

**ELEVENTH REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON MIGRATION (RCM)
San Salvador, El Salvador, 4 – 5 May, 2006**

DECLARATION

The XI Regional Conference on Migration (RCM), with the participation of the Vice-Ministers of Canada, Costa Rica, El Salvador, the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama and the United States of America, was held in San Salvador, El Salvador, on May 4 – 5, 2006.

In this meeting the Vice-Ministers:

Acknowledged the positive contribution of migrants, and highlighted the importance of programs that link nationals abroad with their communities of origin, as currently undertaken in various RCM member countries. The Vice-Ministers congratulated El Salvador for selecting the theme of “Linking Communities” to highlight the importance of this subject.

Acknowledged the value of the signing of the *“Memorandum of Understanding between the Governments of the United Mexican States, the Republic of El Salvador, the Republic of Guatemala, the Republic of Honduras, and the Republic of Nicaragua for the Dignified, Orderly, Prompt and Safe Repatriation by Land of Central American Nationals,”* which takes into consideration the *“Guidelines for the Signing of Multi and/or Bilateral Agreements Between Member Countries of the Regional Conference on Migration Regarding the Repatriation of Regional Migrants by Land,”* approved by the RCM in Panama City on May 21, 2004.

Recognized that this agreement constitutes a best practice that complements the efforts of these governments to promote and protect the human rights of migrants.

Reiterated their commitment to combatting trafficking in persons and migrant smuggling, and encouraged cooperation, particularly in providing protection to victims of trafficking. To this effect, they emphasized the importance of having information campaigns on the risks and consequences associated with irregular migration.

Expressed concern about the natural disasters that affect the region and may provoke migratory movements, and thus emphasized the importance of promoting more timely cooperation in the protection of and assistance to persons affected by these phenomena.

Decisions:

1. Recognizing the success achieved in the use of the Reserve Fund for the *“Assistance to Intra-Regional Migrants in High Vulnerability Situations”* and the importance of this assistance, create a permanent fund administered by IOM using established guidelines. Contributions¹ to the initial fund of

¹ Costa Rica indicated that it will undertake corresponding internal consultations.

US\$60,000 will be made on the basis of the scale used for contributions to the Technical Secretariat budget. The fund may be further supplemented by discretionary contributions.

2. Encourage member states to submit comments on the draft "*Regional Guidelines for Special Protection in Cases of the Return of Child Victims of Trafficking*" to the Technical Secretariat by July 14, 2006; received comments will be circulated to member countries by July 31, 2006.

Approve the holding of a joint meeting of the networks in the last quarter of 2006 to discuss the new version. IOM is asked to coordinate with the TS and the PPT, with the support of UNICEF, ILO and UNHCR, the preparation of this new draft which will be submitted for approval at the next Vice-Ministerial meeting.

3. Taking into account the need to protect those who have suffered disabilities while migrating, welcome the project presented by El Salvador and IOM for the comprehensive assistance to persons who have suffered a physical disability while migrating, and endorse the possibility of extending it to other interested RCM member countries and seeking possible financing.
4. Request the Presidency Pro-Tempore and the Technical Secretariat of the RCM to incorporate comments of member states into the document that will be presented at the High Level Dialogue, which shall include the main achievements of the RCM. The previously-approved poster and flyer of the RCM, as well as the relevant subjects of the Declaration of this Vice-Ministerial meeting, will be distributed with the presentation.

The Presidency Pro-Tempore shall highlight the strengths and contributions of the RCM as a significant forum for dialogue and consensus, and a success story in addressing migration matters of common concern at the regional level.

5. Approve the participation of the Presidency Pro-Tempore and the Coordinator of the Technical Secretariat at the meeting on Regional Consultative Processes (RCP) to be held on June 20, 2006 in New York as part of the United Nations High Level Dialogue events.
6. Take note of the invitation presented by the Ibero-American General Secretary for Presidency Pro-Tempore (PPT), Technical Secretariat (TS) and Regional Network of Civil Society Organizations on Migration (RNCOM) to participate in the Ibero-American Conference on Migration to be held July 18 – 19, 2006 in Madrid, Spain. Approve the participation of the PPT and the TS Coordinator at the Conference. The document that will be presented at the Conference will be submitted to member states of the RCM for comments.

7. Decide to establish a simple and agile mechanism to share migration statistics, and instruct the Regional Consultation Group on Migration (RCGM) that, at its next meeting, it develop such a mechanism.
8. Instruct the Regional Consultation Group on Migration to analyze best practices for effective documentation of departing minors, in order to fight the scourge of trafficking in persons.
9. Congratulate the Government of El Salvador for establishing the first Shelter for Assisting Victims of Trafficking in Persons, and request El Salvador to produce, jointly with IOM, a regional project proposal for evaluation by the Regional Consultation Group on Migration; once endorsed it could be subject to our approval. The preparation of the project proposal could include a round of written comments from RCM member states.
10. Highlight the advances in the development of the Statistical Information System for Mesoamerican Migration for (SIEMMES) and take note of the actions taken to consolidate Mexican participation in this important initiative. Encourage interested countries to make provision for the financial resources to continue with the execution of this project.
11. Congratulate IOM for its products and advances in its information campaign on the risks and consequences of trafficking in persons and migrant smuggling, and encourage the search for funding to continue the campaign. Encourage RCM member states to disseminate these products to the extent possible.
12. Agree that the agenda of future Vice-Ministerial meetings offers an opportunity to share government efforts, experiences and advances in initiatives to link their migrants with their communities of origin.
13. Accept the offer of Guatemala to be the host country for the Seminar-Workshop on Immigration Legislation proposed by UNHCR and IOM.
14. Approve the Technical Secretariat budget for its 2007 operations
15. Renew the appointment of Mr. Luis Monzon as Coordinator of the Technical Secretariat for a final year. Take note of the Mexican Government's intention to nominate a candidate for this post for the period 2007 - 2008.

Equally, the Vice-Ministers:

Thanked the Regional Network of Civil Society Organizations for its participation and offer to hold training on human rights and migration, in coordination with the RCM.

Acknowledged the participation of observer countries and international organizations: Peru, Ecuador and Colombia, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, the International Organization for Migration, the United Nations Population Fund, and the System for Central American Integration.

Thanked the Government of the United States of America for assuming the next Presidency Pro-Tempore of the RCM and hosting the XII Regional Conference on Migration. The Vice-Ministers also thanked Honduras for its offer to assume the following Presidency Pro-Tempore, and consequently host the XIII Meeting of the RCM.

Finally, the Vice-Ministers thanked El Salvador and the city of San Salvador for their hospitality and the excellent organization of the meetings of the the XI Regional Conference on Migration.