



Conferencia Regional sobre Migración
Regional Conference on Migration



II PLENARY MEETING OF THE REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON MIGRATION (RCM) AND THE SOUTH AMERICAN CONFERENCE ON MIGRATION (SACM)

9-10 September 2021

“Seeking joint actions for better migration governance”

CONCEPT NOTE

BACKGROUND

Inter-State Consultation Mechanisms on Migration (ISCM) are all regular information-sharing and policy dialogues at the regional, interregional or global level for States with an interest in promoting cooperation in the field of migration. These inter-State consultation mechanisms include global processes on migration, interregional forums on migration (including two or more regions) and regional consultative processes on migration (covering one region).

Regional Consultative Processes on Migration (RCP) are State-led, ongoing regional information-sharing and policy dialogues to discuss specific migration matters cooperatively among States of an established (usually geographic) region. These consultative processes can be officially linked to formal regional institutions or be informal and non-binding.

On the American continent, the work of the Regional Conference on Migration (RCM) and the South American Conference on Migration (SACM) can be highlighted, as recognized and consolidated regional consultative processes on migration.

RCM

The RCM is a non-binding regional consultative process on migration aimed at addressing migration in the region in a practical and comprehensive manner with a technical/political approach. The RCM provides a space for respectful, open and honest dialogue among the Member Countries on regional and international migration, thus ensuring better coordination, transparency and cooperation.

The RCM was established in 1996 as a result of the Tuxtla Summit and includes 11 Member Countries: Canada, United States, Mexico, Guatemala, Belize, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama and the Dominican Republic.

SACM

The SACM, established in 2000, has the objective of facilitating a consultation forum for the South American countries in the main spheres of development; diasporas; the rights of migrants; integration; information exchange; statistics on migration; and combating migrant smuggling and trafficking.

The Member Countries of the SACM are the following: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, Uruguay and Venezuela.

In 2017, a first meeting between troikas from the SACM and RCM was held in Washington D.C. Later that year, a meeting of an Ad Hoc Group of troikas was held in Panama City to prepare bi-regional inputs for the consultation phase of the Global Compact on Migration.

In May 2018, the I Plenary Meeting of the RCM and SACM was held. The following topics were addressed during the meeting:

- 1) Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration
- 2) Extraregional and extra-continental migration flows

In addition, the meeting had the objective of generating input from the participating countries in the rounds of intergovernmental negotiations on the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration in 2018 and 2019.

RATIONALE

The following activity has been included in the Work Plan of the President pro tempore (PPT) of the RCM for 2021, to be implemented by the Working Group on Border Management:

- Plenary Meeting of the Regional Conference on Migration (RCM) and the South American Conference on Migration (SACM)

The activity was approved by the Vice-Ministers in November 2018. However, the meeting had to be postponed due to different circumstances in 2019 and 2020, in addition to the uncertainty generated by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.

In the Declaration of the XVIII Meeting of the SACM, held in Sucre in 2018, the SACM Member Countries reaffirmed the need to strengthen the consultative relations of the SACM with other regional consultative processes such as the Regional Conference on Migration (RCM), based on a route map for the exchange of experiences and best practices through online and face-to-face meetings, with the aim of achieving the objectives that both consultative processes have established for themselves.

Based on the dialogue between the Governments of Mexico and Argentina as Presidents Pro-Tempore of the RCM and the SACM, respectively, and with support from the Government of Canada, it has been agreed to hold the II Plenary Meeting of the RCM and the SACM: "Seeking Joint Actions Aimed at Improving Migration Governance".

The meeting will be held online on 9-10 September 2021.

OBJECTIVES

- ✓ To promote increased collaboration between the Member Countries from both organizations to address hemispheric challenges related to migration governance, including irregular and extra-regional migration.
- ✓ To identify specific issues requiring attention in order to deter irregular migration and promote regular migration, and to identify concrete next steps to address these issues.

PARTICIPANT PROFILE

The participation of representatives from the Member Countries of the RCM and the SACM is expected. As a minimum, participants should be technical officers with decision-making power.

Furthermore, representatives from the observer organizations of the regional consultative processes on migration (RCPs) and representatives from civil society organizations will be able to participate as observers.

