

**EXPERT SYMPOSIUM ON
INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

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**CONTRIBUTION
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¹The views expressed in the paper do not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of the United Nations Secretariat.

ECLAC's activities related to international migration in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration

Migration trends, drivers, opportunities and legal regimes usually differ from region to region. So, understanding and addressing the regional dimensions of migration is crucial for ensuring safe, orderly, and regular migration. There are also important differences within regions. In Latin America and the Caribbean, migration in and from the Caribbean significantly differs from that from, through and to Central America, and yet again from the experiences of South America.

Latin American and Caribbean countries have been founded on or fundamentally shaped by migration. From its origins, migratory movements have accompanied its history, the creation of its institutions, communities and territories. First, by receiving large numbers of immigrants coming from other regions, and lately, mainly over the last four decades, by nationals from the region leaving to other regions.

Although emigration outside the region still predominates, especially from Mexico and Central America to the United States of America, current migratory patterns show an important increase in intraregional migration in Latin America and the Caribbean. About 30 million Latin American and Caribbean people live outside their country of birth, out of those being about 17 million Mexicans and Central Americans living in the USA.

Latin America and the Caribbean countries have contributed significantly to the global migration debate, by ensuring the incorporation of the human rights of migrants in all regional and global migration fora. They also have made important contributions in migration governance through different initiatives such as the Residence Agreement of MERCOSUR, the free transit instruments issued by the Community of Andean Nations, and more recently some arrangements on free mobility approved by the Alliance of the Pacific.

The region is aware of the vulnerability and violence suffered by many of its migrants, whether in transit, during insertion in destination or repatriation. The detention and deportation of migrants is a particularly pressing situation, as it has affected large numbers of unaccompanied child and adolescent migrants. At the same time, recognizes the overwhelmingly positive social, economic and cultural impact of migration on countries of origin and destination and the empowering experience it represents for millions of migrants and their families.

Through its intergovernmental consultative forums (the South American Conference on Migration and the Regional Conference on Migration), the region has taken great strides in creating spaces for dialogue and regional cooperation. Organized civil society has also made important contributions to States, and academia has also participated actively in these processes, providing valuable information and analysis, with a cross-cutting view of human rights and recognizing the vulnerability of migrant women and children during different stages of the migratory cycle.

ECLAC has a long history of collaboration with both the South American Conference on Migration and the Regional Conference on Migration, and very much welcome the possibility of an additional consultative forum being established for the Caribbean to complement the work of CARICOM in addressing the needs of this sub-region. This collaboration has made possible to establish commitments regarding several issues, such as regularization and facilitation of migration, elaboration of protocols to deal with trafficking and smuggling, and the situation of vulnerability of migrant women and unaccompanied children.

ECLAC has a broad experience in the interlinkages of international migration, human rights and development. For decades, it has been mandated by its Member States to follow up on these issues in the region, particularly by undertaking studies and research, providing training and technical assistance, promoting technical cooperation and capacity building, and generating migration related data and information.

Over the years, ECLAC has conducted numerous studies on migratory patterns and trends that strongly contributed to build the regional perspective on this matter; launched and maintained a major regional data bank on international migration (IMILA, <https://celade.cepal.org/bdcelade/imila/>); assisted governments in the design and evaluation of

policies, regulations, plans and strategies on migration; and provided training and capacity-building on the measurement of international migration, migration policies and the rights of migrants.

ECLAC has numerous intergovernmental subsidiary bodies in which its member States can undertake and advance policy discussions on a broad range of development issues. In the case of international migration, the most relevant subsidiary organ is the Conference on Population and Development, in charge of the follow-up of the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development, adopted in 2013 by the countries of the region as an instrument for the regional follow up of the International Conference on Population and Development (Cairo, 1994). The role played by ECLAC in the generation of evidence and indicators for the follow up of the Montevideo Consensus, which includes a specific chapter on international migration, has been particularly relevant.

ECLAC also convenes and serves as a technical secretariat to the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development, in charge of the follow up and review of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including those related to international migration. ECLAC's subsidiary bodies, including the Regional Conference on Population and Development, report to this Forum on their contribution to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. For the third session of the Forum, to be held in April 2019, ECLAC is also organizing a side event on further implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and its synergies with the 2030 Agenda and the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development.

ECLAC has been able to leverage its work on international migration through extensive collaboration, including UN bodies such as the International Labor Organization (ILO), the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) and UNICEF, as well as civil society organizations and the academia. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) is a particularly strategic partner in this area. ECLAC and IOM signed a Memorandum of Understanding in 1985 and since then have been implementing several joint projects and initiatives.

A most recent and relevant collaboration took place in the context of the preparatory activities for the Global Compact for Migration (GCM), in which Member States of the United Nations called for the regional commissions of the United Nations to hold a series of regional consultations throughout 2017 to build evidence on the regional dimensions of migration, and highlight key themes and priorities with regards to migration to feed into and support the stocktaking and negotiation process for the GCM.

The consultations highlighted the variation of migration trends and realities among the regions. They addressed major challenges that the regions face and showcased some good practices. The outcome of the consultations was key in providing a comprehensive understanding of the regional dimension of migration, which contributed to guide the negotiations on the GCM.

The Latin American and Caribbean Regional Preparatory Meeting of International Migration Experts on the global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration was held at ECLAC headquarters in Santiago, on 30 and 31 August 2017. The meeting brought together about 50 experts from governments, civil society and academia from 15 countries of the region, and counted on the participation of Louise Arbour, special representative of the Secretary General for International Migration; Ambassador Juan José Gómez Camacho, Co-facilitator for the Global Compact for Migration; and Laura Thompson, Deputy Director General of the IOM. The expert consultation fostered a regional vision on the human rights of migrants, the response to factors that drive migration, international cooperation and governance, irregular migration, human trafficking, and migrants' contributions to sustainable development and decent work. The results of the meeting, presented at the final consultation meeting in Puerto Vallarta (Mexico) in December 2017, constituted an important contribution of the region to the process leading to the GCM.

ECLAC sees the GCM as a historic opportunity to recognize the triad of rights, development and migration, as part of the future of the nations, while recognizing the complexity of the task of identifying and taking advantage of the opportunities offered by international migration while properly addressing its challenges at the local, national, regional and global levels.

ECLAC stands ready to provide support to governments in the region on the implementation, follow-up and monitoring of the GCM at the regional level, in close collaboration with IOM and other partners from the UN System, as well as the regional consultative processes, civil society organizations and the academia.

It is crucial that the GCM follow-up and monitoring processes be evidence based, and ECLAC is in the right position to provide the necessary empirical and analytical support to generate migration related data and inputs that are relevant to the objectives of the GCM. For example, ECLAC has recently prepared an *Atlas of migration in Northern Central America*, that was presented during the *Intergovernmental Conference to Adopt the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration* in Marrakesh in December 2018, as an input for a Sub regional Integral development plan under elaboration by the governments of Mexico, El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras.