

JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ

The VI Regional Conference on Migration (RCM) took place in San Jose, Costa Rica March 22-23, 2001, with the participation of the member countries of Belize, Canada, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama and the United States of America.

The Vice-Ministers expressed their solidarity with the people and Government of El Salvador for the deaths and damage caused by the two earthquakes which occurred on January 13 and February 13, and urged the member countries of the RCM to continue supporting the process of national reconstruction. For its part, the Government of El Salvador thanked the member countries of the RCM for their demonstration of support and assistance.

The Vice-Ministers were also pleased to receive:

- The proposal presented by the IOM, requested by the RCM, entitled "Terms of Reference on the Provision of Technical Support to the Regional Conference on Migration."
- The report by Canada and the United States of America on the theme of migration in the Summit of the Americas process.
- The case study of trafficking of migrants in Belize, developed by IOM, with financial assistance from the Government of Canada.
- The conceptual document, presented by the Governments of Canada and Mexico, for a joint study on migrant children in the region.
- The progress report on the project entitled "Statistical Information System on Migration in Central America" (SIEMCA) by IOM/ECLAC/CELADE.
- The report by the Regional Network of Civil Organizations for Migration (RNCOM) at the RCGM meeting about its timely intervention in support of the three themes of the Plan of Action.

They agreed to the following:

1. Accept the desirability of the term of art "President Pro-Tempore" instead of "Secretary Pro-Tempore."
2. Recognize the importance of the paper entitled: "Consolidating a Sustainable Vision of the Future," for the process of consolidation of the RCM, as presented by the President Pro-Tempore. In this sense, accept the recommendation to restructure the Plan of Action in two parts: The Archival Plan of Action and the Current Plan of Action, and reorganize the latter according to three central themes:
 - a. Migration Policies and Management
 - b. Human Rights
 - c. Migration and Development

3. Incorporate the theme of "Migration and Health" in the section on Human Rights in the Plan of Action, taking into account the work already conducted in this field by other international fora, and involving in the process government officials from the health sector. Also, incorporate the themes of "Integration and Insertion of Migrants" and "Border Cooperation" within the section on Migration and Development in the Plan of Action.
4. Authorize the creation of a Technical Support Unit (TSU), under the direction and supervision of the President Pro-Tempore, according to the proposal presented by IOM entitled: "Terms of Reference on the provision of technical support to the Regional Conference on Migration." With respect to the budget, the member states will take the necessary steps, as may be the case, for its approval and implementation.
5. Reactivate the Technical Group of the Virtual Secretariat to carry out an analysis of its operation in each of the member-states of the RCM. In addition, the Technical Group will, in coordination with the IOM, issue its recommendation for the most appropriate site for location of the server. The President Pro-Tempore is authorized to implement the recommendation.
6. Invite the member countries of the RCM, who so wish, to adopt the document entitled "Framework for the Implementation of the General Program of Cooperation of the RCM for the Return of Extra-regional Migrants" as a point of reference for the negotiation of accords between IOM and member-states of the RCM, in accordance with the legal framework of each country.
7. Authorize the Networks of Liaison Officers for the Ongoing Exchange of Information to Combat Trafficking in Migrants and for Consular Protection to meet within the framework of the RCGM sessions with the aim of optimizing participation in the Conference.
8. Promote the establishment of communication and cooperative networks among the Consulates of the member-states of the RCM with the aim of strengthening consular protection and assistance to regional migrants.
9. Urge member countries to give priority, according to their individual capacity, to the problems resulting from migrant concentrations in border communities in the region through measures such as increased consular attention at the border areas and the development of cooperative programs aimed at facilitating the prompt return of regional migrants to their places of origin.
10. Promote development of cooperative mechanisms with international organizations and NGOs to assist regional migrants held in detention centers.
11. To better identify and combat trafficking networks and the new trends in migration, the Liaison Officer Network for the Ongoing Exchange of Information to Combat Trafficking in Migrants will propose training initiatives, and coordinated, simultaneous or joint actions and the exchange of information about the entry of migrants who have been victims of smuggling or trafficking, the documents utilized and the routes taken.

12. That the projects RCM supports must:
 - a. Be of direct or indirect benefit to the member countries
 - b. Identify and seek diverse sources of financing.
13. Adopt as the theme for the RCM meeting in 2001 the "Modernization of Migration Management and Transborder Cooperation."
14. Urge the member countries of the RCM to sign, ratify, and implement, as may be the case, the U.N. Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the two supplemental Protocols—the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air and the Protocol To Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children. Also, to urge participation in the Central American seminar on this subject, which will take place in Guatemala City in April.
15. Incorporate into the RCM Plan of Action the initiative, "Regional Guidelines for the Protection of Migrant Human Rights in Situations of Arrest, Detention, Deportation and Reception," proposed by the Regional Network of Civil Organizations for Migration (RNCOM); and facilitate, as practicable, according to each country's legal framework, access to information and installations where migrants are located in the above mentioned situations, for research as part of this initiative.
16. Authorize the Liaison Network of Consular Protection Officers to meet within the framework of the RCGM with the RNCOM to develop the guidelines.
17. Task the RCGM to analyze the manner of participation in the activities of the RCM by the private sector in support of the Puebla Process and consistent with the ground rules for participation in the latter.

They also expressed their appreciation for and gave their approval to a proposal by the Delegation of the Government of Guatemala to host the VII Regional Conference on Migration during the first quarter of 2002.

The participating Delegations expressed their deep appreciation to the people and Government of Costa Rica for their warm hospitality and excellent organization of the event.

The Vice-Ministers recognized the successful work of the Regional Network of Civil Organizations for Migration (RNCOM), in particular, the seminar held on "Principles on Basic Standards and Procedures for the Detention, Holding, Deportation/Expulsion, and Reception of Migrants," and reiterated their support for the meaningful dialogue with representatives of civil society organizations and for the strengthening of that cooperation to achieve shared goals.

The Vice-Ministers expressed their satisfaction with the participation, as observers, of Argentina, Colombia and Ecuador, as well as the following international organizations: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean/Demographic Institute for Latin America (ECLAC/CELADE), International Organization for Migration (IOM), and Inter-American Human Rights Commission (IACHR).