

**Organization: Unnamed Human Smuggling Ring (Belize)**

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<b>A. When the organization was formed + brief history</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The organization appears to be an international smuggling ring that operates in Cuba, Haiti, Ecuador, Sri Lanka, and China.<sup>1</sup> In October 2010, the smuggling operation was uncovered in Belize and six immigration officers were charged; however it is thought that they might have been scapegoats and the real ring leaders hold high positions in government or the ministries government.<sup>2</sup> Visas are obtained for the illegal aliens through correspondence between the Belize Embassy in Havana, Cuba and the Immigration department in Belmopan; Immigration Director Gareth Murillo and Minister of Immigration Carlos Perdomo approve them. It is believed that between 2009 and July 2010 over 120 visas were approved for Chinese nationals.<sup>3</sup> 16 visas were issued to Sri Lankan Nationals on December 17, 2009, December 22, 2009, and April 29, 2010 through correspondence from Quito, Ecuador and Belmopan.<sup>4</sup> At least two of the visa approvals, had a template similar to those used for the Chinese nationals and Gareth Murillo's signature was forged on these.<sup>5</sup> In November, 2010, Ecuadorian authorities detained six Sri Lankans because their passports were stamped with visas issued through a back channel from the Immigration Department in Belmopan.<sup>6</sup></li></ul>
<b>B. Types of illegal activities engaged in,</b>
a. In general
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Human smuggling</li></ul>
b. <i>Specific detail: types of illicit trafficking activities engaged in</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>3 flights landed at Phillip Goldson International Airport on September 18, 19, and October 3<sup>rd</sup> 2010 bringing 32 Chinese nationals in on chartered flights<sup>7</sup> from Port Au Prince, Haiti<sup>8</sup></li></ul>
<b>C. Scope and Size</b>
a. Estimated size of network and membership
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Information not found but the network appears to have international connections</li></ul>
<b>D. Leader Characteristics</b>
a. Who is/are the leader(s)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The leadership is unknown but it is suspected that the ring is lead by local Chinese businessman.<sup>9</sup> The smuggling was facilitated by corruption in higher levels of Belizean government, and in particular, Carlos Perdomo, Minister of National Security and Immigration, might have been involved<sup>10</sup></li><li>6 immigration officers were charged for the incident in October 2010 when the group was exposed: Matthew Guy, Mark Tench, Candra Wade, Lindsay Wade, Jason Daly, and Angelica Lima<sup>11</sup></li></ul>
b. Leadership timeline
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Information not found</li></ul>
c. Leadership style (autocratic, diffuse, etc.)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Information not found</li></ul>
<b>E. Organizational Structure</b>
a. Topology (cellular, hierarchical, etc.)

Information derived from several sources and searchable databases.

