**REPORT FROM THE MEETING OF THE LIAISON OFFICER NETWORK FOR**

**CONSULAR PROTECTION**

**Panama City, Panama**

**19 July 2018**

The Liaison Officer Network for Consular Protection held its ordinary meeting on 19 July 2018 in Panama City, Panama prior to the meeting of the Regional Consultation Group on Migration (RCGM), with participation of representatives from the following countries: Canada, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama and the United States.

The Network submits its report to the Regional Consultation Group on Migration (RCGM) for consideration, as follows:

1. To thank the delegations of Canada, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama and the United States for their reports on best practices and advances regarding consular protection.
2. To thank the International Organization for Migration (IOM) for the offer to collect information for the study that incorporates good practices, legal frameworks and inputs that allow for the possibility of opening joint consulates among the interested RCM Member Countries, with a joint protection approach. In this regard, the Member Countries considered the importance of the cooperation for the installation of joint consulates.
   1. Regarding the methodology, the Member Countries recommended first collecting the information through an interview and then through written information.
   2. To thank IOM for the availability to present the study during the next meeting of the RCGM.
3. To thank El Salvador for the information about the project of consular windows for protection and to recognize the advances in providing assistance to their nationals at the consulates in Mexico and the United States.
4. In regard to consular assistance related to the separation of families, to thank the information provided by Mexico about the joint efforts with the countries of the Northern Triangle to care for children and adolescents migrants in the United States.
   1. To appreciate the frank and respectful dialogue among the Member Countries regarding the situation of children and adolescents separated from their parents. To this end, recommend the inclusion of this agenda item in the plenary meeting of the RCGM.
   2. Emphasize the importance of respecting the human rights of children and adolescents, with emphasis on the best interests of the child, the right to family unity and family life (established in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the American Declaration on the Rights and Duties of Man) and the right to due process.
   3. Procure timely consular notification in cases of detection of children and adolescents in vulnerable situations.
   4. To take note of the rejection by Mexico, El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras on the practice of separation of children and adolescents and the detention of families, which is contrary to the best interests of the child.
   5. To request from the United States the current statistical data of the list and number of cases of separated children and adolescents by country of origin.
   6. To request the RNCOM a list of civil society organizations that attend these cases, to support the consular protection functions of their nationals.
5. To thank the Regional Network of Civil Organizations on Migration (RNCOM) for their recommendations on consular protection, and the offer to trainings in this topic for the improvement in the attention of migrant population.
6. In regard to the proposed new activities:
   1. To thank Mexico, IOM and the International Labour Organisation (ILO) for the information about the Regional Workshop on Labour Migration Governance: Toward Integrated and Planned Policies, to be held in Mexico in September 4-5, 2018.
   2. To thank IOM for the online course for consular officers: “Course of Action on Trafficking in Persons for Consulates, Ministries and Secretariats of Foreign Affairs.”
   3. To take note of the contents of the workshop on implementation of a regional mechanism to exchange information during the search for disappeared or missing migrants, with support from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and IOM,, to be held in September 25-26, 2018.