METHODOLOGY OF THE DIALOGUE

For each topic included in the agenda, a country will be designated to lead the discussions relating to the topic. The leading country will make a presentation on the topic and will ask trigger questions to open the dialogue among the participating countries. These questions should be provided beforehand by the countries leading the discussions of each topic in order to include them in a single concept note to be disseminated prior to the event. Three sessions of the event will be led by RCM Member Countries and three sessions by SACM Member Countries.

For each session included in the agenda, the elements for the dialogue will be provided through technical datasheets:

- SESSION 1. Irregular migration from within the hemisphere and extra continental
- SESSION 2. Human trafficking and migrant smuggling
- SESSION 3. Migration governance and pathways for regular migration
- SESSION 4. Travel documentation policy and processing
- SESSION 5. International protection systems
- SESSION 6. Integration of migrants and countering xenophobia

General Concept: Best Practices

For the purposes of the meeting, a “best practice” shall be recognized in each session as an outcome that enabled the successful achievement of a concrete objective and therefore, is recommended as a model that can be replicated in other contexts.

A best practice is described as, but not limited to, a real-life experience such as a policy, law or strategy, as well as a simpler experience such as an initiative, process or action. Regardless of its form, the best practice should always have a certain “maturity”, that is, it should have been implemented over the course of a period that has proven to work well.

Each session will last approximately 1 hour. The leading country should use that time as efficiently as possible, opening and guiding the discussion. The Secretariats of the RCM and the SACM will support the leading country by keeping track of time.

**SESSION 1 TECHNICAL DATASHEET:
Irregular migration from within the hemisphere and extra continental**

LEAD	<i>Panama and Costa Rica</i>
A BRIEF INITIAL PRESENTATION BY THE LEADING COUNTRY TO OPEN DIALOGUE	
TOPICS TO ADDRESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion on regional and extracontinental irregular migration trends and challenges; • Measures adopted by countries to address mass movements and prevent flows; • Identifying joint actions and information exchange on irregular migration from within the hemisphere and extra continental.
KEY CONCEPTS	<p>Migration Flows: The number of international migrants arriving in a country (immigrants) or the number of international migrants departing from a country (emigrants) over the course of a specific period.¹</p> <p>Extraregional Migration: The movement of nationals originating in countries outside the American continent.²</p>

GUIDING QUESTIONS

What are the current challenges relating to migration management faced by your country regarding extra-regional migration flows?

What best practices in the management of extraregional migration can you share?

What joint actions could be implemented to address irregular migration and to explore new paths for regularization, from within the hemisphere and extracontinental?

¹ UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), Toolkit on International Migration (2012).

² Own formulation.

📁 SESSION 2 TECHNICAL DATASHEET: Human Trafficking and Migrant smuggling	
LEAD	<i>Chile and Venezuela</i>
A BRIEF INITIAL PRESENTATION BY THE LEADING COUNTRY TO OPEN DIALOGUE	
TOPICS TO ADDRESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion on human trafficking and migrant smuggling; Good practices for prevention and early detection at the border; Best practices in multilevel inter-agency coordination; Good practices on border management, including information exchange and travel document integrity verification.
KEY CONCEPTS	<p>Trafficking in Persons: The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.³</p> <p>Migrant Smuggling: The procurement, in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit, of the illegal entry of a person into a State Party of which the person is not a national or a permanent resident.⁴</p>
GUIDING QUESTIONS	
<p><i>Open dialogue on the challenges faced in the hemisphere relating to trafficking in persons.</i></p> <p><i>What are the main routes for migrant smuggling in the American continent?</i></p> <p><i>What specific actions could be agreed on by the RCM and the SACM to combat migrant smuggling and trafficking?</i></p>	

³ Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (approved on 15 November 2000 and effective since 25 December 2003), Art. 3 (a).

⁴ Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, Article 3 (a).