All research conducted according to the project manual.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information not found</li> </ul>
b.	<p>Membership – is there formal or informal membership in the organization or network? What role do informal or nonmembers play in trafficking and other criminal activities?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information not found</li> </ul>
c.	<p>Command and Control (decentralized or centralized)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information not found</li> </ul>
<b>F. Resources</b>	
a.	<p>Financial</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• According to Hon. Carlos Perdomo, Minister of Defense, “it’s a very well organized network, very expensive and once you land to your end point there is a way where they collect for the delivery to wherever they were supposed to go, so it’s a very intricate, well-organized, well-financed, a lot of money involved.”<sup>12</sup></li> </ul>
b.	<p>Human</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information not found</li> </ul>
c.	<p>Logistical</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Forgery, safe-houses, etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suspected of using the Princess Hotel located in the Corozal free zone<sup>13</sup></li> </ul> </li> <li>Key routes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Chinese nationals were picked up and immediately taken north, perhaps staying at the Princess Hotel.<sup>14</sup> They entered Mexico through the border town of Juan Sarabia located less than two miles from the international bridge between Belize and Mexico.<sup>15</sup></li> </ul> </li> </ol>
d.	<p>Transportation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Land <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Picked up at airport in a van<sup>16</sup></li> </ul> </li> <li>Sea <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information not found</li> </ul> </li> <li>Air <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chartered planes<sup>17</sup></li> </ul> </li> <li>Intermodal container <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information not found</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
<b>G. Trafficking Methods and Modalities</b>	
a.	<p>Corruption</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Belize immigration officers<sup>18</sup> facilitated the smuggling through unauthorized entries in documentation, fictitious documents, missing customs declaration forms,<sup>19</sup> and quick movement through customs.<sup>20</sup></li> </ul>
b.	<p>Concealment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information not found</li> </ul>
c.	<p>Deception</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arrival records were falsified<sup>21</sup></li> <li>• Chinese nationals carried counterfeit Japanese passports<sup>22</sup> since they are not immediately red flagged<sup>23</sup> and are cheaper.<sup>24</sup></li> <li>• Use of real visa numbers<sup>25</sup> that were never issued to anyone<sup>26</sup> obtained from the Embassy of Belize in Cuba<sup>27</sup></li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Charter flights were undeclared<sup>28</sup></li> <li>• Duplicated flight manifests<sup>29</sup></li> </ul>
d.	<p>Circumvention (avoiding border entry points)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information not found</li> </ul>
<b>H.</b>	<b>Prior / Existing Relationships</b>
a.	<p>Other criminal organizations (cooperative and conflictual)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information not found</li> </ul>
b.	<p>Corrupt politicians, law enforcement , political parties and other state entities, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Belize immigration officers facilitated the smuggling.<sup>30</sup></li> </ul>
c.	<p><i>Specific detail: Any alliances / past dealings with terrorist groups.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information not found</li> </ul>
<b>I.</b>	<b>Ideological / Ethnic / Familial Orientation (if any)</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information not found</li> </ul>
<b>J.</b>	<b>Technical Sophistication</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• According to Hon. Carlos Perdomo, Minister of Defense, “it’s a very well organized network, very expensive and once you land to your end point there is a way where they collect for the delivery to wherever they were supposed to go, so it’s a very intricate, well-organized, well-financed, a lot of money involved.”<sup>31</sup></li> </ul>
<b>K.</b>	<b>Penchant for Innovation</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information not found</li> </ul>
<b>L.</b>	<b>Activities in United States</b>
a.	<p>Includes both criminal and non-criminal activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Illegal aliens head for the United States<sup>32</sup></li> </ul>
b.	<p><i>Specific detail: trafficking activities; logistical activities</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information not found</li> </ul>
c.	<p>Linkages with US groups</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Market/transaction links <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information not found</li> </ul> </li> <li>Stable supplier <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information not found</li> </ul> </li> <li>Franchise arrangement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information not found</li> </ul> </li> <li>HQ and Branch office <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information not found</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
<b>M.</b>	<b>Evaluations</b>
a.	<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appears to have connections to high-ranking government personnel who provide visa approvals</li> <li>• Appears to be well financed and organized</li> </ul>
b.	<p>Weaknesses and vulnerabilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exposed in October 2010 which probably lead to the slowdown of operations</li> </ul>
c.	<p>Additional insights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The group appears to be extensive and brings into Belize, Chinese and Sri Lankan Nationals who are headed for the United States. The operation is sophisticated and</li> </ul>

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well financed; although its existence was exposed in October 2010 only low level immigration officers were charged. The ringleaders of the group have yet to be uncovered. Although, the group must now operate more discretely and slowly, its network and connections remain in place.

#### Other Notes

- Sri Lankan nationals that were obtained visas from the immigration office in Belmopan include: Anushan Karunamoorthy, Rajkumar Thambimuthu, Vijay Manokarasa, Sivasanthan Sivarasa, Srikanan Sivapatham, Thiyagarajah Peethamparam,<sup>33</sup> Farooque Umar, and Mohammad Aasif<sup>34</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Sanchez, Jose, "Scandal; More Chinese Visas and Ministry of National Security Knew," *News 5*, November 2, 2010 Retrieved online at: <http://edition.channel5belize.com/archives/41942>

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Sanchez, Jose, "Detained in Quito, Sri Lankans En Route to USA from Belmopan," *News 5*, November 9, 2010, Retrieved online at: <http://edition.channel5belize.com/archives/42319>

<sup>4</sup> Sanchez, Jose, "Scandal; More Chinese Visas and Ministry of National Security Knew," *News 5*, November 2, 2010 Retrieved online at: <http://edition.channel5belize.com/archives/41942>

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Parks, Rowland, "Ecuafor detains Sri Lankans with Belizean Visas," *The Reporter*, November 12, 2010, Retrieved online at <http://www.reporter.bz/index.php?mod=archive&act=view&article=4760>

<sup>7</sup> "Police Officer Detained in Chinese Smuggling Ring Scandal," *News 5*, October 14, 2010, Retrieved online at: <http://edition.channel5belize.com/archives/40502>

<sup>8</sup> "Human Smuggling Ring Exposed," *7 News*, October 6, 2010, Retrieved online at: <http://www.7newsbelize.com/sstory.php?nid=17950>

<sup>9</sup> "Chinese Businessman Behind Human Smuggling Ring, Says Belize Prime Minister," *Caribbean Business Journal*, Retrieved online at: <http://www.cbji.com/article.aspx?id=Chinese-businessman-behind-human-smuggling-ring-says-Belize-Prime-Minister-579>

<sup>10</sup> "'Cover up, Cesspool of Corruption;' Carlos Perdomo Called Out on Chinese Visa," *World247.net*, November 4, 2010, Retrieved online at: <http://northamerica.world247.net/belize-news/%E2%80%9Ccover-up-cesspool-of-corruption%E2%80%9D-carlos-perdomo-called-out-on-chinese-visas/>

