of the latest border tech solutions demonstrated and dicussed during the Technology Workshop.

The Future of Automated Border Control: Making an Informed Decision - Christopher Gilliland, Director, Innovative Travel Solutions, Vancouver Airport Authority

The Need for Client-Owned Open Source Frameworks for Integration of Sensors - Sean Buckley, PMP, Program Director, Parsons

TBC - Senior Representative, Smiths Detection

Future Technologies for improving Border Security - Radu Pop, Head of Sales, Infrastructure and Frontier Security Solutions, Airbus Defence & Space & Michael Edwards, Director of Business Development & Technical Sales eGovernment, Veridos

How Technology and Collaboration between nations enable focus on detecting Foreign Terrorist Fighters - Kier-co Gerritsen, Business Development Director, SITA

Beyond the Passport: Truth, Lies or Threats? - Dr. Enrique Segura, president and CEO of Securiport

11:15AM - 12:30PM   **WORKSHOPS**

BREAKOUT WORKSHOP - CAPACITY BUILDING AND TRAINING IN BORDER AND MIGRATION MANAGEMENT

Enhancing capacity and migration management through by improved technical support and knowledge; administrative ability; promoting mechanisms for co-operation and the exchange of expertise between migration management personnel and the strengthening the monitoring and oversight.

Nélson Goncalves, Immigration and Border Management Training Specialist, International Organization for Migration (IOM)

Capacity Building and Design Thinking - Dr Katerina Poustourli, Scientific/Technical Officer, International University of Greece

Global Border Security and Management (BSM) Programme - Margherita Natali, Associate Programme Officer, United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, Counter Terrorism Centre, Border Security and Management Unit

Olasunkanmi John Oba - Nigerian Representative, AU-ECOSOCC

CLOSED AGENCY WORKSHOP - CHALLENGES OF INTER-AGENCY AND INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION SHARING

Chair: Ministry of Citizen Protection, Greece

Legacy information systems, lack of trust, lack of sharing mechanisms, lack of a designated international agency all contribute to a lack of information sharing. Integrated Border Management (IBM) is based on the premise that agencies and the international community need to work together to achieve common aims that benefit all parties. Information sharing becomes increasingly effective as border management agencies gather, collate and share more data, but how is this to be achieved. **BSRBCC - A model for long term cross-border cooperation** - Hans Peter Wagner, National Expert, Senior Chief Inspector, Federal Police

Alvaro Rodriguez-Gaya, Head of Strategy, European Migrant Smuggling Centre, EUROPOL

Delimitation and demarcation of state boundaries as a significant element of improving border security and cooperation between neighbors with a focus on the Balkans, the current situation and challenges - Mile Milenkoski, Senior adviser, Department for borders, passports and overflights, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of North Macedonia

Trade Facilitation and National Security: The Need for Border Coordination and Cooperation - Sanusi Tasiu Saulawa, Deputy Superintendent, Nigeria Customs

Big Data Strategy - migration trends and risks - Florian Forster, Head, Immigration and Border Management (IBM), International Organization for Migration (IOM)

2:00pm - 3:30pm   **PLENARY SESSION - SECURING THE LITTORAL BORDER: UNDERSTANDING THREATS AND CHALLENGES FOR MARITIME BORDERS**

Our coastline borders present huge security challenges for the border community. With dramatically varied terrain from mountains and cliffs to beaches and swamps. Tens of thousands of kilometers of extended coastline with multiple lonely bays, Inlets, estuaries and Islands that can all be exploited by terrorists, illegal migrants, drug and arms smugglers, human traffickers and organised crime. How do we secure this complex and challenging environment?

Rear Admiral Mohammed Ashraful Haque, Director General, Bangladesh Coast Guard Force

Cristina Gatões , National Director, Portuguese Immigration and Border Service (SEF)

Jim Nye, Assistant Chief Constable - Innovation, Contact & Demand & NPCC Maritime Lead, Devon & Cornwall Police, UK

Rear Admiral Enrico Credendino, Italian Navy EUNAVFORMED

Senior Representative, Hellenic Coast Guard

Vice Admiral Aan Kurnia , Director General, Indonesia Maritime Security Agency

2.15PM - 3.30PM   **TECHNOLOGY WORKSHOP**

See some of the latest border tech solutions demonstrated and dicussed during the Technology Workshop.

Mobile Biometrics: Revolutionizing Border Security and Efficiency
David Gerulski, Senior Vice President, Global Sales & Marketing, Integrated Biometrics

Smart Borders start with AI-powered solutions
Senior Representative, Cellebrite

Addressing the challenge of land and sea borders
Nicholas Phan, Market Manager Border Control and Passenger Flow Facilitation, IDEMIA

Now Is The Time For The Right Kind of RADAR At Borders
Senior Representative, Blighter Surveillance Systems

Border Security – AI and Human Machine Teaming - Paul Hollingshead, Head of EMEA, Anduril Industries, Inc

8th-10th JUNE 2021
ATHENS, GREECE
www.world-border-congress.com

4:15PM - 5:30PM   **WORKSHOPS**

BREAKOUT SESSION - PRE-TRAVEL RISK ASSESSMENT AND TRUSTED TRAVELLERS

With a plethora of trusted traveller programs around the world, how can we make legitimate travel more seamless? Is it possible to provide better connectivity between programs? How can API/PNR play a role on pre-travel risk assessment.

Europe Travel Information & Authorisation System (ETIAS)
Olivier Onidi, Deputy Director General, Directorate General for Migration & Home Affairs, European Commission

EU's Entry-Exit System (EES) - Borders Are Fixed But Identification Must Be Mobile
Rein Süld, Program Manager, Information Technology & Development Center, SMIT (Estonian Ministry of the Interior)

Integrated identification process: The case of Germany
Heiko Werner, Head of Security Group, Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, Germany

---

CLOSED AGENCY WORKSHOP - DISRUPTING PEOPLE TRAFFICKING ROUTES

Chair: International Organization for Migration (IOM)

Human trafficking is one of the largest criminal enterprises in the world. It is a multi-billion dollar criminal business on a global scale. This is because human trafficking is a high profit, low risk enterprise that is also a low priority for most law enforcement agencies, meaning apprehension of perpetrators is low and sentences are often minimal compared that of major crimes. What can be done to disrupt trafficking routes and gangs?

Border Development, Security and Migration Management in Nigeria: Challenges and Prospects
Asogwa Dominic Obetta, Comptroller, Nigeria Immigration Service

Uche Chukwuma Azuka-Osadebe – Executive Chairman, Oshimili South Local Government Council of Delta State

Gabor Kemeny, OSCE Skopje

THURSDAY 10TH JUNE

9:00am - 10:30am   **PLENARY SESSION - THE DEVELOPING ROLE OF BIOMETRICS IN IDENTITY MANAGEMENT & DOCUMENT FRAUD**

Formal identification is a prerequisite for effective border control. Document fraud has become an enabler of terrorism and organised crime and is linked to the trafficking of human beings and migrant smuggling. Facial recognition, fingerprinting and iris scan are now maturing technologies with increasing accuracy and performance. What is the developing and future role of biometrics in managing identity and our borders, and how are associated technologies best utilised to bridge the gap and underdocumentation, so widespread in the developing world?

The Malpensa e-Gates Project - A user perspective on e-Gates security and usability at the Malpensa Airport
Guido Ferraro di Silva e Castiglione, Commander (ITA Coast Guard, Res), Transport and Border Security Unit, Joint Research Centre, European Commission

Biometrics on the Move and SEF Mobile
Helio Freixial, IT Expert – Smart Borders PT Project manager, Portuguese Immigration and Borders Service

Angelisa Corbo, Border Adviser, OSCE

Dr Anna Makakala, Tanzania Immigration Service

Nosakhare Igbiniere – Executive Director, The Major Resources Nigeria

---

9.15AM - 10.30AM   **AIRPOL WORKSHOP - INSIDER THREAT - SETTING UP AN INSIDER MITIGATION PROGRAM**

A step-by-step discussion to setting up an insider mitigation program, including risk assessment/vulnerabilities according to the AIRPOL model and what co-operation is required when setting up the insider mitigation program.

Host: Peter Nilsson, Head of AIRPOL

8th-10th JUNE 2021
ATHENS, GREECE
www.world-border-congress.com

World Border
Security Congress

11:15AM - 12:30PM   WORKSHOPS

BREAKOUT WORKSHOP - SMUGGLING & TRADE IN ILLICIT GOODS, ANTIQUITIES AND ENDANGERED SPECIES

The global trade in endangered species, over 1.5million transactions per year, will drive some species to extinction if the trade is not stopped. The cultural damage inflicted by the global trade in antiquities, valued over $20 billion, cannot be quantified but is all too easily understood. So, what can the border community do to stem the flow and illegal trade of illicit goods, antiquities and endangered species?

