COMMITTEE ON MIGRATION ISSUES OEA/Ser.W

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REPORT OF MRS. YESICA FONSECA MARTINEZ,
ALTERNATE REPRESENTATIVE OF PERU,

CHAIR OF THE COMMITTEE ON MIGRATION ISSUES (CAM)

(2019-2020 Term)

1. INSTALLATION AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS OF THE CAM

The Committee on Migration Issues (CAM) was created by resolution AG/RES. 2738 (XLII-O/12) “Strengthening the Topic of Migration in the OAS: Establishment of the Committee on Migration Issues.”

The Committee on Migration Issues was installed for the 2019-2020 term at the XCII regular meeting of CIDI on August 27, 2019. On that same date, Mrs. Yesica Noemí Fonseca Martinez, Alternate Representative of Peru to the OAS, was elected by acclamation to serve as Chair of the Committee.

At the first meeting of the CAM, held on November 5, 2019, Mr. Alvaro Calderón Ponce de León, Minister Counselor and Alternate Representative of Colombia, was elected as the Committee’s Vice Chair.

1. ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT BY THE CAM: 2019-2020 TERM

At the first meeting, held on November 5, 2019, the CAM approved its Work Plan for the 2019-2020 term (CIDI/CAM/doc.65/19 rev. 1  [English](http://scm.oas.org/IDMS/Redirectpage.aspx?class=cidi/CAM/doc.&classNum=65&lang=e)**-**[Spanish](http://scm.oas.org/IDMS/Redirectpage.aspx?class=cidi/CAM/doc.&classNum=65&lang=s)) and, under the plan, the following thematic meetings were held throughout the term:

1. The first meeting took place on November 25, 2019, and focused on the “International and Inter-American Standards on Protection of Migrant Workers and Their Families.” Presentations were made by experts from the OAS Department of Social Inclusion (DSI) and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), who stressed that in recent decades the countries of the Americas have been taking a rights-based approach to migration issues, as reflected in the relevant legal reforms and in the public policies they have been implementing. The meeting also included a presentation by Costa Rica’s Directorate General for Migration and Aliens on the various policies it has implemented in recent years to protect the rights of migrant and refugee populations.
2. The second thematic meeting took place on December 16, 2019, and, in commemoration of International Migrants Day, highlighted the contributions of migrants in host countries. This meeting was attended by experts from the Migration Policy Institute of the United States, Texas A&M University, and Banco Bilbao Vizcaya (BBVA) of Peru. The meeting underscored, among other considerations, how immigrants help to increase productivity levels and raise the Gross Domestic Product when they are integrated into the host country’s workforce, as well as their role in job creation, since many immigrants are entrepreneurs and investors. The State delegates also discussed “Public Policies in the Region to Combat Discrimination, Xenophobia, and Racism,” and there were presentations by representatives of the Governments of Panama, Mexico, and Canada.
3. The third thematic meeting took place on January 30, 2020, to examine “Migration Challenges for the States of the Caribbean, Particularly Small Island States.” The meeting was attended by experts from the University of the West Indies in Barbados and the World Bank, as well as representatives of the Caribbean Diaspora in the United States. At the request of the member states, a report prepared by the Department of Social Inclusion (DSI) on activities related to international migration that are carried out within the framework of the OAS was presented to the CAM.
4. The fourth thematic meeting of the CAM was held on February 27, 2020, and focused on analyzing various international initiatives to help the region’s countries address humanitarian needs and facilitate the social integration of migrant populations in the Americas. Experts from the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) attended the session. It was noted that the international community plays a critical role in providing technical and financial support to the countries of the Hemisphere in response to the increased flow of migrants and refugees from the region, especially from Venezuela, Nicaragua, Haiti, and Northern Central America.
5. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Chair found it appropriate to use the fifth and final thematic meeting of the CAM to address the impact of the pandemic on migrants in the Americas. At this session, held on June 5, 2020, the Director of the Department of Social Inclusion presented the section on migrants from the “Practical Guide to Inclusive and Rights-based Responses to COVID-19 in the Americas,” published by the Secretariat for Access to Rights and Equity. There were also presentations by experts from the IACHR, the Pan American Health Organization, and the International Committee of the Red Cross.

At the same time, in keeping with its mandate to ensure that the institutions of the inter-American system meet the international migration objectives assigned to them through the Inter-American Program for the Promotion and Protection of the Human Rights of Migrants, Including Migrant Workers and Their Families [AG/RES. 2883 (XLVI-O/16)], the Chair of the CAM called upon the IACHR, the Inter-American Children’s Institute (IIN), the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM), and the Department of Public Security of the OAS Secretariat for Multidimensional Security to submit written reports on the work they have done over the past year to meet the Program’s objectives. This information was included in the Report by the Chair of the CAM on Follow-Up to the Inter-American Program (CIDI/CAM/doc.80/20 [Spanish](http://scm.oas.org/IDMS/Redirectpage.aspx?class=cidi/CAM/doc.&classNum=80&lang=s) |[English](http://scm.oas.org/IDMS/Redirectpage.aspx?class=cidi/CAM/doc.&classNum=80&lang=e) | [French](http://scm.oas.org/IDMS/Redirectpage.aspx?class=cidi/CAM/doc.&classNum=80&lang=f) | Portuguese) which was distributed to all the States on August 12, 2020, and presented at the CIDI meeting of September 29, 2020.

Finally, under the auspices of the CAM, the OAS member states negotiated and agreed upon various paragraphs on migration to be included in the “Fostering the Promotion and Protection of the Human Rights of Migrants, Including Migrant Workers and Their Families, in accordance with the Inter-American Program on This Subject to Enhance Their Contribution to Development” strategic line of the draft omnibus resolution of the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CIDI), for submission to the General Assembly at its fiftieth regular session.

1. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Chair is grateful for the support provided by the Vice Chair of the CAM, Alvaro Calderón Ponce de León, Minister Counselor and Alternate Representative of Colombia, and would like to thank the delegations of the member states for their valuable contributions during the negotiation of the paragraphs to be included in the draft CIDI omnibus resolution, as well as for their participation in the activities set out in the CAM Work Plan for the 2019-2020 term. She would also like to thank the Executive Secretariat for Integral Development and the Department of Social Inclusion of the Secretariat for Access to Rights and Equity, which serve as the Secretariat and Technical Secretariat of the CAM, respectively, for their valuable support.

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