

## Bali Process steps up, but action on forced migration will be critical

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**The Bali Process can now lead a regional approach to forced migration that is effective, dignified and durable.**

Outcomes agreed at the Bali Process Ministerial Meeting demonstrate governments in the region can do much more on forced migration. The Ministerial Declaration and the new Response Mechanism are promising developments. The challenge now is for Bali Process countries, especially its Co-Chairs, to turn such promise into reality.

CPD's CEO, Travers McLeod, said:

"Outcomes agreed by ministers can enable the Bali Process to be less about process and much more about effective, durable and dignified action on forced migration."

"Over 60 million people are now displaced globally, many in the Asia-Pacific region. New stories of the suffering of forced migrants emerge daily. The underlying causes, including conflict, persecution, human trafficking, people smuggling, transnational crime and now climate change, are resulting in escalating numbers. Governments are struggling to respond effectively – unilateral action will not do."

"It's pleasing to see the Bali Process adopt recommendations of the Asia Dialogue on Forced Migration, which CPD convenes with regional policy institutes. A review of limitations of regional responses to the 2015 Andaman Sea crisis and improvements needed, including a new capability for the Bali Process to broker more predictable and effective responses on forced migration (even preventative action), is overdue."

"The challenge now is for leaders to deploy this new capability and put it to work, instead of letting short-term thinking dictate counterproductive national responses."

CPD fellow, Peter Hughes, a former Deputy Secretary at the Department of Immigration in Australia, also welcomed the announcement:

"The nature of the Bali Process, with its vast size and diverse membership, means that it has stopped short of direct responses to major incidents of displacement in the past. Its role was very limited in the 2015 Andaman Sea crisis. Member countries have admitted that this is not good enough anymore."

"The mechanism announced today provides a vital avenue for the Bali Process to make a difference in responding to mass displacement. Ministers Bishop and Marsudi, as Co-Chairs, should be commended for showing leadership in reinvigorating the Bali Process and driving improvement in national and regional contingency planning. Their task now is to continue to advance more active and resilient regional architecture in the management of mass displacement."

**Travers McLeod and Peter Hughes are available for interview.**

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**More information about Asia Dialogue on Forced Migration at:**

[www.cpd.org.au/intergenerational-wellbeing/asia-dialogue-on-forced-migration/](http://www.cpd.org.au/intergenerational-wellbeing/asia-dialogue-on-forced-migration/)

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