Budapest Process – Community of Law Enforcement Practitioners (COLEP)

Terms of Reference (draft)

Background Information

The Budapest Process (BP) has a mandate to "prevent and counteract irregular migration, facilitate return and readmission of irregular migrants, and combat criminal networks involved in smuggling of migrants" (as per its Priority Goal 1) and "prevent and combat trafficking in persons, address its root causes and provide adequate protection and support to trafficked persons" (Priority Goal 5). Thus, in light of this mandate, several BP participating states have recently proposed to set up a **Community of Law Enforcement Practitioners (COLEP)**. The COLEP platform would serve as a means for BP participating states to discuss contemporary irregular migration challenges in the EU, Western Balkans and Silk Routes countries, and find common ways to address them and form good practice. The COLEP platform would also serve as a catalyst for bilateral and multilateral initiatives on operational cooperation among law enforcement agencies.

The COLEP platform is meant to facilitate informal/flexible but structured interactions between law enforcement officers of countries of origin, transit and destination. This peer to peer exchange platform would adopt a Whole-of-Route approach, encompassing coordinated and simultaneous efforts of law enforcement across different jurisdictions in prevention, investigation and prosecution of the crimes related to smuggling and trafficking of migrants. Participation in the platform would be non-binding and voluntary. With a view to foster ownership and genuine cooperation, and in the spirit of the BP, a tripartite chair of this mini-dialogue will be established on a rotational basis consisting of one Silk Routes, one transit and one destination country.

Scope and Responsibilities

The following is foreseen to fall within the **scope** of COLEP:

- Organise study visits of countries of origin, transit and destination;
- Facilitate the creation of frameworks for sharing of real-time data and information;
- Facilitate the sharing of information on transnational irregular migration patterns and trends;
- Assessment of current challenges and needs of law enforcement authorities

Participating states would be **responsible** for:

- Ensuring appropriate participation from their relevant law enforcement authorities;
- Providing continual input to the forum regarding quality and nature of discussions

Timeline

The COLEP shall meet every 2-3 months (in-person and/or online), its meetings will be convened by its tri-partite chairmanship, and coordinated by the Budapest Process Secretariat