

An eight-step reform plan to address forced migration through the Bali Process

- *Founded 20 years ago and co-chaired by Australia and Indonesia, the 45-member Bali Process is the only body that brings together origin, transit and destination countries for forced migration in our region*
- *Future Ready - a new report from the Asia Dialogue on Forced Migration Secretariat - urges reforms for stronger leadership and clearer strategy for the Bali Process through an eight-step plan for effective, durable and dignified management of forced migration*
- *The ADFM comprises current and former public officials, diplomats, researchers and experts from nine countries, and is led by a Secretariat of policy institutes in Australia, Indonesia, Thailand and Malaysia*

MONDAY 25 JULY 2022 – Australia and Indonesia must take the opportunity to reform an international body established 20 years ago for addressing forced migration, an international coalition of policy institutes has recommended in a new report.

Key recommendations from the *Future Ready* report for reforms to the Bali Process include better dialogue with ASEAN and other regional bodies, stripping away bureaucracy and formality, prioritising early warning capabilities for forced migration crises, and adding a third rotating co-Chair position.

The report is authored by the Secretariat of the Asia Dialogue on Forced Migration, which brings together government and non-government officials from nine countries alongside representatives from UN agencies.

It comes as conflicts in Afghanistan and Myanmar, and economic turmoil in Sri Lanka, drive increases in forced migration across the Indo-Pacific region. Ministerial recognition of the mounting challenge dates as far back as 2016 when the Bali Declaration noted that irregular migration challenges have grown in scale and complexity.

The eight point plan includes:

1. Clearer strategy and stronger leadership
2. A third rotating Co-Chair position and preconditions for Bali Process membership
3. Investments in technical capability and less formal meetings
4. Streamlining of existing work
5. Strengthening and clarifying the Regional Support Office (RSO)
6. Diversifying investment into the Bali Process
7. Elevating engagement with other regional bodies, particularly ASEAN
8. Prioritising early warning capabilities and responses to known movements

Centre for Policy Development CEO and ADFM Secretariat spokesperson Andrew Hudson said taking the opportunity for reform as the Bali Process approaches its 20th anniversary would help countries in the region provide durable, efficient and humane responses to forced migration.

“It is the responsibility of all nations in the Indo-Pacific region to cooperate so that we can manage forced migration in a way that is effective, durable and dignified,” Mr Hudson said.

“The Bali Process brings together 45 countries and four international bodies. That collection of actors represents an incredible opportunity for collaboration.

“If leaders in our region take this opportunity they can lay the foundations for a cooperative, effective response to forced migration that builds regional stability, enhances trust and cooperation, and provides safety, shelter and certainty to people displaced by conflict and turmoil.”

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About the Asia Dialogue on Forced Migration

Established in August 2015, the Asia Dialogue on Forced Migration (ADFM) is a ‘second track’ process pursuing more effective, durable and dignified approaches to forced migration in the Indo Pacific. The ADFM brings together government and nongovernment decision makers from nine affected countries and representatives from UNHCR and IOM, each of whom act in their personal capacities. The ADFM is led by a regional Secretariat, convened by the Centre for Policy Development in Australia, in partnership with the National Research and Innovation Agency (BRIN) in Indonesia, the Institute of Human Rights and Peace Studies (IHRP) at Mahidol University, Thailand, and the Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS) Malaysia.

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