Chair: Orfeas-Konstantinos Sotiriou

Antiquities Smuggling as Transnational Threat - Orfeas-Konstantinos Sotiriou, National Centre for Public Administration and Local Government

Trafficking of Underwater Cultural Heritage - Peter Campbell, Assistant Director: British School at Rome

Internet and Dark Web in Antiquities Smuggling Phenomenon - Vassiliki Simi, MSc of Laws, International Law and Legal Studies, National School for Public Administration and Local Government student

Borderline" Exhibitions: Ephemeral Museum Displays as Tools for Raising Awareness Against Trafficking Of Antiquities - Katerina Koukouvaou, Archaeologist, Hellenic Ministry of Culture and Sports, General Directorate of Antiquities and Cultural Heritage, Directorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities

Education and Training Responding to Operational Needs and Practices in Law Enforcement Units : Cultural Heritage Protection - Angeliki Aloupi, Director of the Committee of Prevention and Management of Social Exclusion - Hellenic Community for Behavior Analysis

CLOSED AGENCY WORKSHOP - BIOMETRICS - NEXT STEPS

Biometrics are here to stay and are an increasingly valuable tool in making borders secure. But what are the next steps and developments and implementation in biometric technology and how biometrics is lawfully used to help on the border, considering aspects such as GDPR and travel document security.

Chair: Organization for Security & Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)

Glen Wimbury, Technology & Innovation Lead, Future Borders, Border Force UK*

Guenter Schumacher, Researcher, European Commission, ec · Joint Research Centre (JRC)*

2:00pm - 4:00pm   PLENARY SESSION - THE FUTURE TRENDS AND APPROACH TO ALTERNATIVES FOR SECURING BORDERS

Brexit, the US/Mexico Wall, Greek/Turkish borders are forcing the debate about future border developments. But could any or all of them really supply the blue print for the future of borders for land, sea and air? Has Integrated Border Management (IBM) proven successful? What's the latest thought leadership in enhancing border protection and management to counter the ever changing challenges?

Senior Representative, Center for Security Studies (KEMEA), Greece

The Role of Gender Equality in BSM
Inesa Nicolaescu, Associate Border Security Officer, OSCE

Health and Humanitarian border management programs
Judith Knöpfli, Project Manager, IOM / Immigration and Border management unit, Niger

Use of Technology for Security and Development of South Asian Borders
Manoj Kumar, Second in Command, Indian Border Security Force

Strengthening Trust and Cooperation at the Eastern Border of the EU. Current and Future trends in the EU Border Management
Rimutis Klevečka, Ambassador, Special Envoy for Border Management, Lithuania

Achieving Effective Border Security in Nigeria: A Sustainable Social, Economic and Infrastructural Development Approach
Captain Junaid Abdullahi, Executive Secretary, Border Communities Development Agency, Nigeria

Non-governmental participation in integrated border management
Iryna Sushko, Executive Director, Europe Without Barriers

Comprehensive Border Governance - Tony Stefan Mihaitoaia, Senior Border Management and Security Adviser, International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD)

4:00PM   CONGRESS ROUND UP AND CLOSE

8th-10th JUNE 2021
ATHENS, GREECE
www.world-border-congress.com

SITE VISITS TO PORT OF PIRAEUS / ATHENS INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

TUESDAY 8TH JUNE – 8.30AM-12NOON

| PORT OF PIRAEUS | ATHENS INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT |

The Port of Piraeus is the chief sea port of Piraeus, Greece, situated upon the Saronic Gulf on the western coasts of the Aegean Sea, the largest port in Greece and one of the largest in Europe. With about 18.6 million passengers Piraeus was the busiest passenger port in Europe in 2014. Since its privatization in 2009 the port's container handling has grown rapidly. According to Lloyd's list for top 100 container ports in 2015 Piraeus ranked 8th in Europe. Piraeus handled 4.9 million twenty-foot equivalent unit containers (TEU's) in 2018, an increase of 19,4% compared with 2017 climbing to the number two position of all Mediterranean ports.

