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**CONCEPT PAPER**

REGULAR MEETING OF THE

INTER-AMERICAN COUNCIL FOR INTEGRAL DEVELOPMENT (CIDI)

May 31, 2022

(Prepared by the Chair of CIDI with support from the Department of Social Inclusion
of the Secretariat for Access to Rights and Equity)

TOPIC: **MULTILATERAL APPROACH TO MIGRATION IN THE HEMISPHERE**

1. **Background and Rationale**

Among the most notable and complex contemporary manifestations of globalization, international migration is a cross-border issue that no individual state can tackle on its own. Nevertheless, the challenge is still to develop a coherent and formal multilateral structure for managing it at the regional level in the Americas.

By the end of 2020, the United Nations had recorded nearly 281 million migrants worldwide, 26% of them – or 73.5 million people – lived in the Americas, accounting for 7% of the region's total population. Eight out of every 10 migrants in the Americas are in North America, while South America is host to almost 11 million migrants, many of them from other countries in the South American region, mostly Venezuela. According to International Labor Organization (ILO) estimates, 1 out of every 4 migrant workers lives in the Americas. Furthermore, remittances are among migrants' many contributions to development in their countries of origin. According to World Bank estimates, remittances will have reached a new high of US$126 billion by 2021 in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Globally and regionally, mechanisms and processes are in place to deal with migration and forced displacement, but they are often fragmented into a series of institutions that attach different degrees of importance to the types of agreements, the players involved, and the levels of governance. Put another way, migration governance has remained largely a matter for sovereign states, with no formal multilateral institutional framework at the level of the Americas region.[[1]](#footnote-1)/

At the global and regional levels alike, the institutional scenario of migration governance is increasingly complex and ever-changing and, coupled with the recent impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, this has posed multiple challenges for governments in the region in terms of developing migration policies to deal with migration as a normal human phenomenon rather than through containment or deterrence approaches to migration.

Against that backdrop, it is critical for migration to be integrated into development policy planning within a human rights-based context. The challenge is therefore to link migration and development from a non-linear standpoint by examining how migration impacts development and how development policies affect migration.

The region stands at a critical juncture as it nears the Summit of the Americas to be hosted in Los Angeles, United States, in June 2022. This Summit could be an ideal starting point for the conversation on a hemispheric approach to further solidify the principle of shared responsibility, which holds that no single country should by itself shoulder the cost of receiving and integrating migrants and refugees.[[2]](#footnote-2)/

1. **Purpose of the meeting**

 This CIDI meeting will offer member states an opportunity to discuss actionable priorities for advancing regional collaboration through comprehensive and sustainable hemispheric migration governance as a vital strategy to meet the human development needs of countries of origin, transit, destination, and return for migrants in the Americas, including needs stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic.

 The meeting will examine initiatives to help improve migration governance with a view to managing migration in an orderly, humane, safe, and regular manner and in line with the international obligations that the member states of the Organization of American States (OAS) have undertaken in this area, and in line with the principle of shared responsibility as well. The purpose of this meeting is also to discuss the specific actions being developed by member states to improve and strengthen migration management at the regional level, as well as to support the design of public policies to promote humane, orderly, safe, and regular migration management at the regional level – policies beneficial to development in countries of origin, transit, destination, and return of migrants and in particular for migrants in vulnerable situations.

**3. Relevance to the OAS General Secretariat and its mandates**

 The theme proposed for this CIDI meeting is in line with the issues covered in the resolution **“Advancing Hemispheric Initiatives on Integral Development: Promoting Resilience”** [AG/RES. 2967 (LI-O/21)] that the Assembly adopted in November 2021, urging the member states to “acknowledge the importance of a safe, orderly, and regular migration and the creation of evidence-based public policies to address the causes and structural consequences of migration and reduce the risks associated with irregular migration.” The resolution at the same time urges the member states, in keeping with the pertinent obligations under international human rights law, to strengthen their public policies for countering discrimination, racism, xenophobia.

 Said resolution also recognizes the challenges of human mobility caused by the effects of natural disasters, environmental degradation and biodiversity loss caused by climate change; and underscores the need to address the structural causes that increase disaster risk, with the consequent displacement of people, focusing on mitigation and prevention actions.

1. **Structure of the meeting**

For the purposes of the meeting, various speakers have been invited to explore the main challenges and opportunities involved in managing migration and building migration governance at the hemispheric level in the Americas, and to share information on the formulation and implementation of more inclusive and accessible responses from a perspective of human rights and equity in terms of gender, age, and diversity. The member states will have an opportunity to take part in an interactive dialogue guided by the Chair of CIDI.

**PART ONE:** Presentations by high-level immigration authorities, up to 7 minutes per presentation:

* Mr. Jerome Xavier Walcott, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Barbados.
* Ms. Antonia Urrejola Noguera, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Chile
* Ms. Erika Mouynes, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Panama
* Mr. Eduardo Enrique Reina, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Honduras

Guiding questions for the presentations by high-level officials:

1. What are the main challenges your country faces in managing migration?
2. What collaboration or technical support opportunities could your country contribute to hemispheric migration management and governance?
3. How can existing dialogue and technical cooperation forums (such as the RCM, CSM, MIRPS, Quito Process, etc.) be leveraged to build a hemispheric multilateral mechanism to streamline ongoing efforts?

**PART TWO:** Technical panel discussion with participants getting 5 minutes to answer guiding questions. After the question-and-answer period, delegations will be invited to share on best practices, needs, underlying challenges, and specific opportunities and/or demand for hemispheric collaboration in the subject area.

**MODERATOR:** Ambassador María del Carmen Roquebert, Permanent Representative of Panama to the Organization of American States (OAS), Chair of CIDI

**Guest panelists:**

* Ricardo Martins Rizzo, Head of the United Nations Division III at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and of the Council of the Brazilian National Commission for UNESCO – Focal Point of the Pro Tempore Presidency of the Quito Process
* Mr. Diego Beltrand, International Organization for Migration (IOM) Director General’s Special Envoy for refugee and migrant flows from Venezuela
* Mr. José Samaniego, Director for the Americas, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
* Mr. Joel Hernández García, IACHR Rapporteur on the Rights of Migrants
* Ms. Betilde Muñoz-Pogossian, Director of the Department of Social Inclusion, OAS Secretariat for Access to Rights and Equity

Guiding questions for the presentations:

1. Representatives of the OAS, IACHR, and the Quito Process: What are the main challenges and specific opportunities in terms of migration policy that could be tackled from a hemispheric standpoint?
2. UNHCR and IOM representatives: What measures do you consider useful for developing migration governance at the regional level and for an institutional framework to make it operational?
3. For all experts: What could be key features of a human rights- and development-based regional migration governance that is also based on the principle of shared responsibility?
4. **Meeting outcomes**

The session is expected to help:

1. Provide information on the main trends, challenges, and specific opportunities for OAS member states to enhance national and regional policies to manage and govern migration and forced displacement.
2. Identify priorities for action and opportunities for cooperation based on the principle of shared responsibility in migration governance at the hemispheric level, with a view to fostering development and social inclusion at the regional level.
3. Encourage member states to share best practices, policies, and programs yielding success in handling migration and forced displacement at the national, subregional, and regional levels, with particular attention to the most vulnerable.
4. Raise member states’ awareness of the positive impacts of human rights- and development-based regional migration governance that is also based on the principle of shared responsibility.

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1. Alexander Betts (2011) “Global Migration Governance”. Oxford University Press. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. # Betilde Muñoz-Pogossian (2022) “Americas Quarterly: The Summit Is a Great Chance for Better Cooperation on Migration”. Available at: <https://americasquarterly.org/article/the-summit-is-a-great-chance-for-better-cooperation-on-migration/>

 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)