

DECLARATION

Migration in the Context of Socio-Environmental Challenges

October 23-25, 2024

San José, Costa Rica

We, parliamentarian delegates from 20 countries and territories¹ in the Americas and the Caribbean, have convened on October 23, 24 and 25, 2024, in San José, in the Legislative Assembly of Costa Rica, for the hemispheric interparliamentary gathering *Migration in the Context of Socio-Environmental Challenges*.²

The gathering created a space for us to analyze the state of migration in the Americas and the Caribbean and its interrelation with socioeconomic and environmental factors, alongside specialists and representatives of international and civil society organizations.

Our dialogues affirmed the need to continue to update and strengthen regulatory frameworks and policies on migration and foster an inclusive migration governance model grounded in human rights and the promotion of safe, orderly and regular migration in order to effectively respond to the new migratory patterns in the region and their structural causes.

Recognizing:

1. That migration has been a constant occurrence throughout human history for those seeking new economic and educational opportunities; those escaping armed conflicts, poverty, food insecurity, persecution, terrorism or human rights violations; or those fleeing the effects of climate change, disasters and other environmental factors; among other reasons.
2. That migration can be an important source of cultural exchange, economic prosperity and sustainable development.

¹ Argentina, Antigua and Barbuda, Belize, Bolivia, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Curaçao, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Saint Lucia, Sint Maarten and Suriname.

² Held on the occasion of the 8th Gathering of the ParlAmericas Parliamentary Network on Climate Change and Sustainability, the 16th Gathering of the ParlAmericas Parliamentary Network for Gender Equality and the IX Meeting of the Interparliamentary Commission on Women's Rights and Gender Equity of the Forum of Presidents of the Legislative Bodies of Central America and the Caribbean (FOPREL).

3. That migration is a multidimensional phenomenon with diverse repercussions for countries and communities of origin, transit, destination and return, requiring harmonized global and regional regulatory frameworks that centre on human rights and incorporate economic, social, cultural and environmental considerations.
4. That migration should be a voluntary and informed choice and not an urgent necessity.
5. That international and regional instruments exist to support in coordinated and comprehensive migration governance, including the [New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants](#), the [Global Compact on Refugees](#), the [Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration](#), the [Los Angeles Declaration on Migration and Protection](#), the [International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families](#), the [Sustainable Development Goals](#) and [general recommendation No. 26 on women migrant workers](#) of the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, among others.
6. That, historically, the Americas and the Caribbean have welcomed migrants, refugees, displaced persons and asylum seekers of diverse origins and conditions, and that their contributions to social and economic development have had positive effects for the well-being and prosperity of countries and communities.
7. That the countries of the Americas and the Caribbean have undertaken important efforts to regularize and socially and economically integrate migrants, refugees, displaced persons and asylum seekers.
8. That internal migration, particularly from rural to urban areas, continues to be a central factor in the spatial redistribution of the population in the Americas and the Caribbean, which has social and economic implications for communities, households and individuals and for sustainable urban planning.
9. That, in the last decade, the Americas and the Caribbean has experienced a considerable increase in intra-regional migration³ driven by a variety of factors, including a structural lack of job opportunities aggravated by economic and political crises, the effects of

³ “Since 2010, no single region has experienced a greater relative increase in international migration than Latin America and the Caribbean. The number of migrants living in the region nearly doubled from 8.3 million in 2010 to 16.3 million in 2022.” [In a Dramatic Shift, the Americas Have Become a Leading Migration Destination](#) (Migration Policy Institute, 2023).

climate change and disasters, humanitarian emergencies, political persecution and diverse forms of violence, including but not limited to sexual violence.

10. That transnational organized crime, one of the drivers of migration in the region, is involved in illicit migrant smuggling and human trafficking, exploiting and benefitting from some migrants' situations of vulnerability, particularly those of low-skilled migrant workers, women, youth and children.
11. That it is necessary for regional cooperation efforts to consider the different situations of countries of origin, transit, destination and return to be able to respond in a coordinated manner to the migration-related challenges the region faces and to craft a regional approach centred on safe, orderly and regular migration.
12. That people's experiences of migration vary significantly due to diverse characteristics including gender, sexual orientation, age, and ethnicity, and that negative effects are disproportionately felt by women, the LGBTI community, youth and children, and persons with disabilities, who are at greater risk of suffering from sexual abuse, exploitation, human trafficking and other forms of violence and discrimination.
13. That, despite the increasing feminization of migration,⁴ women and girls' active participation and roles in migration processes continue to be invisibilized due to harmful gender norms and stereotypes.
14. That climate change and environmental degradation are drivers of internal and external migration with increasingly significant impacts in the Americas and the Caribbean, as vulnerability to disasters and socioeconomic inequalities are leading to growth in climate mobility, requiring cooperation around development assistance and resources particularly in the wake of disasters.
15. That the gradual effects of climate change – such as sea-level rise, soil degradation, flooding, coastal erosion and extreme temperatures, among others – contribute to human displacement by making entire areas uninhabitable, threatening livelihoods and increasing competition for resources.

⁴ Women and girls are estimated to comprise 51.3% of the number of international migrants in the Americas ([IOM, 2022](#)).

