



## **Business and Government Leaders Endorse AAA Recommendations To End Modern Slavery**

**BALI, INDONESIA, 7 August 2018** – A three-pronged strategy to eradicate modern slavery has been endorsed today by influential business leaders and government ministers representing 40 countries in the Asia Pacific region.

At the Bali Process Government and Business Forum in Nusa Dua, leaders from across the region contributed to the development of practical, regional solutions to address the hugely prevalent and profitable crime of modern slavery.

The high-powered cohort ultimately endorsed a strategy which outlines immediate and effective measures to end slavery in all its forms.

The Asia Pacific is the world's largest region, accounting for about 56 percent of the world's population. The region is also responsible for modern slavery on a shocking scale.

An estimated 24.9 million men, women, and children are in modern slavery in the Asia Pacific, or 62 per cent of the global estimate of 40.3 million. The region has the highest number of victims across all forms of modern slavery, accounting for 68 percent of those forced to work by state authorities and 64 percent of those in forced labour exploitation.

Andrew Forrest AO, Chairman of Fortescue Metals Group and Australia's Business Co-Chair of the Forum, said it was critical business and government came together to solve this shared challenge.

"As members of the Asia Pacific region, we simply cannot accept that we are the slavery hot spot of the world," Mr Forrest said.

"The slavery that exists in our region shatters the human dignity of tens of millions of people, dampens our economic prospects and touches the rest of the world through long, global supply chains. The united front against this crime demonstrated by top business and government leaders at the Forum is the only way we are going to make progress – together."

"Business is calling on all governments to bolster modern slavery legislation, something endorsed at this forum. Governments must strengthen, implement and enforce legislation which encourages supply chain transparency and ethical recruitment to protect workers and reduce the risk of modern slavery occurring."

During the two-day Forum, business leaders shared experiences and advice from the private sector and collaborated with government on regional solutions to eradicate modern slavery.

The [Acknowledge, Act, Advance \(AAA\) Recommendations](#), endorsed by the business and government leaders, outline actions to strengthen and implement policy and legal frameworks and advance long-term efforts to improve supply chain transparency, the treatment of workers, ethical recruitment and victim support.

"We understand how important the role of the private sector is because we know that prosperity is the key to combatting transnational organized crime, trafficking and smuggling networks in the region," Indonesian Foreign Minister Her Excellency Retno Marsudi said at a Bali Process press conference.

The official Government and Business Forum took note of the AAA Recommendations, she said. “The business sector can help and collaborate with government.”

Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs The Honourable Julie Bishop told the press conference: “The AAA framework of recommendations – acknowledge, act, advance – will be a blueprint for governments and businesses in the future.”

“We recognise that governments alone cannot tackle these challenges and come up with solutions. We need the support of the private sector.”

Minister Bishop announced at the press conference that the Government and Business Forum is now cemented as a permanent track of the Bali Process.

Dr Eddy Sariaatmadja, Chairman of the Emtex Group and Indonesia's Business Co-Chair of the Forum, said: “The heinous crimes of trafficking in person, people smuggling and forced labour across borders, are hidden in supply chains and the shadows of our economies, and therefore require a strong, regional solution.”

“This is why the Bali Process Government and Business Forum is so important. That we have emerged from the past two days with collective recommendations for action, is a strong step forward.”

Asia Pacific countries export over \$US555.9 billion of five key products ‘at risk’ of slavery to the rest of the world each year, according to an analysis of regional trade data conducted by Walk Free Foundation’s Global Slavery Index research team.

The research found laptops, computers and mobile phones proved to be the largest category of at risk exports by dollar value (\$US330.3bn), followed by apparel and accessories (\$US199.6bn), fish (\$US17.6bn), rice (\$US6.6bn) and carpets (\$US1.9bn).

This new data set, unveiled at the Forum, provides business and government with the knowledge to underpin change.

Michael Chaney, chairman of Australian conglomerate Wesfarmers said: “Our participation in important forums like the Bali Process reflects the unfortunate reality that modern slavery is a growing and extremely complex problem, best tackled by a collective commitment and responsibility to bring it to an end.

“Wesfarmers recognises that safeguarding human rights across our operations and supply chains is an area of growing importance to our employees, shareholders, customers and the communities where we operate. There is both a moral and a business case for the steps we are taking to identify, report, address and ultimately eliminate any exploitation of vulnerable people with which we may be involved, directly or indirectly, overseas or at home,” Mr Chaney said.

“But companies cannot do this alone: it requires governments to recognise the problem and work with companies involved in their countries to end modern slavery. That is the real value of the government/business Bali process.”

Harry Nurmansyah, Senior Director Field Operations at Adidas said: “One of the biggest challenges for businesses keen to find and address modern slavery is a lack of clarity over conditions further up their supply chain. Supply chains, as we all know, can be complex and opaque.”



“While modern slavery can occur in any part of the chain, it is especially prominent in the upstream tiers where there is little visibility and highly vulnerable workforces. Full traceability - from source to consumer - remains the ideal but it is yet to be realised for the vast majority of businesses.”

Darian McBain, Global Director of Sustainable Development at Thai Union, a major seafood producer and exporter told the Forum: “It is incumbent upon all of us, particularly the governments and businesses involved in the Bali Process, to lead in this fight. We do this, in part, through genuine political will, multi-party collaboration, and resolute, uncompromising determination.”

The Bali Process Government and Business Forum was launched in 2017 as the inaugural business track of the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime, which was established in 2002.

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*About Walk Free Foundation*

*The Walk Free Foundation is a global organisation with a mission to end modern slavery in our generation by mobilising a global activist movement, generating the highest quality research, enlisting business, and raising unprecedented levels of capital to drive change in those countries and industries bearing the greatest responsibility for modern slavery today. For more information, visit [WalkFreeFoundation.org](http://WalkFreeFoundation.org) and follow @WalkFreeFdn*

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