<sup>11</sup> "Police Officer Detained in Chinese Smuggling Ring Scandal," *News 5*, October 14, 2010 Retrieved online at: <http://edition.channel5belize.com/archives/40502>

<sup>12</sup> "The Scandal Exposed: Six Immigration Officers Arrested," *7 News*, October 12, 2010, Retrieved online at: <http://www.7newsbelize.com/sstory.php?nid=17987>

<sup>13</sup> "Major Immigration Smuggling Exposed!," *Belize Times*, October 15, 2010, Retrieved online at: [http://issuu.com/lucilo/docs/belize\\_times\\_101017](http://issuu.com/lucilo/docs/belize_times_101017)

<sup>14</sup> "The Scandal Exposed: Six Immigration Officers Arrested," *7 News*, October 12, 2010, Retrieved online at: <http://www.7newsbelize.com/sstory.php?nid=17987>

<sup>15</sup> "Police Officer Detained in Chinese Smuggling Ring Scandal," *News 5*, October 14, 2010 Retrieved online at: <http://edition.channel5belize.com/archives/40502>

<sup>16</sup> Ortiz, Daniel, "Four Immigration Officers Charged for the Immigration Scandal at PGIA," *Amandala*, October, 15, 2010, Retrieved online at: <http://www.amandala.com.bz/index.php?id=10421>

<sup>17</sup> "Police Officer Detained in Chinese Smuggling Ring Scandal," *News 5*, October 14, 2010 Retrieved online at: <http://edition.channel5belize.com/archives/40502>

<sup>18</sup> Ibid

<sup>19</sup> "Human Smuggling Ring Exposed," *7 News*, October 6, 2010, Retrieved online at: <http://www.7newsbelize.com/sstory.php?nid=17950>

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- <sup>20</sup> Williams, Shane, "Human Smuggling Ring Caught," *The Guardian*, October, 14, 2010, Retrieved online at: <http://www.guardian.bz/editorial/2419-human-smuggling-ring-caught>
- <sup>21</sup> "The Scandal Exposed: Six Immigration Officers Arrested," *7 News*, October 12, 2010, Retrieved online at: <http://www.7newsbelize.com/sstory.php?nid=17987>
- <sup>22</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>23</sup> Williams, Shane, "Human Smuggling Ring Caught," *The Guardian*, October, 14, 2010, Retrieved online at: <http://www.guardian.bz/editorial/2419-human-smuggling-ring-caught>
- <sup>24</sup> North, David, "Chinese Illegals Coming to US via Haiti (!) and Belize," *Center for Immigration Studies*, October 13, 2010, Retrieved online at: <http://www.cis.org/north/chinese-illegals-via-belize>
- <sup>25</sup> "Chinese Businessman Behind Human Smuggling Ring, Says Belize Prime Minister," *Caribbean Business Journal*, Retrieved online at: <http://www.cbji.com/article.aspx?id=Chinese-businessman-behind-human-smuggling-ring-says-Belize-Prime-Minister-579>
- <sup>26</sup> "The Scandal Exposed: Six Immigration Officers Arrested," *7 News*, October 12, 2010, Retrieved online at: <http://www.7newsbelize.com/sstory.php?nid=17987>
- <sup>27</sup> "Detained in Quito, Sri Lankans En Route to USA, with Visas from Belmopan," *News 5*, November 9, 2010, Retrieved online at: <http://edition.channel5belize.com/archives/42319>
- <sup>28</sup> "Human Smuggling Ring Exposed," *7 News*, October 6, 2010, Retrieved online at: <http://www.7newsbelize.com/sstory.php?nid=17950>
- <sup>29</sup> Bureau of Economic, Energy and Business Affairs, "2011 Investment Climate Statement –Belize," *US Department of State*, March 2011, Retrieved online at: <http://www.state.gov/e/eeb/rls/othr/ics/2011/157241.htm>
- <sup>30</sup> "Police Officer Detained in Chinese Smuggling Ring Scandal," *News 5*, October 14, 2010 Retrieved online at: <http://edition.channel5belize.com/archives/40502>
- <sup>31</sup> "The Scandal Exposed: Six Immigration Officers Arrested," *7 News*, October 12, 2010, Retrieved online at: <http://www.7newsbelize.com/sstory.php?nid=17987>
- <sup>32</sup> "Police Officer Detained in Chinese Smuggling Ring Scandal," *Channel 5*, October 14, 2010 Retrieved online at: <http://edition.channel5belize.com/archives/40502>
- <sup>33</sup> Sanchez, Jose, "Scandal; More Chinese Visas and Ministry of National Security Knew," *News 5*, November 2, 2010 Retrieved online at: <http://edition.channel5belize.com/archives/41942>
- <sup>34</sup> Ibid.

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