Athens International Airport is the largest international airport in Greece, serving the city of Athens and region of Attica. It began operation on March 2001 and is the main base of Aegean Airlines, as well as other smaller Greek airlines. Athens International is currently the 27th-busiest airport in Europe. The airport currently has two terminals, the main terminal and the satellite terminal accessible by an underground link from the main terminal. It is designed to be extended in a modular approach over the ensuing years in order to accommodate increases in air travel. These extensions are planned in a six-phase framework. The first (and current) phase allows the airport to accommodate 26 million passengers per year. In 2004, it was declared European airport of the year.

Spaces are limited so ensure you book your place on the site tour early at www.world-border-congress.com

8th-10th JUNE 2021
ATHENS, GREECE
www.world-border-congress.com

Watch the latest webinar recordings at **www.border-security-report.com/webinar-library**

See more Videos on the Border Security Report YouTube Channel >>

You Tube

Central Asia Border Security Challenges

In partneship with the
United Nations Counter-Terrism Centre

View directly at www.border-security-report.com/
central-asia-webinar

API / PNR – Future Systems to Fight a Global Pandemic?

View directly at www.border-security-report.com/
api-pnr-webinar

Border Challenges in the Southeast Europe-Mediterranean Region in the Context of Counter-Terrorism and Related Transnational Organized Crime

In partneship with the
United Nations Counter Terrorism Centre (UNCCT)

View directly at www.border-security-report.com/
see-med-webinar

SAHEL Region Border Challenges in the Context of Counter-Terrorism and Related Transnational Organized Crime

In partneship with the
United Nations Counter Terrorism Centre (UNCCT)

View directly at www.border-security-report.com/
sahel-webinar

Watch more videos at **www.border-security-report.com/video-library**

MSAB MSAB Ecosystem of Mobile Fo...
MSAB
Ecosystem of Mobile Forensics

Experience the World of Interco...
WELCOME TO IDEMIA CITY

Parsons & Border Security: Tec...
PARSONS
BORDER ►SECURITY
TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATOR & INFRASTRUCTURE CONSTRUCTOR

STEP 3
Veridos DNA ID Solution
National Registry

Blighter Promo Video (2017) - ...
- OPERATES IN HIGH & LOW TEMPERATURE ENVIRONMENTS
- WORKS IN RAIN & FOG BOTH DAY & NIGHT
- EASY-TO-USE, WINDOWS-BASED BLIGHTERVIEW HMI SOFTWARE

DERMALOG Fever Detection Camera for he...
FEVER DETECTION CAMERA
at Hanover exhibition grounds

Anduril Sizzle Reel 2020 - Sentry no audio
from Anduril Industries
01:29
vimeo

Laxton Profile Video 2018
SHARE
0:00 / 1:51
HD

Veridos introduces a new solution for eVisas and electronic travel authorizations

As part of a comprehensive border control solution, SmartTravel offers an efficient and secure digital visa application and issuance process that benefits travelers and government agencies alike.

The new Veridos solution, SmartTravel, aims to simplify the complete eVisa and electronic travel authorization (eTA) application process by making it more efficient and convenient for both authorities and travelers. SmartTravel covers the entire procedure, from application to the payment of fees and visa approval. A crucial advantage of the web-based solution is that an applicant is no longer required to visit a visa center. So, in the current COVID-19 situation, the individual will not be at risk of infection or inconvenienced by the reduced opening hours of visa application centers. In addition, governments can ask for a detailed travel history to stop travelers from high-risk COVID-19 regions.

SmartTravel incorporates several components. The main feature of the solution is a website where travelers can apply for an eVisa or eTA, obtain information about the procedure (requirements as well as fees), and check the status of their application. Via the website, travelers can submit documents such as passport scans, invitation letters, and vaccination certificates, and make electronic payments. The applicant receives the eVisa by e-mail and can then use it in whichever format is most convenient: as an e-wallet element, an image or pdf file on the smartphone, or a printout.

TSA at Burlington International Airport gets new Credential Authentication Technology

Transportation Security Administration (TSA) officers at Burlington International Airport are now using new technology that confirms the validity of a traveler's identification (ID) and confirms their flight information in near real time.

The two credential authentication technology (CAT) units will scan a passenger's photo identification to verify the authenticity of the document. The system uses information from the photo identification to confirm a passenger's flight status by cross-referencing it against the Secure Flight database.

