

U.S., LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN ORGANIZATIONS RESPOND TO THE LOS ANGELES DECLARATION ON MIGRATION AND PROTECTION

Los Angeles, CA —On June 10th, in a parallel event to the Ninth Summit of the Americas, 20 governments signed the [Los Angeles Declaration on Migration and Protection](#). In response, migrant rights and human rights organizations from across the U.S., Latin America, and the Caribbean issued the following statement:

“In light of the changing migration trends over the last decade and the lack of protections and access to basic rights in transit and receiving countries, we recognize the importance of governments from across the Western Hemisphere coming together to rethink the way they approach migration and protection based on the principles of human rights.

“We hope the Los Angeles Declaration on Migration and Protection will be more than a mere statement and will become actionable commitments that uphold the rights of migrants, asylum seekers and refugees. This includes the right to seek asylum, in the country where people feel safe; access to rights throughout the migration process; assuming shared responsibility to welcome and protect people on the move through increased humanitarian assistance and safe avenues of protection; regular channels for migration that transcend labor supply and demand, promoting pathways that are accessible for women, men, children and families on the move; and increased financial support for the integration of displaced populations and host communities.

“Human rights also include the right to personal freedom, due process, protection of families, children, vulnerable groups that can be at greater risk of human rights violations and violence such as women, the LGBTI+ community, indigenous peoples and Afro-descendant communities. This includes the recognition of indigenous peoples through the creation of a language access plan.

“To ensure that the Declaration does not remain just an expression of good intentions and aspirations, the governments of the region must ensure that they develop action plans for fulfilling the rights-respecting commitments assumed in the Declaration with clear indicators and timelines for follow-up. As part of this process, we urge sustained consultation with migrants, asylum seekers, refugees, returnees and host communities across the Americas, as well as a wide range of migrants’ rights organizations, human rights organizations and Indigenous-led organizations, including for evaluation and monitoring progress towards meeting its goals.

“While we recognize the more integral approach to migration that is reflected in the Declaration, we are concerned about the continued focus by governments on cooperation on border control and enforcement, including the lack of additional accountability and oversight mechanisms, information sharing without appropriate safeguards in place which leads to risks of privacy and surveillance, and the implementation of visa regimes, which can negatively impact individuals seeking refuge and lead them to travel along more dangerous routes. Given the mixed nature of migration trends, and in lieu of ineffective and harmful enforcement-based approaches, we urge

states to implement protection-sensitive entry systems that are required to identify protection needs, protect against refoulement, and ensure access to asylum procedures.

“We also urge governments to create joint initiatives that prioritize combating crimes and human rights violations against migrants. Ending violence against migrants requires demilitarizing immigration enforcement, decriminalizing migrants in policy and political rhetoric, curtailing the use of detention, and holding state, business, and criminal actors accountable for the harm, exploitation and abuse of migrants. Fighting xenophobia means developing policies that prohibit and counter hatred, reflect input from immigrants and refugees themselves, support host communities, and enhance social and economic integration through access to legal status, safe shelter, dignified work, education and healthcare

“Various humanitarian crises across the Americas require an immediate response and engagement. The Declaration is an opportunity for governments to reset the regional approach to migration management; reconsider a framework of shared responsibility; help strengthen migration protection systems throughout the Americas; build from good practices in the region; ensure that all individuals have the right to seek and enjoy asylum and other forms of protection and to uphold the principle of non-refoulement”.

ACCSS, Guatemala

Alianza Americas

Asociación Rumiñahui

Asociación Pop No’j, Guatemala

Asylum Access México (AAMX) A.C

Bloque Latinoamericano sobre Migración

CARECEN-LA

Center for Democracy in the Americas (CDA)

Centro de Atención a la Familia Migrante Indígena -CAFAMI A.C.

Centro de Estudios Legales y Sociales (CELS)

Center for Gender & Refugee Studies (CGRS)

Comunidades Indígena en Liderazgo (CIELO)

Estancia del Migrante González y Martínez

Encuentros Servicio Jesuita a Migrantes (Perú)

Fundación para la Justicia y el Estado Democrático de Derecho (FJEDD)

Hope Border Institute | Instituto Fronterizo Esperanza

Instituto para las Mujeres en la Migración (IMUMI)

Latin America Working Group (LAWG)

Latinas en Poder

National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (NNIRR)

Organismo Cristiano de Desarrollo Integral de Honduras (OCIDH)

Oxfam America

Red Jesuita con Migrantes - Latinoamérica y el Caribe (RJM-LAC)

Sin Fronteras, I.A.P.

Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA)

Women’s Refugee Commission