**III PLENARY MEETING BETWEEN THE REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON MIGRATION (RCM) AND THE SOUTH AMERICAN CONFERENCE ON MIGRATION (SACM)**

**CONCEPT NOTE**

**31 May 2022**

**BACKGROUND**

Inter-State Consultation Mechanisms on Migration (ISCMs) refer to all regular information and policy dialogues at the regional, inter-regional or global level between States interested in promoting cooperation in the field of migration. These Inter-State Consultation Mechanisms include global migration processes, inter-regional migration fora (linking two or more regions), and regional migration consultative processes (covering a region).

Regional Consultative Processes on Migration (RCPs) are ongoing state and regional information and policy exchange dialogues dedicated to discussing specific migration issues in a cooperative manner among states in an agreed (usually geographic) region and may be officially associated with formal regional institutions or be informal and non-binding.

In the Americas, the Regional Conference on Migration (RCM) and the South American Conference on Migration (SACM) are recognized and consolidated regional consultative processes on migration.

**RCM**

The RCM is a non-binding regional consultative process on migration, created in 1996 to address migration in the region in a practical and comprehensive manner, from a technical-political level. It provides a space for respectful, frank, and honest discussion among Member Countries on regional and international migration, ensuring greater coordination, transparency, and cooperation. The RCM is made up of 11 countries: Canada, the United States, Mexico, Guatemala, Belize, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, and the Dominican Republic.

Under the Presidency Pro-Témpore of El Salvador, a close dialogue has been held between the countries of origin, transit, and destination to jointly address extra-regional and intraregional flows, which was reflected in the joint visit made by the members of the RCM to the Darien area of Panama as an opportunity to agree on concrete actions to advance in this issue.

The RCM also has four working groups addressing Protection, Labor Migration, Border Management, and Irregular and Mass Migration. It also has a Regional Consultation Group on Migration; whose objective is to supervise and follow up on the technical tasks carried out within the framework of the Conference.

Throughout its 27 years of existence, the RCM has worked on different topics, including the preparation of the following documents[[1]](#footnote-2), among others:

* Regional Guidelines for the Preliminary Identification of profiles and Referral Mechanisms of Migrant Populations in Vulnerable Situations
* Operational guide for the application of the best interests of the child in contexts of human mobility.
* Regional Study: Regularization programs and processes
* A guide to effective practices for RCM Member Countries: Protection for persons moving across borders in the context of disasters
* Guidelines on assistance and protection of women in context of migration
* Regional guidelines for the comprehensive protection of boys, girls and adolescents in the context of migration

**SACM**

The SACM, created in 2000, aims to be a forum for consultation for South American countries in the main areas of development; diasporas; migrants' rights; integration; information exchange; migration statistics; and the fight against human trafficking and smuggling. The SACM Member Countries are Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, Uruguay, and Venezuela.

Under the current Presidency Pro-Témpore of the SACM, held by the Republic of Chile, and under the slogan "**Migration, Integration, and Cooperation: Towards a Regional Migration Agenda**," the aim has been to strengthen this space for consultation together with the South American States. The work agenda is based on: a) rapprochement with other regional processes; b) strengthening the six working networks (Border Management; Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants; Migrant Children and Adolescents; Migration, Environment, and Climate Change; Gender and Migration; Social and Labor Integration: Labor and Education); established in the last PPT of the Republic of Argentina; and c) holding Webinars and Technical Meetings, in order to raise the priority issues of the regional migration contingency.

**RCM-SACM**

In 2017, the first meeting between RCM and SACM troikas was held in Washington, D.C. Later that year, a meeting of an Ad Hoc Group of troikas was held in Panama City to prepare bi-regional inputs for the consultation phase of the Global Compact on Migration.

In May 2018, the First Plenary Meeting between the RCM and the SACM was held in Montevideo, Uruguay. The topics addressed were:

1. United Nation’s Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration
2. Extra-regional and extra-continental migration flows

The meeting also aimed to provide input to the countries participating in the intergovernmental negotiation rounds of the Global Compact, during 2018 and 2019.