When a traveler places their ID in the CAT unit, it informs the TSA officer if the ID is valid. Travelers who approach the TSA travel document checking podium do not have to show their boarding pass because the CAT unit verifies that the traveler is prescreened to travel out of the airport for a flight that day.

"We're thrilled to have this technology. It is going to enhance our detection capability for identifying fraudulent documents at security checkpoints here at Burlington International," says Bruce McDonald, TSA's Vermont Federal Security Director. "The system also confirms the passenger's flight status in near real time through a secured connection."

CAT units authenticate several thousand types of IDs including passports and many other ID cards.

Vision-Box Deploys Contactless Passenger Experience for Emirates Airline at Dubai International Airport

Vision-Box's Orchestra Digital Identity Management Platform – a state-of-the-art touchless and contactless passenger processing at the airport to provide passenger safety and security in response to the covid-19 pandemic.

Vision-Box's contactless technology will offer a sophisticated traveler experience, comprising an identification, clearance, and safety monitoring environment. The new infrastructure offers a suite of digital tools that reduces or eliminates passenger contact with touchscreen surfaces, and physical interaction with airport and airline staff, thus providing a safe travel experience.

Vision-Box and Emirates reaffirmed their mutual commitment by signing a long-term agreement to deploy and advance a digital shift in passenger operations at Dubai Airport and beyond, aimed at keeping travelers and staff safe. Advanced touchless biometrics and contactless clearance technology used at Terminal 3 shifts the passenger clearance process from a manual interaction to one of minimal physical contact with automated self-service devices.

Using the Vision-Box Orchestra™ Digital Identity Management Platform, Emirates is optimising traveler flow and passenger processing through security and clearance checks being performed in less time. Facial recognition biometrics offers the highest level of traveler identity security and significant improvements over traditional manual and touch-based identification procedures in terms of hygiene, accuracy and privacy protections.

European border control in Bulgaria: SSARM and secunet will implement the first EES project in Europe

In preparation for the planned European Entry/Exit System (EES), Bulgaria has opted for border control technology from SSARM and secunet.

The overall solution will relieve the Bulgarian authorities and compensate the additional workload that will arise in the future from the collection of biometric data at the border.

As part of the Smart Borders Initiative, the European Parliament decided to establish the common biometric Entry/Exit System (EES) for the registration of all travellers from third countries. Therefore, as of 2022, Third Country Nationals (TCN) will have to register with four fingerprints and a facial image when entering the Schengen area through land, sea and air borders.

Following the recent tender, the Bulgarian Ministry of Interior has commissioned the company SSARM as general contractor to implement the first EES project in Europe. The solution provider secunet acting as industry partner to SSARM will deliver and install 20 secunet easygates for automated border control including face and fingerprint verification and 8 secunet easykiosks for the self-preregistration of TCN. For stationary border control counters, secunet provides 66 easytowers as well as fingerprint scanners for the high-quality biometric acquisition (facial images and fingerprints).

The EES components will be installed at the airports in Sofia, Varna and Burgas.

EU Entry/Exit System: IDEMIA Reveals New Travel Kiosk for Biometric Identification at Airports

The first travel kiosk that will soon be placed at European airports for biometric identification of passengers has been revealed by IDEMIA, part of the consortium to which the eu-LISA has awarded a contract for the delivery of a new shared Biometric Matching System (sBMS), an important part of the EES.

TravelKiosk™ – EU EES

IDEMIA, which is a global leader in Augmented Identity that serves to different enterprises and government customers worldwide, has revealed the new travel kiosk, including details how it will work and how it will address the challenges that the EU faces in terms of travel.

"By 2022, the new European Entry/Exit System (EU-EES) regulation will require the biometric capture and identification (face and fingerprint) of Third Country Nationals (TCNs) at outer borders of Schengen area. This will affect the border clearance processes for all member states," IDEMIA says in a press release

presenting the new travel kiosk.

It also points out that while the EU fears longer waiting times may occur due to limited airport space and lack of enough workforces to process more TCNs, the use of self-service technology at borders will be crucial to address these challenges.

According to IDEMIA, the new self-service kiosks are an obvious win-win solution for airports, border authorities and passengers, since they optimize airport space and border checkpoint resources, reduce waiting times and improve the passenger experience.