16. That climate-induced migration occurs disproportionately in developing countries, and is projected to especially impact Small Island Developing States, even though these countries have contributed less to greenhouse gas emissions.
17. That access to up-to-date information and data on migration, disaggregated by gender and other variables, is imperative to developing evidence-based public policies and legislative frameworks, informing public discourse and providing oversight on the achievement of national objectives and international commitments on migration adopted by governments.

We commit to:

1. Adopt an approach across our parliamentary work that centres on protecting the rights and dignity of migrants, refugees, displaced persons and asylum seekers, ensuring respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms as well as expeditious access to essential goods and services regardless of immigration status.
2. Promote the economic, social and cultural benefits derived from safe, orderly and regular migration, while also addressing the challenges and concerns that migration can pose for countries and communities of origin, transit, destination and return.
3. Take decisive action towards establishing political, economic, social, environmental and peace and security conditions that enable all people to live productive, dignified and violence-free lives in their countries of origin.
4. Advocate for strengthened regional and hemispheric migration cooperation, including integrated, safe and coordinated border management that respects the human rights of migrants, refugees, displaced persons and asylum seekers.
5. Foster accessible and participatory parliamentary dialogue, public consultations, online forums, and collaborative workshops to address the situation and needs of migrants convening a diverse array of stakeholders including migrants and migration organizations, diasporas, local communities, civil society, academia, the private sector and the media, among others.
6. Promote mechanisms that ensure that the voices of migrants are heard and considered in the formulation of legislation and the implementation of public policies on migration.

7. Ensure that the relevant legislative bodies or committees address issues related to migration systematically, regularly and with a gender-responsive, intersectional, intercultural and human rights lens, including taking into account the unique rights and realities of Indigenous Peoples.
8. Call for the relevant authorities to improve processes for the collection, analysis and dissemination of information, statistics and disaggregated data on the migrant population, including on demographics, socioeconomic and cultural characteristics, motivations, migration status and risks, among other qualitative and quantitative variables, while complying with the highest standards of data protection and confidentiality.
9. Mainstream gender equality, intersectionality, interculturality and human rights perspectives in our legislative work on migration, recognizing the diversity of migrants and their different needs and motivations related to migration.
10. Ensure that legislation on migration responds to the differentiated experiences of women, youth and child migrants, low-skilled labour migrants, and people with disabilities, including measures on assistance, healthcare, psychological services and access to justice, seeking to prevent gender-based discrimination, abusive labour conditions, and violence in all its forms and modalities.
11. Promote the legal recognition of climate migrants as rights holders and ensure their protection in migration governance policies.
12. Redouble our efforts to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius, the target in the Paris Agreement, to prevent the worsening of climate impacts, and prioritizing climate adaptation and disaster risk management to contribute to reducing climate and environmental migration.
13. Call for the relevant authorities to include actions and strategies to address climate and environmental migration within migration policies and plans on development, climate adaptation and disaster risk reduction.
14. Encourage public discourse that recognizes the importance of migration for sustainable development and highlights the economic, social and cultural contributions of migrants.
15. Strengthen or implement legislative measures to combat discrimination, hate speech,

xenophobia and negative stereotyping of migrants.

16. Advocate for the relevant authorities to develop communications campaigns in various languages to ensure that migrants and potential migrants are fully informed of their rights, obligations and options, of support programs for safe, orderly and regular migration and of the risks posed by irregular migration; additionally, for campaigns that counter migration-related disinformation, as well as xenophobia and hate speech against migrants.
17. Promote the adoption and implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and the Los Angeles Declaration on Migration and Protection and provide oversight on progress towards international commitments on migration governance adopted by our countries.
18. Promote safe and regular channels for migration, including legal entry and residence plans for study, work, humanitarian and family reunification purposes.
19. Urge the relevant authorities to ensure that healthcare plans and programs for migrants include mental health support and physical recovery care to address the serious health and safety risks, including permanent and disabling injuries, faced by migrants during their journeys.
20. Foster migrants' socioeconomic integration through programs that facilitate access to education, including promotion of school attendance for all children and adolescents, recognition of academic degree and certification equivalencies, professional training, health care and employment opportunities.
21. Urge the relevant authorities to allocate the necessary funds to guarantee the provision of essential services, identity documents, integration and regularization programs for migrants, refugees, displaced persons and asylum seekers, ensuring their dignity and well-being in accordance with the relevant international instruments.
22. Encourage the allocation of resources to strengthen social organizations that work with migrants on the ground, including organizations of women migrants, recognizing their roles as agents of change within migrant communities.

23. Call for the relevant authorities to develop programs that sustainably facilitate return and reintegration in a way that is safe and dignified for migrants returning to their countries of origin, ensuring respect for their human rights during the entire process.
24. Continue to work through hemispheric and regional inter-parliamentary spaces like ParlAmericas and FOPREL to exchange good legislative practices and harmonize regulatory frameworks⁵ related to migration that reflect new migratory patterns in the region and prioritize the human rights of migrants; and promote bilateral and multilateral agreements to support countries with the implementation of the objectives of this declaration.

Adopted in San José, Costa Rica, on October 25, 2024

⁵ See the [Framework Law on the Management of Migration for Climate and Environmental Reasons with a Human Rights Approach](#) (in Spanish) and the [Regional Framework Law on Migration with a Human Rights Approach](#) (in Spanish) developed by FOPREL and the International Organization on Migration.