In September 2021, the Second Plenary Meeting between the RCM and the SACM was held, organized by the Presidencies Pro-Témpore of both Conferences. The meeting was entitled:

“Seeking joint actions for better migration governance including addressing irregular migration.”

The topics addressed were:

* Irregular migration from inside and out the hemisphere
* Human Trafficking and Migrant Smuggling
* Migration governance and pathways for regular migration
* Travel documentation policy and processing
* International Protection Systems
* Integration of Migrants and Countering Xenophobia

In February 2022, a meeting was held between the Presidencies Pro-Témpore and the Troikas of the RCM and the SACM to lay the groundwork for the III Plenary Meeting. The challenges for the regional management of irregular migratory flows and related transnational crimes were addressed on this ocassion, as well as the development of a decalogue of areas that could be analyzed by the members of both consultative processes, with the objective of articulating joint cooperation strategies.

**RATIONALE**

This activity was approved at the Vice-Ministerial Meeting in December 2021. Likewise, **decision 4, paragraph d** of the Vice-Ministerial Declaration states:

*d. To keep communication and exchange with the SACM Member Countries with the aim to know about changes related to migration management and visas that may impact migration flows in the region.*

Also, the RCM PPT Work Plan for 2022 establishes the following structural activity:

* III Plenary Meeting between the RCM and the SACM, by mid-2022.

Consequently, from what has been described above, it should be noted that the Charter of the RCM indicates the following:

*“as appropriate, will seek to find ways to support or reaffirm the commitments of the 2030 Agenda and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration.”*

Likewise, in the work plan of the South American Conference, established in its Agenda for the period 2021 - 2022, the PPT of Chile and the SACM are interested in holding the III Plenary Meeting between the RCM and the SACM as one of the priority activities of the year.

Both the RCM and the SACM are committed to maintaining spaces for dialogue that will allow them to have an overview of both regions on migration issues, with special attention to the shared responsibility to address this phenomenon that transcends borders.

**INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION REVIEW FORUM (IMRF)**

The International Migration Review Forum (IMRF) is the main multilateral instrument for States and relevant stakeholders to discuss and report on progress in implementing the objectives of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration (GCM), providing a mechanism for monitoring and evolving good practices towards safe, orderly and regular migration.

A follow-up is expected to be carried out in the framework of the event, held between May 17 and 20, regarding the participation of the countries of the region, the results achieved, and the challenges identified at the multilateral level with respect to the implementation of the Global Compact on Migration.

**RCM-SACM REGIONAL AGENDA**

In recent years, an outreach process has begun between the two consultative processes, in the understanding that migratory challenges are becoming increasingly complex and broader in scope, requiring joint international cooperation between the States of the Latin American region. Within this framework, recent meetings have focused on migration management, irregular flows, the treatment of transnational crimes such as human trafficking and smuggling of migrants, and regularization processes, among other priorities.

From the SACM, the Presidency Pro-Témpore of Chile is making efforts to bring together the different regional spaces that already exist to work on migration governance in the Latin American area, with the aim of advancing a regional migration agenda. Given the current migration panorama and its challenges, it is of special interest and importance to share solutions and good practices among the countries of both regional processes on issues such as handling in-transit irregular migration; strengthening international protection systems; information and intelligence exchange mechanisms for the fight against transnational migration offenses; effective ways of integrating migrants, listening to them and fostering processes for the participation of host communities, among other priority issues.

In this regard, Chile as Presidency Pro-Témpore of the SACM has proposed to move forward with migration management based on five main work areas:

1. **Humanitarian Axis:** This axis refers to the necessary protection and attention that must be provided to migrants throughout their migration journey and in each of its phases. Its main guideline is based on the protection of the human rights and integrity of migrants, with emphasis on migrant women, children, and adolescents, superimposing their best interests.

To this end, it is essential to develop a strong coordination between migration authorities, international organizations, as managers of humanitarian aid, and local governments (depending on the territorial distribution of the country), especially in border areas, as key agents in migration management and as the main experts on the local reality.

