



**GLOBAL
INITIATIVE**
AGAINST TRANSNATIONAL
ORGANIZED CRIME

TAILORING INTERNATIONAL RESPONSES TO ADDRESS CONTEMPORARY HUMAN SMUGGLING

SIDE EVENT AT THE 35TH COMMISSION ON CRIME PREVENTION AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE

1 June 2026
13:00–14:00 CEST

Venue: M7, Vienna
International Centre
(Hybrid)

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Organized by the Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime and co-sponsored by the UK, the Netherlands and the African Union

Human smugglers are increasingly central to irregular migratory journeys. Traditional, more organic networks have increasingly given way to highly specialized, operationally savvy and resilient transnational criminal ecosystems operating along entire routes. Yet policy responses continue to focus heavily on border control and return, while paying less attention to disrupting the criminal ecosystems that organize, finance and profit from these movements.

Drawing on lessons from different contexts, this event will examine how coordinated law enforcement action, international cooperation, targeted sanctions and prosecution can reshape smuggling markets, deter high-level facilitators and reduce the operational space available to traffickers. It will also underline that criminal justice tools are not standalone solutions, but must sit within broader protection, prevention, accountability and rights-based migration governance frameworks. The event will invite participants to explore how these lessons can inform more durable and coordinated responses across major smuggling corridors.

Speakers

- **Chair and moderator:** Mark Shaw – Executive Director, GI-TOC
- **Opening remarks:** HE Peter Christiaan Potman – Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Netherlands to the UN in Vienna
- Mark Micallef – Director, Observatory of Illicit Economies in North Africa and the Sahel, GI-TOC
- Jolanda de Boer – Senior Public Prosecutor at the Netherlands National Public Prosecutors' Office
- Oliver Hirst – Team Leader UK and UN Sanctions, Sanctions Directorate, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, UK