COMMITTEE ON MIGRATION ISSUES OEA/Ser.W

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CONCEPT NOTE

THEMATIC MEETING: "MIGRATION GOVERNANCE AND INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL MIGRATION MECHANISMS AND PROCESSES: TOWARDS THE DEVELOPMENT OF A COMPREHENSIVE AND HEMISPHERIC APPROACH
(CRM, CSM, CAM, MIRPS, Quito Process, R4V Platform, GCM, GCR)"

(May 17, 2022)

(Prepared by the Chair of the CAM with support from the Technical Secretariat)

International migration is a major phenomenon of both regional and global affairs. Between 1970 and 2020, the number of international migrants rose from 82 million to 281 million, representing 3.7% of the world's total population. The broad economic, social, and political implications of migration have led to the increasing politicization and polarization of this issue in recent decades, especially with the emergence of populist and nationalist environments and leaders. Given the importance of migration at the international and regional levels, states, multilateral organizations, and nonstate actors face an increasingly urgent need to manage migration and develop a migration system that can maximize its benefits and minimize its costs while seeking to ensure that their policies are consistent with international obligations undertaken by states in the area of international human rights law, international refugee law, and other branches of international law, as well as the principle of shared responsibility.

Against this backdrop, multiple consultation processes have emerged, as have nonbinding instruments, both global and regional, aimed at promoting dialogue, coordination, cooperation, and the sharing of expertise among states in the area of international migration and forced displacement. This has generated new perspectives that view migration as a common good that requires global and regional solutions at the multilateral level. In the Americas, there are now numerous nonbinding processes responsible for addressing migration and forced displacement with respect to certain groups of countries in the region, yielding a positive impact on the generation of government policies. However, a lack of coordination among these processes poses a major impediment to states as they seek all the benefits of migration while promoting the wellbeing of migrants, their families, and their host communities.

Some of the main processes and mechanisms to address the issue of migration and forced displacement in the Americas today are:

**Regional Conference on Migration (RCM) - 1996**

This is a forum for dialogue and regional consultation on migration issues. The RCM bases its discussions and actions on three foundations: protecting and respecting the human rights of migrants, cooperation among countries with civil society participation, and promoting orderly and safe migration. The conference includes all the countries of North and Central America and the Dominican Republic. It also serves as a mechanism for cooperation and dialogue to address regional problems among countries with different migration situations.

**South American Conference on Migration (CSM) or Lima Process – 1999**

This regional consultation process was created over 20 years ago by the countries of South America. It is a forum for cooperation and intergovernmental consultation among the countries of South America on the diasporas; migrant rights; integration; information-sharing; migration statistics; and fighting the trafficking and smuggling of persons. It has monitored changes in migration policies in South America and led to important points of consensus, such as the South American Plan for Human Development of Migration (2010) and the Buenos Aires Declaration (2013). It has strengthened its role of complementing the Specialized Migration Forum of MERCOSUR and its dialogue with the Regional Conference on Migration (CRM), the counterpart forum for consultation among the countries of Central and North America. Its 12 member states are Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, Uruguay, and Venezuela.

**Committee on Migration Issues (CAM) - 2012**

This permanent committee of the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CIDI) of the Organization of American States (OAS) was established by General Assembly resolution AG/RES. 2738 (XLII-O/12) of June 2012. Its predecessor was the Special Committee on Migration Issues, attached to the Permanent Council, which operated from April 2008 to June 2012. The CAM is mandated to act as the Organization's main forum on migration issues. It was also established in Article 58 of the Rules of Procedure for Regular and Special Meetings of CIDI and charged with promoting dialogue, cooperation, and the exchange of expertise to improve practices at the international, regional, subregional, and bilateral levels in migration matters, within a framework of respect for human rights, promoting recognition of the contributions of migrants to the integral development of the Hemisphere.

**Caribbean Migration Consultations (CMC) – 2016**

In this consultation forum, over 20 governments and 10 international organizations exchange information and best practices on a wide range of migration issues. It was officially launched in January 2016 and functioned as a process for policy dialogue on migration, promoting alliances among countries and overseas territories of the Caribbean. Its principal areas of endeavor are the exchange of good practices on refugees and at-risk migrants, the protection of refugees in mixed migration and in border management, and the gathering and exchange of data and intelligence on migration questions.

*This process is not currently in operation.*

**Comprehensive Regional Protection and Solutions Framework (MIRPS**)

This is a pioneering initiative for implementation of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) and for contributions to the Global Compact on Refugees, adopted by Belize, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, and Panama. The MIRPS seeks to mobilize a comprehensive approach to addressing needs identified during national and regional consultations, focusing on providing financial and technical support to affected states in establishing appropriate reception mechanisms in countries of transit, building viable national asylum systems, and improving conditions in countries of origin for safe and dignified returns.

**Quito Process - 2018**

This is a process of cooperation among a group of Latin American countries to respond to the migration crisis in Venezuela. It was established by the Quito Declaration on Human Mobility and Venezuelan Citizens in the Region. The process is not mandatory for member countries, but it urges them to strengthen policies on the reception of Venezuelan migrants. Its main function is to reinforce norms to promote and safeguard migrant rights; various technical groups have been created to that end, working in coordination in the region and following up on problems shared by the host countries in 10 thematic areas. The process also called on the Venezuelan Government to accept cooperation from governments in the region. The members are Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guyana, Mexico, Panama, Peru, and Uruguay.

**Interagency Coordination Platform for Refugees and Migrants from Venezuela (R4V Platform) - 2018**

This is a regional coordination mechanism, led by the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), to respond to the displacement of refugees from Venezuela in Latin America and the Caribbean. The platform is made up of more than 192 partner organizations in 17 countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, with the principal aim of coordinating the response of the various UN agencies and civil society organizations that provide support and services to refugees.

**Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration,** **or Global Compact on Migration** **(GCM) – 2018**

This is the first intergovernmental agreement negotiated under the auspices of the United Nations (UN) the objective of which is to cover all dimensions of international migration in a comprehensive and holistic manner, improving its governance and addressing the challenges associated with migration today, as well as strengthening the contribution of migrants and migration to sustainable development. It was signed by 164 countries, at a UN conference held in Marrakech, Morocco, in December 2018. The global compact is not an international treaty, and is not legally binding; however, like other similar UN agreements, it is considered a politically binding commitment. It has 23 objectives, divided into five thematic areas, which contain a commitment and a series of actions considered appropriate, such as normative instruments and best practices for achieving safe, orderly, and regular migration throughout the migration cycle. It also establishes a cooperation framework in its measures for implementation, follow-up, and review.

 **Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) – 2018**

The establishment of this agreement followed over 18 months of intense discussions among UN member states, experts, civil society, and refugees. The GCR aims to address current challenges in the situations of refugees by implementing a Programme of Action and a Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF). The Compact also strives to ease pressures on host countries, improve the independence of refugees, expand access to solutions in third countries, and support conditions in countries of origin to allow a dignified and safe return.

 Accordingly, this meeting of the CAM is intended as an opportunity for dialogue and coordination in relation to the work done, challenges faced, and good practices developed by these mechanisms and processes for the governance of migration. Procedurally, the meeting is planned around two rounds of questions with the panelists, in which they are allotted seven minutes to answer the following questions:

1. What are the main challenges and good practices that the mechanism or process you represent has developed to respond to migration and/or forced displacement?
2. What opportunities for coordination and cooperation do you envision among the mechanism or process you represent and the other processes or mechanisms present at today's meeting to improve the governance of migration at the hemispheric level in the Americas?

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