

BRIEFING ROOM

Fact Sheet: The Los Angeles Declaration on Migration and Protection U.S. Government and Foreign Partner Deliverables

JUNE 10, 2022

STATEMENTS AND RELEASES

Today, President Biden joins leaders from across the Western Hemisphere to present the Los Angeles Declaration on Migration and Protection at the Summit of the Americas. The Declaration seeks to mobilize the entire region around bold actions that will transform our approach to managing migration in the Americas. The Declaration is organized around four key pillars: (1) stability and assistance for communities; (2) expansion of legal pathways; (3) humane migration management; and (4) coordinated emergency response.

In preparation for the Summit, the United States and other countries in the region developed a suite of bold new migration-related deliverables.

Pillar I: Stability and Assistance for Communities

Addressing the unprecedented migration crisis in the region requires us to rethink how we view multilateral development finance and how we manage the strains on our economies. Globally, International Financial Institutions (IFIs) and development assistance have been directed to poor and low-income countries, designations which no longer apply to most of Latin America and the Caribbean. The need for economic stabilization and support is particularly important in countries housing the more than six million refugees and migrants.

- **Belize will implement in August 2022 a program to regularize Central American and CARICOM migrants** who have been living illegally in the country for a specified time.
- **Colombia's leadership in responding to Venezuelan migrants and refugees with forward-leaning policies based on solidarity, humanitarian relief, and protection:** Colombia reaffirms its commitment to fully implement its announcement of temporary protected status for displaced Venezuelan migrants and refugees in its territory. As of June 10, it has granted regularization documents to over 1.2 million individuals, allowing them to work legally, access public and private services, integrate successfully, and contribute to Colombia's economy and society. Colombia further reaffirms its commitment to grant regularization permits to 1.5M Venezuelan migrants and refugees in total, by the end of August 2022.

- **Costa Rica commits to plan for a renewal of the special temporary complementary protection category scheme for migrants from Venezuela, Nicaragua, and Cuba**, that have arrived prior to March 2020, contingent on obtaining necessary financial resources, and to convene an international task force to secure additional direct support and financial resources to support its implementation.
- **Ecuador issued an executive decree that creates a path to a regular migration status for Venezuelans who entered the country regularly via an official port of entry, but who are currently out of status.** This process includes unaccompanied or separated migrant children and a migration amnesty. It contemplates the provision of identification documents for the regularization process, taking into account the current difficulties facing Venezuelan citizens. It intends to expand this process to include all Venezuelans.
- **The United States will provide additional U.S. support for a crisis response mechanism on migration.** Working with Congress, we will provide an additional \$25 million to the Global Concessional Financing Facility (GCOFF) housed at the World Bank to prioritize countries in Latin America such as Ecuador and Costa Rica in their newly announced regularization programs for displaced migrant and refugee populations residing within their respective countries. The new funding would support registration processes, the extension of social services, integration programs, and would benefit host

communities that have generously opened their doors to the most vulnerable.

- **The United States will announce \$314 million in new PRM and USAID funding for stabilization efforts in the Americas.** USAID and the State Department's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) will announce more than \$314 million in new funding for humanitarian and development assistance for refugees and vulnerable migrants across the hemisphere. This includes support for socio-economic integration and humanitarian aid for Venezuelans in 17 countries of the region.

Pillar II: Legal Pathways and Protection

Expanding legal pathways for protection and opportunity is at the heart of efforts to humanely address irregular migration in the Americas. The goal is to *change the way* people migrate. Countries in the region have strategically pegged priority legal pathway programs with the primary reasons for migrating: (1) jobs; (2) protection; and (3) family reunification.

- **Canada's resettlement and complementary pathways initiative:** Canada is welcoming record numbers of refugees and in line with Canada's immigration levels plans. As part of these growing efforts, Canada will increase refugee resettlement from the Americas and aims to welcome up to 4,000 individuals by 2028, providing durable solutions to a number of refugees in the

region. Canada recognizes the important support of the UNHCR and the IOM in the region. Canada will also look to promote its regular pathways in the region to help provide opportunities including to those in vulnerable situations. For example, Canada will advance a promotion and recruitment efforts related to its Francophone Immigration Program which may offer opportunities to French speaking newcomers such as Haitians with skills and experience, some of which may have been displaced due to the pandemic.

