COMMITTEE ON MIGRATION ISSUES OEA/Ser.W

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR OF THE CAM

COMMEMORATION OF INTERNATIONAL MIGRANTS DAY

December 18, 2020

Today we commemorate the International Migrants Day, as declared by United Nations General Assembly resolution 55/93 in 2000. Since then, every December 18, States and societies in general remember the duty to pay greater attention to those who migrate, on the premise that to understand migration for the complex phenomenon it is requires giving consideration to its causes and consequences.

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At a time when the COVID-19 pandemic has exposed all kinds of vulnerabilities at the global level, attention should be paid to international migration as a multidimensional phenomenon that impacts countries of origin, transit, destination, and return. Establishing conditions for orderly, safe, regular migration can contribute to the development of States and improve the living conditions of migrants, their families, and their home and host communities.

According to the United Nations report “International Migration 2019,” the number of migrants in the world reached 272 million and, in the Americas it rose from 47 million in 2000 to 70.3 million in 2019. Thus, migration has become an increasingly important phenomenon for the region, manifesting itself in different ways and requiring responses based on multilateral regional cooperation.

OAS member states are agreed on the importance of promoting evidence-based public policies to address the structural causes of migration and reduce the risks associated with irregular migration.

Today, on International Migrants Day, we reaffirm the importance of continuing to strengthen and promote constructive dialogue and regional and bilateral cooperation on migration issues, as highlighted in the resolution "Advancing Hemispheric Initiatives on Integral Development: Promoting Resilience” adopted at the OAS General Assembly in October this year, and, as that resolution provides, of 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.

As Chair of the Committee on Migratory Issues, I urge OAS member states, in 2021, to continue promoting dialogue and cooperation to comprehensively address international migration through exchanges of information, experience, and good practices, including on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on migrants and on policies adopted by the region’s countries in the current context.