1. **Migration Axis:** This axis includes everything related to migration management, including regularization and registration processes for the migrant population and inter-institutional and intersectoral coordination. The strengthening of migration management also requires a robust institutional framework with enough capacity to deal with the various migration flows and their different dimensions.

In this regard, it also includes training for workers involved in migration management, especially those who work in border management, in order to strengthen intersectoral work and inter-institutional coordination in this area.

1. **International Cooperation Axis:** International cooperation is key to addressing the regional challenges arising from migration and human mobility. International organizations play a key role in guaranteeing cooperation among States, as well as being executors of instances, tools, and inputs that provide humanitarian assistance and services to strengthen migration management.

Thus, this axis focuses on strengthening international cooperation with international organizations such as the United Nations, through the preparation of coordinated and transparent plans with the States, through fluid communication between the parties, which will strengthen multilateralism, as well as the response to the regional migration situation.

1. **Regional and Bilateral Cooperation Axis:** As well as strengthening international cooperation, regional cooperation under a rich bilateral agenda is key to advancing coordinated migration management. In this sense, these instances not only seek to improve the relationship between States but also to advance the development of regional guidelines to address the migration issue.

Consequently, regional cooperation not only involves bilateral cooperation, but also the strengthening of the existing Regional Consultative Processes themselves and the dialogue between them, in order to promote the elaboration of a regional position before international challenges related to human mobility.

1. **Migratory Social Cohesion Axis:** The understanding of migratory social cohesion is strictly related to the understanding of the migration phenomenon from its most human perspective, including the role of civil society in its different manifestations (migrant and pro-migrant civil society organizations, academia, among others) and the host community in the processes of migratory integration.

Due to the increase in the feeling of rejection of migration and episodes of discrimination and xenophobia, in this axis, it is essential to coordinate all the actors involved in migration management to advance measures that facilitate integration and social cohesion, such as information and communication campaigns on migration, and to promote active listening to the host communities to address their concerns and needs.

**GENERAL OBJECTIVE**

Continue collaboration between the countries of both regional processes to address hemispheric challenges related to migration governance, including irregular and extra-regional migration.

**SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES**

1. To discuss on the results of the International Migration Review Forum held in May 2022, in order to capitalize on good practices and improve areas that need further attention in view of the commitments made.
2. To continue the development of a common regional agenda to address the issue of migration governance, including irregular and extra-regional migration.

**PARTICIPANT’S PROFILE**

The participation of representatives of the Member Countries of the RCM and the SACM is expected. The minimum level of participation is technical with decision-making power. Representatives of the observer organizations of both conferences and representatives of organized civil society may participate as observers.

**METHODOLOGY**

The III Plenary Meeting will be held in virtual mode, through the Zoom platform. After an introductory presentation for each topic, the plenary dialogue will be opened. The session will be facilitated by the RCM and the SACM.

**AGENDA**

**31 May 2022**

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| **Schedule** | **Activity** | **Participants** |
| **(GMT-6)** |
| **9:00 – 9:15** | ***Opening*** | |
| * Introduction to the session | RCM ES AND SACM TS |
| * Welcome |  |
| * Representative of El Salvador, Presidency Pro-Témpore of the Regional Conference on Migration (RCM) | RCM PPT |
| * Representative of Chile, Presidency Pro-Témpore of the South American Conference on Migration (SACM) | SACM PPT |
|  | * ***TOPIC 1. Recommendations and Commitments from the International Migration Review Forum (IMRF) - El Salvador*** |  |
| **9:15 – 10:00** |  |  |
| * Presentation of the main results of the IMRF and next steps to be taken * Comments from RCM-SACM countries | IOM Regional Offices  Moderator: RCM PPT |
|  | * ***TOPIC 2. RCM- SACM Regional Migration Agenda- Chile*** |  |
| **10:00 – 10:45** | * Background on the cooperation between the RCM and the SACM * Exchange between countries | RCM ES AND SACM TS  Moderator: SACM PPT |
| **10:45 – 11:00** |  | RCM ES AND SACM TS |
| Closing and conclusions |
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1. The RCM thematic page is available on the following link: <https://temas.crmsv.org/> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)