- **Canada is addressing root causes and investing \$26.9 million, in 2022-2023, in additional funding toward migration- and protection-related capacity building in the Americas.** This funding is supporting projects across Latin America and the Caribbean focused on supporting the socio-economic and labour market integration of refugees and migrants; improving border and migration management systems; contributing to the safeguarding of migrants, refugees and host communities' rights; advancing gender equality and inclusive economic growth; and preventing and tackling migrant smuggling and trafficking in persons.
- **Canada expects to welcome more than 50,000 agricultural workers from Mexico, Guatemala and the Caribbean in 2022.** Canada is a strong supporter of labour mobility and continues to actively promote regular pathways for migration, including temporary foreign worker programs that respond to employer

labour needs, to address our labour market gaps and as alternatives to irregular migration.

- **Guatemala approves new legislation to promote legal labor migration programs.** On June 1, the Government of Guatemala approved new legislation to incentivize fair recruitment and expand legal pathways for its citizens. The legislation exempts airline tickets from value-added and departure taxes for those traveling for temporary work abroad contracts obtained through the Ministry of Labor. The new initiative is part of a broader set of Guatemalan programs and policies to expand access to labor migration programs, ensure ethical recruitment, and promote legal protections for Guatemalan workers.
- **Mexico will expand the existing Border Worker Card program to include 10,000 to 20,000 additional beneficiaries.** This program allows greater labor mobility to meet employer needs in Mexico, promote economic development in Central America, and provide an alternative to irregular migration.
- **Mexico will launch a new temporary labor program providing work opportunities in Mexico for 15,000 to 20,000 workers from Guatemala per year.** The Government of Mexico aims to expand eligibility for that program to include Honduras and El Salvador in the medium-term.
- **Mexico will integrate 20,000 recognized refugees into the Mexican labor market over the next three years.** With the

support of UNHCR, the program would connect individuals with legal status as recognized refugees in Mexico to work opportunities in regions with labor shortages. A joint initiative with UNHCR, the private sector and the Mexican Government, both refugees and firms will benefit from successful integration into Mexico's formal labor market.

- **The United States will launch the development of a \$65 million U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) pilot program to support U.S. farmers hiring agricultural workers under the H-2A program.** In collaboration with other agencies, [USDA](#) is exploring a multi-year pilot program funded by the President's American Rescue Plan to provide grants to agricultural employers that hire farmworkers from Northern Central American countries under the seasonal H-2A visa program and agree to additional protections to benefit both U.S. and H-2A workers. The pilot will promote the resiliency of our food and agricultural supply chain and three major Administration priorities: (1) driving U.S. economic recovery by addressing current labor shortages in agriculture; (2) reducing irregular migration through the expansion of legal pathways; and (3) improving working conditions for U.S. and migrant agricultural workers. USDA will enter into a cooperative agreement with the United Farm Workers of America (UFW), which will work with relevant stakeholders, including farmers, farmworkers, farmworker advocates and unions, to ensure that

the agency benefits from a wide range of views in designing this program.

- **The United States will provide 11,500 H-2B nonagricultural seasonal worker visas for nationals of Northern Central America and Haiti.** To address labor shortages in key sectors of the U.S. economy and reduce irregular migration, the [Department of Homeland Security \(DHS\)](#) and [Department of Labor \(DOL\)](#) made an additional 11,500 H-2B visas available in late May. These visas are dedicated for nationals of the Northern Central America countries and Haiti for this fiscal year. This is combined with new employer oversight provisions.
- **The United States will roll out new Fair Recruitment Practices Guidance for Temporary Migrant Workers with the cooperation of major employers, including Walmart.** As the United States and various other countries expand temporary worker programs in the Western Hemisphere, President Biden recognizes the importance of safeguarding against exploitation of workers. This is why his Administration will issue first-of-its-kind [“Guidance on Fair Recruitment Practices for Temporary Workers.”](#) The guidance promotes best practices for governments seeking to increase participation in the H-2 visa programs and employers relying on these programs. The United States has also mobilized the support of major U.S. retailer Walmart, which notes the importance of H-2A migrant workers to U.S. agriculture and that the fair recruitment guidance aligns

with the company's own expectations around responsible recruitment.