Smiths Detection announces first US explosives detection system integration with tote-based baggage handling system

In a tote-based BHS, every checked bag is placed in an individual-controlled tray or 'tote' equipped with a RFID chip to track and monitor each bag throughout the baggage handling process. Tote-based BHS offers more reliable bag handling, helping airports to reduce mis-tracked baggage while improving aviation security screening measures.

Already in operation in airports throughout Canada, Europe, Asia and the Middle East, the EDS integration to tote-based BHS delivers a consolidated and optimized process for screening checked baggage, enhancing airports' safety.

Smiths Detection is the only EDS manufacturer to achieve TSA in-tote baggage certification for use within US airports. Shan Hood, President of SDI, commented, "We have gained expertise by working with a broad range of baggage handling system companies. That expertise,

combined with the talent of our engineering and service teams, allows Smiths Detection to consistently deliver integration projects on-time, and on-budget, no matter where in the world."

A tote-based baggage handling system integrated with EDS also minimizes the need for operators to handle goods in the Checked Baggage Reconciliation Area and lowers cross-contamination between operators and bags. Plus, it gives airports the option to have an early bag storage system to further enhance their passengers' experience.

Frontex selects Airbus and its partner IAI for Maritime Aerial Surveillance with Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS)

The European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex) awarded a contract to Airbus Defence and Space Airborne Solutions (ADAS), a 100% subsidiary of Airbus Defence and Space and the global market leader in RPAS services, and its long-term partner Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI) to operate a Medium Altitude Long Endurance (MALE) RPAS for Maritime Aerial Surveillance services.

The service will be delivered in Greece, and/or Italy and/or Malta within a Framework Contract. The service include the provision of a RPAS platform, payload, communication equipment and capacity, mission storage and all necessary experts managing the system and providing operational support. Under the contract, Airbus and IAI will provide the service for pre-planned assignments as well as for ad-hoc calls.

The maritime Heron RPAS from IAI serves a range of customers worldwide and is a part of the well-known "Heron family" which accumulates over 450,000 flight hours, day and night missions under all weather conditions. The system is capable of flying more than 24 hours in full operational configuration and creates a comprehensive, real time, naval picture in geographical areas for potential surveillance interests, e.g. in the context of coordinated European monitoring activities.
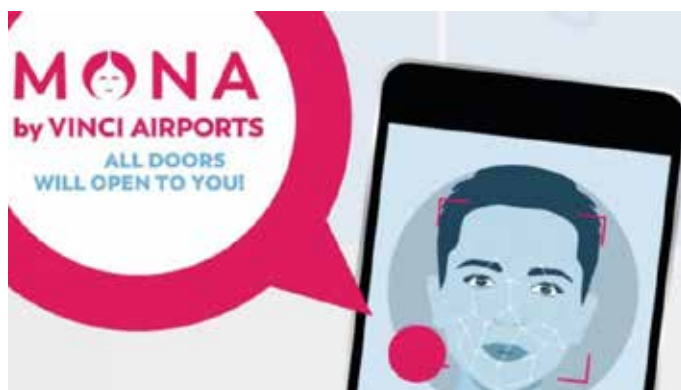
The RPAS will be fitted with versatile dedicated payloads (e.g. electro-optical for day and infrared for night purposes, maritime patrol radar made by IAI and automatic identification system), relevant communication equipment, and corresponding ground mission control and support. The surveillance platform Heron uses a direct link when flying within Line of Sight (LOS), changing seamlessly to a satellite link when flying Beyond Line of Sight (BLOS) to transmit real time information or when needed to fly in low altitude over sea. This information is being transmitted to Frontex command and control centre as well as to centres of the respective Coast Guards.

Lyon Airport Introduces Mona – First Travel Assistant that Uses Facial Recognition Technology

A new system that uses facial recognition permitting the passengers to go through different airport checkpoints, without physical contact, has been launched at the Lyon-Saint Exupéry airport, which is managed by VINCI Airports.

The new system has been inaugurated by the Chairman and CEO of VINCI Xavier Huillard and CEO of VINCI Concessions and President of VINCI Airports, Nicolas Notebaert, at the VINCI Airports Centre of Excellence for Innovation based at Lyon-Saint Exupéry airport, SchengenVisaInfo.com reports.

"With Mona, VINCI Airports is launching a world-first that adds a new dimension to the airport experience. At a time when contactless technology is proving increasingly important, and personalisation is becoming the norm, our network once again proves it is able to continuously reinvent itself," Notebaert pointed out during the inauguration ceremony.

With its recently introduced system, VINCI Airports becomes the first airport operator worldwide to "trial a biometric journey from their home to the plane."

Gulf of Finland Coast Guard District continues RPAS missions on Eastern Gulf of Finland

Gulf of Finland Coast Guard District continues RPAS (Remotely Piloted Aircraft System) flight missions on Eastern Gulf of Finland.

The Finnish Border Guard is using European Maritime Safety Agency's (EMSA) RPAS services focusing mainly on maritime surveillance operations, which include for example maritime safety, search and rescue, anti-pollution activities and other coast guard functions in the maritime domain.

Cooperation between the EU Member States supported by EU Agencies is a vital part of the deployment. Gulf of Finland Coast Guard District has not forgotten inter-agency cooperation either. For example, fisheries control missions will be carried out together with fisheries inspectors from Centres of Economic Development, Transport and Environment (ELY Centres).

RPAS devices are useful tools for enhancing surveillance capability and other coast guard functions. However, The Finnish Border Guard won´t replace helicopters or fixed wing aircrafts by unmanned RPAS -equipment. RPAS services increase surveillance capabilities of The Finnish Border Guard.

Building Trust and Co-operation through Discussion and Dialogue

Co-Hosted by:

HELLENIC REPUBLIC
Ministry of Migration & Asylum

REGISTER TODAY

REGISTER FOR YOUR DELEGATE PASS ONLINE TODAY

Greece lies at the crossroads of East and West, Europe and the Middle East. It lies directly opposite Libya so along with Italy is the primary destination for migrants coming from that conflict zone and is a short boat trip from Turkey, the other principal migrant route for Syrians fleeing there conflict there.

Greece has over sixteen thousand kilometres of coastline and six thousand islands, only two hundred and twenty-seven of which are inhabited. The islands alone have 7,500 km of coastline and are spread mainly through the Aegean and the Ionian Seas, making maritime security incredibly challenging.

The sheer scale of the migrant crisis in late 2015 early 2016 had a devasting impact on Greek finances and its principle industry, tourism. All this in the aftermath of the financial crisis in 2009. Despite this, both Greece and Italy, largely left to handle the crisis on their own, managed the crisis with commendable determination and humanity.

With their experience of being in the frontline of the migration crisis, Greece is the perfect place re-convene for the next meeting of the World Border Security Congress.

The World Border Security Congress is a high level 3 day event that will discuss and debate current and future policies, implementation issues and challenges as well as new and developing technologies that contribute towards safe and secure border and migration management.

The World Border Security Congress Committee invite you to join the international border security and management community and Apply for your Delegate Pass at **www.world-border-congress.com.**

We look forward to welcoming you to Athens, Greece on March 31st-2nd April 2020 for the next gathering of border and migration management professionals.

www.world-border-congress.com

for the international border management and security industry

Confirmed speakers include:

- Jim Nye, Assistant Chief Constable – Innovation, Contact & Demand & NPCC Maritime Lead, Devon & Cornwall Police
- Dr Olomu Babatunde Olukayode, Deputy Comptroller of Customs, Nigeria Customs
- Sanusi Tasiu Saulawa, Deputy Superintendent of Customs, Nigeria Customs Service
- Heiko Werner, Head of Security Group, Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, Germany
- Gerald Tatzgern, Head of Joint Operational Office, Public Security Austria
- Peter Nilsson, Head of AIRPOL
- Wayne Salzgaber, Director, INTERPOL Washington
- Tatiana Kotlyarenko, Adviser on Anti-Trafficking Issues, OSCE
- James Garcia, Assistant Director, Cargo & Biometrics – Global Targeting Advisory Division National Targeting Center – U.S. Customs and Border Protection
- Valdecy Urquiza, Assistant Director – Vulnerable Communities – INTERPOL General Secretariat
- Hans Peter Wagner, National Expert, Senior Chief Inspector, Federal Police
- Mile Milenkoski, Senior adviser, Department for borders, passports and overflights, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of North Macedonia
- Manoj Kumar, Second in Command, Indian Border Security Force
- Rear Admiral Mohammed Ashraful Haque, Director General, Bangladesh Coast Guard Force

---

Supported by:

Media Partners: