**REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON MIGRATION**

**TECHNICAL SECRETARIAT**

**REPORT**

**Workshop for the Development of the Counter-Smuggling Work Plan**

**San José, Costa Rica; March 13-14, 2018**

On March 13th and 14th, 2018, was held in San Jose, Costa Rica, the Workshop for the Development of the Counter-Smuggling Work Plan of the Liaison Officer Network to Combat Migrant Smuggling and Trafficking in Persons of the Regional Conference on Migration (RCM). The event was held with the support of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) through the Mesoamerica Program, funded by The Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration of the United States Department of State. The Workshop also had the support of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), and co-financing from the Government of Canada.

The workshop was held in accordance with what was agreed by the Ministers in November of 2017, according to the following background:

In June 2017, the Liaison Officer Network to Combat Migrant Smuggling and Trafficking reported the following to the Regional Consultation Group on Migration (RCGM):

*“2) c) “To thank IOM and accept its offer to provide technical accompaniment during the development, by the TS, of a draft the Counter-Smuggling Work Plan of the Liaison Officer Network to Combat Migrant Smuggling and Trafficking. To this end, the IOM will support the organization of a workshop for the development of the Plan”.*

On the other hand, during the XXII Regional Conference on Migration, held in November of 2017 in El Salvador, the Vice Ministers have agreed on the following:

*“15. To approve the implementation of the following activities in 2018:*

 *i) “Workshop to develop the work plan to combat migrant smuggling of the Liaison Officer Network to Combat Migrant Smuggling and Trafficking in Persons, with support from IOM”*

It is worth noting that the Workshop was attended by officials from all RCM Member Countries. It also counted with the participation of representatives of the Regional Network of Civil Organizations for Migration (RNCOM), on behalf of the civil society.

The opening ceremony was attended by the following persons:

* José Vila Del Castillo, UNODC Regional Director, the organism also supported the preparation of the workshop
* Marcelo Pisani, IOM Regional Director for Central and North America and the Caribbean
* Johanna Aguirre, Government of Panama (PPT)
* Gisela Yockchen, Costa Rica – General Director of Migration, on behalf of the Government of Costa Rica.

After the opening, Mr. Salvador Gutierrez, IOM Regional Liaison and Policy Officer, made an introductory presentation on migration trends in the region.

Before the group sessions, a panel on perspectives and best practices from a regional approach took place, with the following interventions:

1. Comprehensive Approach on Counter Smuggling and Regional Recommendations, in charge of Cy Winter, IOM Specialist
2. Inter-institutional Guidelines for a Comprehensive Approach against the Smuggling of Migrants, in charge of Victor Aguirre, UNODC
3. Information System on Crimes against Irregular Migrants, in charge of Karen Bozicovich, OAS
4. Efforts within the framework of the Central American Commission of Directors of Migration and the elaboration of the “Intersectional Regional Plan against Organized Crime” (PRICCO), in charge of Claudia Lara representing the Technical Secretariat /PPT - OCAM
5. Regional Coalition against Migrant Smuggling and Trafficking in Persons: focus on Illicit Migrant Smuggling within the framework of the Coalition’s Strategic Plan, in charge of Rosa Corea, Presidency, Regional Coalition
6. Sub-Technical Commission of Police for Central America, Mexico, and the Caribbean against Trafficking in Persons, Smuggling of Migrants, Related Offenses, in charge of Victoriano Ruiz, Coordinator
7. Panama: Perspectives in the framework of the Smuggling of Migrants and Related Crimes Act, in charge of Javier Rudas, General Directorate of Migration

The workshop had a dynamic of working in groups, in such a way that with the support of IOM facilitators, a proposal for a participatory plan was elaborated, highlighting the exchange of good practices and experiences of the countries in terms of prevention and fight against the migrants smuggling. Each group worked on contextualization, identifying opportunities and challenges, and then regional objectives and actions were established.

For the development of the Counter-Smuggling Work Plan, the groups addressed the following topics:

**GROUP 1**

Intelligence/Investigation: Data Collection and Exchange

* Financial Investigation of Criminal Networks
* Maps, Profiles, and Modus Operandi
* Modalities of Cooperation in Research
* Strategic Intelligence and Actionable Intelligence
* Integrated Border Cooperation
* Detection of Fraudulent Documents and Border Cooperation
* Migrant-Smuggling by Sea: Approach and Perspectives

**GROUP 2**

Cooperation on Judicial Response

* Legal and Judicial Cooperation
* Policies and Integral Approaches

**GROUP 3**

Administrative Detention and Alternatives

* Exercise of control in management centers for migrants in irregular status, smuggled migrants, victims of associated crimes
* Alternatives to Detention

**GROUP 4**

Migration Solutions, Prevention and Assistance

* Prevention Methods
* Migration Solutions
* Assistance and Protection of migrants victims of related offenses

At the plenary session, each group presented the results of their work, which will form the basis for the Counter-Smuggling Work Plan. In this way, the exercise had a participatory dynamic and was enriched by the exchange of good practices and experiences in the field, such as law enforcement, judicial, and technical immigration matters, among others.

**Steps to follow:**

At the end of the group presentation and the exchange at the plenary session, the IOM and the Technical Secretariat shared the steps to follow:

* IOM will compile the inputs.
* The TS will distribute the plan according to what was work in the workshop, along with the link to download the presentations.
* The TS will distribute the proposed plan for inputs from the countries.
* Is expected to submit a first draft in July RCGM meeting.
* The finalized plan would be presented to the Ministers for approval in the XXIII RCM in November.