📄 **SESSION 3 TECHNICAL DATASHEET:**
Integration of migrants and countering xenophobia

LEAD	<i>Peru</i>
A BRIEF INITIAL PRESENTATION BY THE LEADING COUNTRY TO OPEN DIALOGUE	
TOPICS TO ADDRESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Labour and social challenges for migrants' inclusion; • Gender and migration; • Exchanging experiences on migration narratives and counter xenophobia.
KEY CONCEPTS ⁵	<p>Social Inclusion: The process of improving the ability, opportunity, and dignity of people disadvantaged on the basis of their identity, to take part in society.</p> <p>Gender: The socially constructed roles and relationships, personality traits, attitudes, behaviours, values, relative power and influence that society ascribes to males and females on a differential basis. Gender is relational and refers not simply to women or men, but to the relationship between them.</p> <p>Xenophobia: Attitudes, prejudices and behaviour that reject, exclude and often vilify persons, based on the perception that they are outsiders or foreigners to the community, society or national identity.</p>
GUIDING QUESTIONS	
<p><i>How can human rights-based messages on migration and migrants be developed that are accepted by the general public?</i></p> <p><i>Are there best practices relating to campaigns that can generate an impact in combating xenophobia? Could a campaign be adopted for the entire American continent?</i></p> <p><i>How can the contributions of diasporas be highlighted in societies of the countries of destination?</i></p>	

⁵ IOM Glossary on Migration, 2019 (https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/iml_34_glossary.pdf) and Ad Hoc Working Group on Public Narratives on Migration of the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD).

📁 **SESSION 4 TECHNICAL DATASHEET:**
Travel documentation policy and processing

LEAD	<i>United States</i>
A BRIEF INITIAL PRESENTATION BY THE LEADING COUNTRY TO OPEN DIALOGUE	
TOPICS TO ADDRESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The role of visas as a screen to ensure border and migration integrity; • Best practices in visa processing and travel documentation.
KEY CONCEPTS	<p>Visa: An endorsement by the competent authorities of a State in a passport or a certificate of identity of a non-national who wishes to enter, leave, or transit through the territory of the State that indicates that the authority, at the time of issuance, considers the holder to fall within a category of non-nationals who can enter, leave or transit the State under the State’s laws. A visa establishes the criteria of admission into, transit through or exit from a State.⁶</p> <p>Travel Document: A document issued by a government or by an international organization which is accepted as a proof of identity for the purpose of crossing international borders.⁷</p>

GUIDING QUESTIONS


What are the best characteristics for a safe travel document?

Which countries can share their best experiences and challenges in matters relating to document security?

Can you share examples of the most common cases of visa and travel document fraud on the continent?

⁶ IOM Glossary on Migration, 2019 (https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/iml_34_glossary.pdf).

⁷Ibid.

<div style="text-align: center;">  SESSION 5 TECHNICAL DATASHEET: International protection systems </div>	
LEAD	<i>Mexico</i>
A BRIEF INITIAL PRESENTATION BY THE LEADING COUNTRY TO OPEN DIALOGUE	
TOPICS TO ADDRESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The importance of effective international protection determination systems; • Identification of capacity gaps and opportunities for collaboration.
KEY CONCEPTS	<p>International Protection: The protection that is accorded by the international community to individuals or groups who are outside their own country and are unable to return home because their return would infringe upon the principle of non-refoulement, and their country is unable or unwilling to protect them.⁸</p>
GUIDING QUESTIONS	
<p><i>Share best practices in international cooperation relating to protection determination systems.</i></p> <p><i>How can the international protection systems be strengthened in the American continent?</i></p> <p><i>Identify challenges relating to international protection for which joint solutions can be sought.</i></p>	

⁸ IOM Glossary on Migration, 2019 (https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/iml_34_glossary.pdf).

📁 SESSION 6 TECHNICAL DATASHEET: Migration governance and pathways for regular migration	
LEAD	<i>Republic of Argentina</i>
A BRIEF INITIAL PRESENTATION BY THE LEADING COUNTRY TO OPEN DIALOGUE	
TOPICS TO ADDRESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion on migration governance and pathways for regular migration; Open South America.
KEY CONCEPTS	<p>Migration Governance: The combined frameworks of legal norms, laws and regulations, policies and traditions as well as organizational structures (subnational, national, regional and international) and the relevant processes that shape and regulate States' approaches with regard to migration in all its forms, addressing rights and responsibilities and promoting international cooperation.⁹</p>
GUIDING QUESTIONS	
<p><i>What have been the challenges relating to regional coordination in the context of COVID-19?</i></p> <p><i>What would be the most effective tools or approaches to contribute to this coordination?</i></p> <p><i>In regard to the Open South America Platform, could this be applicable at the regional level? What information could be included to strengthen cooperation between and within countries?</i></p>	

⁹ IOM Glossary on Migration, 2019 (https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/iml_34_glossary.pdf).