



U.S. Department of
Homeland Security

El Salvador Begins Implementation of Asylum Cooperative Agreement

Release Date: December 15, 2020

On December 15, 2020, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) announced that the United States and El Salvador have concluded the implementation accords for the Asylum Cooperative Agreement (ACA) signed in September 2019. Under the ACA, certain migrants requesting asylum or similar humanitarian protection at the U.S. border will be transferred to El Salvador to seek protection in El Salvador.

“Implementation of the Asylum Cooperative Agreement between the United States and El Salvador is a critical step in the establishment of a truly regional approach to migration, and, more specifically, to the offer of protection to those migrants who are victims of persecution,” said Acting Secretary of Homeland Security Chad F. Wolf. “I am grateful to the Government of El Salvador, and to President Bukele personally, for their commitment to the implementation of the ACA, and for the resulting expansion of avenues for protection available to persecuted migrants in the region.”

In order to confront the ongoing humanitarian and security crisis at the Southwest border due to historic levels of irregular migration and human smuggling, the U.S. and El Salvador signed an ACA on September 20, 2019 to allow migrants to seek protection within the region in El Salvador. Today’s announcement means that all operational details relating to the implementation of the ACA have been worked out between the United States and El Salvador.

Implementation of the ACA will involve and facilitate cooperation between the two governments to expand El Salvador’s systems for offering humanitarian protections. Building El Salvador’s protection capacity will involve the use of best practices developed by the United States and the international community to increase protection options for vulnerable populations.

DHS is using every available tool at its disposal to mitigate the crisis. During Fiscal Year 2019, more than 71% of migrants apprehended at the U.S. Southwest border were nationals of El

Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. All these countries have now reached agreements with the Trump Administration to confront irregular migration; and all three ACAs have now entered into force.

For a fact sheet regarding DHS agreements and arrangements with El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras, [please follow this link](https://www.dhs.gov/publication/fact-sheet-dhs-agreements-guatemala-honduras-and-el-salvador). (<https://www.dhs.gov/publication/fact-sheet-dhs-agreements-guatemala-honduras-and-el-salvador>)

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Keywords: [Acting Secretary Chad Wolf](/keywords/acting-secretary-chad-wolf) (/keywords/acting-secretary-chad-wolf), [Asylum](/keywords/asylum-applications) (/keywords/asylum-applications),

[Department of Homeland Security \(DHS\)](/keywords/dhs) (/keywords/dhs)

Last Published Date: December 15, 2020