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On behalf of the Latin American Bloc on Migration
United Nations Regional Consultation Forum
Latin American Review of the Global Compact of Migration.

The Global Compact for Migration represents an important step in the construction of a multilateral architecture for migration policy and the recognition of the rights of migrants, and their necessary role in shaping migration policy with pan-social and pan-governmental human rights, gender-responsive, and non-retrogressive, non-discriminatory approaches, as stated in the Compact.

At the same time, an honest assessment of realities in the region points to hardened and militarized borders, the externalization of border enforcement to other countries, the regression and denial of asylum and international protection, the failure to protect the rights of migrant children and adolescents, large numbers of migrants in irregular situations fleeing difficult social, economic and political conditions in their home countries, and the intentional recruitment of low-wage migrant labor as a business strategy that leads to exploitation and abuse.

All of this has been deepened by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has highlighted the structural inequalities and systematic exclusion of migrants, refugees, and their families in many countries in the region. Not only did migrants constitute a large percentage of frontline workers during the pandemic, but they were most often denied pandemic assistance by States, denied access to health care, denied access to information, and are now excluded from access to vaccines. Those living in already vulnerable and precarious situations found it impossible to shelter in place, making them more vulnerable to the virus, which has claimed an immense number of victims in the hemisphere. For families searching for their missing loved ones, their search and rescue efforts and access to justice were further limited.

From our perspective as members of the Civil Society, we believe that this Regional Review is the first step for the United Nations to assume a coordinated and regional mandate to work on migration, and to promote, defend, and monitor the fulfillment of the human rights of migrants, their families and communities.

We understand that as the first process convened by IOM and ECLAC as a regional platform for the implementation of the Pact in Latin America and the Caribbean, there have been many challenges and there are many possibilities for improvement. Given the transcendence that this new UN structure can have at the global, regional, and



national levels on migration, it is essential to include the active participation of those directly impacted by migration and civil society organizations, to accurately measure the impact of these multilateral efforts.

The following are some proposed steps we consider necessary for strengthening this platform:

In the medium term:

1. Generate mechanisms for permanent dialogue and shared strategies between IOM and ECLAC regional delegates and civil society. This includes CSOs, migrants, their families, and communities in Latin America and the Caribbean, including those residing in the United States and Europe.
2. That the UN regional and global platform for migration informs, publicly and timely, all interested actors of the initiatives of the States identified as Champions; as well their efforts to include and coordinate with civil society organizations in those countries, this includes Mexico, El Salvador, Ecuador, and Honduras. Champion countries must center human rights as guiding principles for all types of migration initiatives. A monitoring mechanism must be developed to ensure that governments do not engage in repressive strategies against migrants or civil society organizations.
3. Facilitate and promote effective cooperation between States centered in a transnational rights-based vision of migration in the region. This process must include the robust participation of civil society, migrants, and their families, so they can participate from the places of origin, transit, or destination. We must build the mechanisms to integrate their proposals to uphold human rights, which arise from their migration experience and their encounters with multiple forms of discrimination. We must move away from migration policies that far from protecting migrant rights subject people to serious human rights violations.

As members of the Civil Society Organizations in the Americas, it is essential to work within a regional framework that understands the particularities of our context to uphold the human rights of people in migration and which are included in the various objectives of the Global Compact. We believe it is possible, and in our collective interest, to advance, through this regional mechanism, initiatives that result in the effective and substantive improvement in the lives and rights of people in migration.

In light of the Regional Review, we also have a few methodological recommendations in the short term.



- To create a Civil Society Committee with representatives of regional networks — including those who have been involved in this consultation process and the implementation process of the pact—to identify panelists, rapporteurs, and moderators for the Regional Review.
- To include this proposed Committee in the preparation of the report, evaluation, of the Regional Review process.
- To provide a digital platform and methodology for the Regional Review sessions that allow us to identify and dialogue with the various stakeholders participating in the sessions. Identify and appropriate some of the best practices that have been generated globally or in other regions.
- To adopt best practices from other regions such as Asia, which hired a consultant for the Regional UN platform to develop reports and follow-up with all stakeholders, so that this activity does not fall solely on civil society which has fewer resources than the UN agencies and the UN system.
- We are convinced of the importance of generating an inclusive regional process with the highest standards of participation, transparency, vigilance, and monitoring in which all interested actors, especially migrants, their families, and civil society organizations take part.
- Finally, we recognize the work of IOM, ECLAC in convening this Regional Consultation. We respectfully ask you to support the process of finalizing the report and shared with all interested actors.

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