



**XVI SOUTH AMERICAN CONFERENCE ON MIGRATION**  
*Asunción, Paraguay, November 3rd and 4th, 2016*

*“Towards free movement”*

**DECLARATION OF ASUNCION**

On November 3rd. and 4th, 2016, at the city of Asuncion, Paraguay, the XVI South American Conference on Migration was held (XVI SACM), with the Presidency Pro Tempore of Paraguay and the participation of Delegations from the Governments of the Argentine Republic, the Federative Republic of Brazil, the Republic of Chile, the Republic of Colombia, the Republic of Ecuador, the Republic of Paraguay, the Republic of Peru, the Oriental Republic of Uruguay, and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, besides several international organizations, special guests and civil society representatives. Moreover, the Conference had the support of the Technical Secretariat run by the International Organization for Migration (TS-IOM).

The central topic of the XVI SACM under the motto *“Towards free movement”* was the reaffirmation of the status of migrants as subjects of rights and the fact that free circulation is a right inherent to all persons.

The SACM agrees on fostering and promoting the ordered, safe and regular migration, as well as on making breakthrough in the implementation of mechanisms which facilitate the free circulation of persons, in the framework of internal rules and signed agreements.

It is aware of any progress achieved in the member states and expresses its appreciation when their respective migration policies and the institutional development facilitating migration governance in the region become evident.

It is with pleasure that the SACM acknowledges the recognition of IOM as a UN associated agency in the area of migration, in the framework of the Relationship Agreement between the United Nations Organization and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), which reflects the importance of migration in the global agenda.

It highlights the presence of migration as an issue in the Sustainable Development Goals and emphasizes that that implies a challenge and an opportunity for the SACM to contribute in the development of that topic from its scope of action.



It approves and appreciates the adoption of the SACM Regulations for its Organization and Operation.

### **CENTRAL THEME I. HUMAN RIGHTS OF MIGRANTS**

The SACM reiterates its commitment to the recognition of migrant persons as subjects of rights.

It reaffirms the scope of the access to justice concept, as stated on the occasion of the SACM held in Chile and expressed in the document issued by the Technical Secretariat under the title: "Access to justice of migrants in the South American region". In this sense it agrees on the fact that access to justice does not only include the recognition of rights by simply passing laws, but it also especially requires the development of actions by the government tending to knock down the hindrances that prevent migrants from effectively enjoying the rights they are entitled to.

It agrees on the importance of migratory regularization as a basis for the integration of migrants in the host society and it highlights the fact that it constitutes a concept which was present in this Conference from its outset. Furthermore, it reiterates that the MERCOSUR's Residency Agreement, which almost all countries participating in the SACM have signed, is an easy access way to regularization and in that sense they foster its adequate application as well as the application of other national processes of migratory regularization implemented in the last years.

It highlights the importance of consular assistance to guarantee that migrants have access to justice and it urges the governments to facilitate and ensure its effective application.

Within this framework, it values the possibility of becoming aware of the situation of access to justice of migrants in the region departing from the initiative of requiring the different countries good practices on that subject matter, by returning the form/grid sent by the Technical Secretariat to the delegations and it agrees on the suggestion of taking as a basis the Handbook on Good Practices for Access to Justice for the MERCOSUR and associated states, published in the framework of the meetings of the Ministers of Justice of MERCOSUR and associated states in 2012.



It stressed the importance of the promotion of the right to vote and its exercise by migrants in our territories as well as compatriots residing overseas, as a tool for the consolidation of democracy and for building citizenship.

It agrees to incorporate to the Central Theme I of the Conference, the topics related to trafficking in persons, with a follow-up of previous statements on this subject and it puts the stress on the preparation of information, on the exchange of good practices regarding rules and on institutionality, development of training initiatives as well as cooperation among countries.

It agrees on the importance of programmes of assistance and protection of victims of trafficking in persons in the framework of the recognition of their rights, following the national and international documents on that matter.

It highlights the special importance of incorporating the gender perspective in migration policies, guaranteeing the access to rights of migrant women, girls and adolescents and their families, and recognizing its contribution to their countries of origin and destination, fostering its autonomy and empowerment and fighting all discriminatory and violent practices to which they are exposed.

The SACM is committed to:

- a) Entrust the TS to continue with the summary of good practices on Access to Justice of migrants, which will be enriched with the contributions of all countries.
- b) Continue driving initiatives aimed at the facilitation of migration regularization, fostering the exercise of the rights of migrants, following the set of laws and public policies of each country.
- c) Continue including the topic of trafficking in persons in the agenda of the next SACM's meetings, with the aim of deepening and contributing with proposals for a joint activity and to facilitate international cooperation on that issue.
- d) Entrust the TS the updating of reports regarding Trafficking in persons in the region, prepared in 2007 in the framework of the SACM.



- e) Entrust the TS the development of a workshop about gender perspective in migration policies.

## **CENTRAL THEME II. MIGRATION AND THE SOUTH AMERICAN INTEGRATION**

The SACM takes note of the progress achieved by the Technical Secretariat in the presentation of the document *“Report on the status of facilitation of border transit in South America”*, which gathers the commitments of member countries as regards border transit and is thankful for such document.

It highlights the importance of continuously working on the infrastructure of border crossings and on the incorporation of technology, as well as on analyzing new modalities of border mobility, following the motto of the XVI SACM.

The SACM expresses its commitment to request the TS to continue with the study of the dynamics of border areas, adding new findings whatsoever.

## **CENTRAL THEME III. STRENGTHENING MIGRATION MANAGEMENT**

The SACM highlights the importance of the participation and the contribution of migrants in the development of the local community; and in this direction, it stresses the need that local governments, in the framework of national policies, issue social inclusion policies and ensure the visibility of such contribution, with special emphasis on the promotion of rights and encouragement of inter-cultural dialogue.