- **The United States will commit to resettle 20,000 refugees from the Americas during Fiscal Years 2023 to 2024.** This represents a three-fold increase from this year and reflects the Biden Administration's strong commitment to welcoming refugees. The protection needs are significant in the Western Hemisphere. More than 5 million Venezuelans have been displaced in the Americas, and hundreds of thousands more people from other countries across Latin America and the Caribbean are also displaced [across borders]. As the United States scales up its resettlement operations in the Americas, we call on other governments to do the same.
- **The United States will increase resettlement of Haitian refugees.** Reflecting the President's commitment to support the people of Haiti, the United States also commits to receiving an increased number of referrals to the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program for Haitians. The United States encourages other governments to join us in strengthening legal pathways for protection and opportunity for Haitians and other displaced populations in the Americas.
- **The United States will resume and increase participation in the Haitian Family Reunification Parole Program.** The Department of Homeland Security will announce the resumption of the Haitian Family Reunification Parole Program,

which allows certain eligible U.S. citizens and lawful permanent residents to apply for parole for their family members in Haiti. Additionally, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services will take steps to increase participation in the program by reducing barriers to access. New invitations to apply under the program are anticipated to be issued in early fall 2022. Concurrently, the Department of State will increase efforts to process Haitian immigrant visas and reduce the existing backlog. State is in the process of assessing options to augment consular adjudicator staffing in Embassy Port-au-Prince and review additional operational efficiencies to decrease the immigrant visa backlog for Haitians.

- **The United States will resume the Cuban Family Reunification Parole Program.** Last month, the United States announced the resumption of operations for the Cuban Family Reunification Parole Program (CFRP). CFRP provides a safe, orderly pathway to the United States for certain Cuban beneficiaries of approved family-based immigrant petitions. [DHS](#) will resume processing cases this summer, work with the Department of State to begin interviews in Cuba by early fall, and build capacity to consider and process approved applicants, thus contributing to migration accord targets over the next two years.

Observer States

- **Spain will double the number of labor pathways for Hondurans** to participate in Spain’s circular migration programs.

Pillar III: Humane Border Management

Securing borders with humane border management policies and practices is essential to reducing irregular migration and collaboratively managing migration across the hemisphere. The focus moving forward should be on: 1) humane border enforcement; 2) return of migrants lacking protection needs or other legal basis to remain; 3) facilitating returns to countries of most recent residence or origin; 4) support for assisted voluntary returns; and 5) strengthened bilateral and regional law enforcement information sharing and cooperation to combat migrant smuggling and human trafficking.

- **The United States will announce a multilateral “Sting Operation” to disrupt human smuggling networks across the Hemisphere.** The President will announce a first of its kind campaign, unprecedented in scale, to disrupt and dismantle smuggling networks in Latin America. In the last two months, the United States, led by DHS, has surged over 1,300 personnel throughout the region and invested over \$50 million to support these activities. Through the end of May, efforts have produced approximately 20,000 total disruption actions including arrests and prosecutions, seizures of property such as houses and vehicles used to hide and smuggle people, and criminal

investigations. DHS assesses that this has led to 900 fewer migrants arriving at the Southwest border each day, and we are just getting started. The U.S. will seek to expand efforts with other governments in the region to improve information sharing, build capacity, and advance criminal investigations.

- **The United States will improve the efficiency and fairness of asylum at the border.** In late May, [DHS](#) and Department of Justice began implementing a new process that improves and expedites processing of asylum claims made by noncitizens subject to expedited removal, to ensure that those who are eligible for asylum are granted relief quickly, and those who are not are promptly removed. The new process is a further step toward a more functional and sensible asylum system that reduces the caseload in immigration courts while also providing individuals with a prompt and fair decision in their case. DHS is phasing in the implementation of this rule and when fully implemented, the rule will shorten the administrative process from several years to just several months.