It gives special value to the TS report on Migration, environment and climate change: agenda 2030, good practices and challenges for the South American region, taking note of recommendations and proposals on that subject for its inclusion in the SACM’s agenda. Within that framework, the Chilean delegation informs of an initiative to organize a workshop on a regional level to develop guidelines and a practical guidance for people who have been displaced in border areas, proposed by the Platform on Disaster-related Displacement, during the first semester of 2017. The venue will be decided by the Troika and the TS.

The Paraguayan delegation has informed and proposed the SACM a working document under the title *“Consular Assistance Mechanism”*.





The SACM expresses its permanent commitment to continue strengthening the link with its compatriots residing overseas. This commitment is based on the recognition of the invaluable contribution migrants make to the destination countries regarding economic, social, inter-cultural and scientific development, as well as the national development of the countries of origin.

The SACM is committed to:

- a) Entrust the TS the preparation of a study about good practices regarding the role of the local governments in the migratory governance.
- b) Schedule the preparation of a regional workshop to develop guidelines and practical guidance for displaced persons in border areas.
- c) Analyze and make contributions and comments to the document “Mechanism of Consular Assistance”.
- d) Entrust the TS the organization of a study on the relationship between climate change, environment and migration, as well as jointly schedule with the TS a training workshop on that subject.
- e) Jointly schedule with the TS a workshop on good practices about policies for linking with compatriots residing overseas.

#### **CENTRAL THEME IV. INTERNATIONAL PROJECTION OF THE SOUTH AMERICAN REGION**

The SACM becomes aware of the invitation that the Regional Conference on Migration has made to the PPT and the TS to participate, as special guests, in the next XXI Meeting of Vice-ministers of the SACM, to take place on November 17th and 18th at the city of San Pedro Sula, Honduras. The SACM will be represented by the PPT and members of the Troika.

Likewise, it becomes aware of the IX Meeting of the Global Forum on Migration and Development, to take place at Dhaka, Bangladesh, from December 10th to December 12th this year, and proposed the convenience of having the SACM to present their advancements to date.



The Chilean Delegation informs about the organization of the V CELAC's Meeting on Migration and the V High Level Meeting of the Dialogue CELAC-EU on Migration, to be held in Santiago de Chile, between November 8th and November 11th this year. The information in relation to the agenda and the contents of these activities was distributed among delegations. The SACM encourages member states to participate and take advantage of these scenarios to disseminate the vision and the progress of the Conference in the field of migration.

Being aware of the importance of the commitments established in the High Level Plenary Meeting of the United Nations General Assembly, as an answer to the massive movements of refugees and migrants, and of the negotiations to be held between 2017-2018, to agree on a Worldwide Pact for a safe, regular and ordered migration, it agrees on having a leading role presenting and defending this debate, with its vision and position, proposals, priorities, and migration realities which have an impact in South America.

The SACM is committed to working to actively participate in the negotiations of the World Pact for a safe, regular and ordered migration, through the Presidency Pro Tempore, the Troika and the TS.

## **UPDATE OF THE SACM'S PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES**

The SACM becomes aware of the report issued by the Chilean Delegation, in its status as outgoing Presidency, regarding the contents and the update process of the "SACM's Principles and Guidelines", and it agrees to prepare, in the short run, a document gathering the progress of the global and regional agenda in the last 5 years, with the intention of counting on an Action Plan for the years to come.

The SACM is committed to requesting the TS to gather contributions from the countries (through a matrix) for updating the Principles and Guidelines of the SACM, in order to prepare a text to be revised at the next intersessional meeting (2017). The first draft should be ready in March 2017.

## **INTERVENTION OF OBSERVERS AND SPECIAL GUESTS**

The SACM appreciates the participation, and takes note of the interventions, of the representatives of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees; of the International Labor Organization; UN Women; the International Air Transport Association; the Committee on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and their Families; and the Committee on the Rights of the Child, highlighting the work of these international



entities in relation to the SACM's agenda.

### **INTERVENTION OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS**

It acknowledges for the participation and takes note of the interventions of representatives of the Migration and Development International Network, and the Scalabrini International Migration Network, recognizing the work that they do in the promotion and protection of migrants, the assistance to vulnerable people and its contribution to the best migratory governance in our region.

### **MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS**

It expresses its commitment to entrust the TS with the task of gathering information on good practices and studies carried out on transfers of remittances made by migrants.

It acknowledged with great pleasure the offering of the Republic of Peru to host the XII Intersessional Meeting of the SACM, during the third quarter of 2017, in coordination with the PTP of Paraguay and the Troika.

The SACM gladly acknowledges the offering of the Oriental Republic of Uruguay to host the XVII South American Conference on Migration in November 2017.

It acknowledges the International Organization for Migration for the organization of the conference about "The SACM and the Migratory Governance in South American countries" (lecturer: Doctor Lelio Mármora), as well as for the presentation of the book "The SACM 2000-2015".

The SACM expresses its recognition to the Government of Paraguay as Presidency Pro Tempore and as host country, for the hospitality they dispensed and the excellent organization and development of the XVI SACM. It also thanks the Technical Secretariat for the permanent support.

In witness whereof the present document is signed at the city of Asunción, Republic of Paraguay, on November 4th 2016.

# SACM XVI South American Conference on Migration

Paraguay, 3rd and 4th November, 2016



On behalf of the Republic of Colombia

On behalf of the Federative Republic of Brazil

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On behalf of the Republic of Chile

On behalf of the Republic of Ecuador

On behalf of the Republic of Paraguay

On behalf of the Republic of Peru

On behalf of the Oriental Republic of Uruguay

On behalf of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela