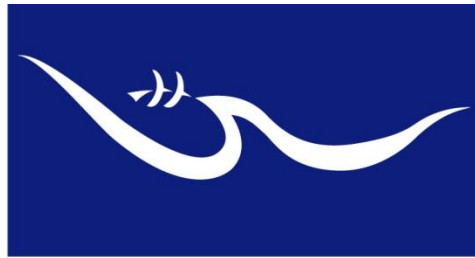


REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON MIGRATION (RCM)



Conferencia Regional sobre Migración Regional Conference on Migration

Glosary of the Regional Conference on Migration (RCM)

Version revised by the Technical Secretariat
Regional Conference on Migration (RCM), 2017

A. Background

1. The **Regional Conference on Migration (RCM) or Puebla Process** is an intergovernmental forum established in 1996 to sustain a regional dialogue and an exchange of ideas as well as experiences, for joint consideration and cooperation, on migration issues of common interest to the participating countries.

2. There are 11 **Member Countries** of the RCM: Belize, Canada, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama and the United States. At RCM ongoing events, the governments are represented by officials of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Interior, Immigration, or Justice, depending in the instance responsible for formulating and implementing national migration policy and administering migration services. However, specialized workshops or seminars in different subject-matters may require the attendance of expert government officers from different fields to enrich the discussions. For the purpose of this glossary, the countries constituting the RCM are referred to as: "**Member Countries**".

3. The **working languages** of the RCM are Spanish and English, but meetings may include other languages provided that any officer of the Member Countries, special guest or RCM observer organization requests so in advance and the incumbent Presidency Pro-Tempore authorizes it.






4. The RCM also includes, as **Observers**, representatives of specific governments and international organizations who participate in the open discussions that are part of the various activities that this forum undertakes with the exception of the closed-door session of the Vice-Ministers.** RCM observers shall not participate in discussions of items on the agenda unless explicitly indicated thereby, the decision-making process or the drafting of documents containing recommendations or commitments, unless they have the Presidency Pro-Tempore prior permission to clarify points related to their expertise. At the closing of the plenary meeting of Vice-Ministers, the observers and international organizations may present short statements which are immediately relevant to the Process. Countries with observer status in the RCM are:

* The purpose of this Glossary is to standardize the vocabulary used to describe the functions, composition and work of the Regional Conference on Migration. In the first instance, the Glossary was prepared by Mexico for the V CRM (Washington, March 2000) and has been updated several times.

** "Strengthening the Regional Conference on Migration Eight years after its Creation". Approved by the Vice-Ministers during the IX RCM, held in Panama City, May 2004.

- Argentina 
- Colombia 
- Ecuador 
- Jamaica 
- Peru 

The international organizations with observer status are:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean / Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Center (ECLAC / CELADE) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inter-American Commission of Human Rights (IACHR) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Organization for Migration (IOM) 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants (OHCHR) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central American Integration System (SICA) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) 	 ICRC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Secretariat of the Ibero-American Conference (SEGIB) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Labour Organization (ILO) 	

5. The RCM is also known informally as the **Puebla Process** since that Mexican city was where the inaugural forum was held. .

B. The Process

6. The RCM holds one annual **Vice-Ministerial Meeting**, which takes place in the territory of a member country offering to act as Presidency Pro-Témpore. The RCM held its Vice-Ministerial Meeting during the first semester of each year until 2014, but starting in 2015, it was agreed to hold this meeting in every November. The First Meeting of the Regional Conference on Migration took place in Puebla, Mexico (1996); the Second in Panama City, Panama (1997); the Third, in Ottawa, Canada (1998); the Fourth in San Salvador, El Salvador (1999); the Fifth, in Washington D.C., United States (2000); the Sixth in San Jose, Costa Rica (2001); the Seventh in Antigua, Guatemala (2002); the Eighth in Cancun, Mexico (2003); the Ninth in Panama City, Panama (2004), the Tenth in Vancouver, Canada (2005); the Eleventh in San Salvador, El Salvador (2006); the Twelfth in New Orleans, United States (2007); the Thirteenth in Tela, Honduras (2008); the Fourteenth in Guatemala City, Guatemala (2009); the Fifteenth in Tapachula, Mexico (2010); the Sixteenth in La Romana, Dominican Republic (2011); the Seventeenth in

Panama City, Panama (2012); the Eighteenth in San Jose, Costa Rica (2013); the Nineteenth in Managua, Nicaragua (2014); the Twentieth in Mexico City, Mexico (2015); the Twentieth First in San Pedro Sula, Honduras (2016) and the Twentieth Second in San Salvador, El Salvador (2017).

7. The **Vice-Ministerial Meeting** is the executive decision-making body of the RCM. It is where the governments adopt the decisions reached by consensus that will define the goals, tasks, conceptual basis, and aspirations of this forum. The actual decision-making takes place in a closed-door meeting attended only by Vice-Ministers and two high-ranking officials that the Vice-Ministers may deem necessary. The country acting as President Pro-tempore may ask the Chair of the Regional Consultation Group and the Coordinator of the Technical Secretariat to join them in the meeting in the specific capacity as advisors or consultants. The decisions are recorded in **Joint Communiqués or Declarations** issued at the conclusion of each annual meeting. The PPT, in coordination with the Technical Secretariat (TS) will draft a proposal of Declaration and Action Plan for each Vice-Ministerial Meeting and they will be negotiated in advance, replacing the work previously done by the drafting committee.

At a minimum, the agenda will include the following items:

- 1) The Presidency Pro-Témpore's report
- 2) Opening statements from delegations of member countries, and
- 3) Dialogue with civil-society organizations (CSOs).

The agenda for the closed-door session contains a series of suggested items to encourage the discussion of topics of interest to each Vice-Minister. It is not necessary that all meetings have the same agenda topics; interested countries could suggest activities or presentations to benefit the Puebla Process. These meetings though, also evaluate issues and recommendations from the Regional Consultation Group on Migration (see point 8) which may be included in the final decision documents. The Technical Secretariat and the observer organizations contribute to the agenda topics based on the RCM Plan of Action (see point 15) but they cannot exert any influence on the Vice-Ministerial decisions.

8. The **Regional Consultation Group on Migration (RCGM)** is the technical expert group of the RCM. The head of delegation of each member country at this level may be either the General Director of Migration or the Director of Consular Affairs. The RCGM does not have the authority to decide on goals, functions, conceptual bases, or aspirations of the RCM. However, the RCGM has the authority to formulate recommendations to the Vice-Ministers on issues requiring political approval. This group also monitors the carrying out of activities and progress in the RCM framework, whose approval is registered in another document containing a set of **conclusions**.

The **Tri-partite Team** composed of the Technical Secretariat of the Regional Conference on Migration (TS-RCM), the Technical Secretariat of the Regional

Network of Civil Society Organizations for Migration (TS-RNCOM) and the Presidency Pro-Témpore provides follow-up on topics of interest for the civil society.

9. The RCGM usually carries out two meetings in the course of a year. During the days immediately preceding each Vice-Ministerial Meeting, the RCGM holds a preparatory meeting, which is largely, though not exclusively, devoted to specifying and fine-tuning the component parts of the imminent Vice-Ministerial Meeting: the program, agenda and documents, as well as any other migration topics relevant to member countries to be submitted for Vice-Ministerial consideration and approval. This preparatory meeting takes place in the same city in which the Vice-Ministers will meet immediately thereafter (see paragraph 10).

10. The RCGM also holds an intermediate meeting some time during the first semester of each year in the country of the PPT or, exceptionally, in the territory of any other Member Country, but under the control, discretion and auspice of the incumbent PPT.

In this intermediate meeting, the RCGM focuses its attention on the following tasks:

- (1) To examine progress in achieving commitments adopted by the Vice-Ministers;
- (2) To approve the Plan of Action (see point 16) and review the actions and efforts to implement its activities;
- (3) To discuss and approve – if possible– the agenda of the next Vice-Ministerial Meeting, as well as the recommendations that will be submitted for consideration to the Vice-Ministers;
- (4) To endorse, at the technical level, the Vice-Ministerial Declaration that will be submitted to the Vice-Ministers for their consideration.

The agenda and the recommendations that result from this intermediate meeting will be examined and adjusted during the proceedings of the preparatory meeting a few months later, immediately preceding the Vice-Ministerial Meeting. Also, the RCGM also evaluates administrative issues of the Technical Secretariat.

11. The **Presidency Pro-Témpore** is the title given to the member country acting as organizer, chair, and host for the annual Viceministerial Meeting, as well as the meetings of the RCGM (see points 8, 9 and 10). The Presidency Pro-Témpore also assumes responsibility for the follow-up of RCM activities and initiatives, for providing overall coordination on RCM matters, and for serving as the main RCM contact and promoter before outside entities. Determination of who will serve as Presidency Pro-Témpore first comes from the offer expressed in this sense by any of the Member Countries (usually in the Vice-Ministers' closed-door session) and then through consensus agreement among the member countries in accepting such offer. The role is exercised for one year and switches among the membership. Transfer of

responsibilities from the current to the incoming PPT occurs by means of a simple ceremony at the end of the Vice-Ministerial Meeting.

12. The **Technical Secretariat (TS)** is technical and logistical support unit established by IOM at the request of the RCM. Although this unit operates autonomously within IOM, it is governed by IOM's budget, staff and administrative policies. The TS receives overall policy direction and supervision from the current RCM Presidency Pro-Témpore to follow up on the mandates and instructions issued after each RCM meeting, while the IOM Regional Director in San Jose supplies programmatic guidance, administrative support, and working space. The TS constantly updates the RCM internet sites (see point 14), and maintains close contact with focal points of each country to assist the PPT in the general and logistical coordination of events. This includes drafting agendas, presentations, documents and different reports among other tasks. The TS also maintains a continuous and open dialogue with the member organizations of RNCOM seeking to benefit its communication with the RCM (see point 23) and serves as a point of contact for the public in general for information and research purposes. Annual apportionments from member countries (based on a consensus scale) provide the financial resources needed for the operations of the TS.

Execution and monitoring of the budget:

The resources of the Technical Secretariat of the RCM should be received, executed and reported in accordance with the administrative and accounting regulations and procedures that, in general, apply to any other project that is commonly administered or implemented by IOM. For this purpose, a Memorandum of Understanding has been established between the RCM and the IOM, in which the responsibilities of each party are described.

13. A **Focal Point** is the designated person(s) within the participating institutions of each government of the Member Countries (see paragraph 2), and whose main responsibility is to serve as the liaison and contact point on RCM matters. The Focal Point plays a key role in terms of receiving and conveying information from both the Presidency Pro-Témpore and the Technical Secretariat to other work colleagues interested or involved in the process, as well as ensuring effective dissemination of information to all involved parties and ministries of that government.

14. The **Virtual Secretariat (VS)** is a web site whose main function is to serve as a "virtual" tool for communication, coordination, and exchange of information among the member countries of the RCM and from the Presidency Pro-Témpore to them. The VS web site consists of two separate parts: a section reserved exclusively for Member Countries, and another section containing information available to the general public. In addition, it has a micro-sites section on topics of special relevance in the RCM dialogues. The Technical Secretariat (see point 12) has day-to-day responsibility for managing both sections of the VS, under the direction of the Presidency Pro-Témpore.

15. The **Liaison Officers Network to Combat Migrant Smuggling and Trafficking in Persons** and the **Liaison Officers Network for Consular Protection** are established networks of officials from RCM Member Countries who exchange information (especially, but not solely, by means of the Virtual Secretariat), organize and participate in coordinated activities on subject-matters of their competence, and formulate reports for the RCGM on courses of action regarding these two key issues for subsequent consideration by the Vice-Ministers. It is an established tradition for these liaison officers' networks to meet prior to the RCGM meetings. The incumbent Presidency Pro-Tempore assumes responsibility for overall coordination and direction of the meetings and activities of these two networks. Each network is tasked with developing and carrying out its respective work program, once approved by the Vice-Ministers.

16. The **Liaison Officers Network for the Protection of Migrant Children and Adolescents** is responsible for exchanging information on flows of migrant children and adolescents. Organizes and participates in activities on migrant children. Likewise, it makes a report to the RCGM on the guidelines to be followed regarding the topic of migrant children and adolescents within the context of the RCM, which will be presented later for the consideration of the Vice-Ministers. As with the other networks, officials of the institutions of childhood of the RCM Member Countries will participate in the meetings.

However, as has been the practice in the meetings and events of the RCM, the prerogative of each RCM Member Country to designate officials from other government institutions to participate in the Network of Liaison Officers for the Protection of Migrant Children and Adolescents will be recognized, as long as they are duly registered.

According to the prerogative of the Pro-Tempore Presidency, the Networks can also hold a joint meeting only or after their separate meetings to evaluate issues of common interest.

17. **Tripartite Mechanism** - During the XXI Vice-Ministerial Meeting of the Regional Conference on Migration (RCM), held in San Pedro Sula, Honduras, in November 2016, the Vice-Ministers of the Member Countries agreed on the creation of a tripartite committee to give greater follow-up on topics of interest for the civil society; in this case represented by the Regional Network of Civil Society Organizations of Migration (RNCOM), as well as for the Member Countries of the RCM. This team will build a work plan and implementation, monitoring and follow-up mechanisms, including the identification of resources that allow its implementation.

NOTE: Annex I contains a diagram-overview of the RCM operation. To see the entire diagram, please consult the RCM poster.

C. Terminology

18. **Plan of Action** – Originally adopted at the Second Meeting of the Regional Conference on Migration (Panama, 1997), the Action Plan represents a consensus programmatic document of the RCM that defines themes, objectives and actions of common concern, as well as a corresponding schedule of implementation. Evolving in step with the RCM, the Action Plan is updated periodically, with the decisions of the Vice-Ministers during their annual meeting. The RCGM may also update and revise the Plan of Action in its intermediate meeting.

19. **Work Plans** – Each network (see paragraphs 15 and 16) should develop a Work Plan which will be approved by the Vice-Ministers. Each Plan must contain specific activities and dates for completion to coordinate its actions in respect to different subjects within its area of interest. It is necessary to point out that the RCM Plan of Action is different from the Work Plans of the Liaison Officer Networks in that the latter complement and are subordinate to the former.

20. **Terms “Trafficking in persons” and “Smuggling of Migrants”** – The RCM has decided to adjust its terminology to that of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its protocols. Therefore, it uses the following terms derived from this international convention: **Trafficking in persons** shall mean “the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.” **Smuggling of migrants** shall mean the procurement, in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit, of the illegal entry of a person into a State Party of which the person is not a national or a permanent resident. (See Annex II to this Glossary for other terms)

21. **Observers** – Point four enumerates the different countries and international organizations that participate as observers in the various RCM activities, as well as their roles and limitations in the discussion and decision-making processes. Following is the criteria *countries* must fulfill to participate as observers:

- a. Be geographically part of the Western Hemisphere;
- b. Make a written declaration of its commitment to the principles of the Puebla Joint Communiqué;
- c. Have a significant migration flow with at least one of the member states;
- d. Be willing to deal with the migration phenomenon in a multilateral context within the RCM;

- e. Be committed to the orderly movement of people and to the respect of the human rights of migrants;
- f. Have policies, laws and practices regarding international migration;
- g. Be committed to being represented at the RCM and at the Regional Consultation Group on Migration (RCGM) by officials of institutions responsible for migration;
- h. Present to Vice-Ministers a written statement of interest and of commitment to the above principles.

International organizations must meet the following criteria:

- a. Be committed to furthering the principles contained in the Puebla Joint Communiqué.
- b. Have a mandate dealing with at least one of the main subject matters considered in the Plan of Action.
- c. Submit a written application to Vice-Ministers making its case for membership.

A decision to accept or reject an application to be a new observer will be made by Vice-Ministers in a closed-door session.

22. **Special Guests** - The current Presidency Pro-Témpore can request the presence of such special guests at a specific event for the purpose of exchanging ideas, experiences and opinions on migration matters. Guests may be present during some discussions and take part in some of them, but as in the case of observers, they are not allowed to participate in the decision-making process reserved exclusively to the RCM member countries.

23. The **Regional Network for Civil Organizations on Migration (RNCOM)** is the network of non-governmental organizations located in RCM Member Countries with whom there is an ongoing dialogue and joint cooperation on migration issues and activities. The RNCOM shall continue to have a space on the agenda of the Regional Consultation Group on Migration and of the Vice-Ministerial meetings. If appropriate, the Vice-Ministers may suggest a topic on which the CSOs could make recommendations to the Vice-Ministers at the next Conference.

24. **Media and press coverage:** Media coverage will be handled at the discretion of the Presidency Pro-Témpore. It is recommended that the press participates only in the opening and closing ceremonies of the Vice-Ministerial meeting. This does not exclude the possibility that a Vice-Minister may wish to make one or more statements of his/her interest.

25. **Acronyms:** Below are the acronyms of some of the organizations that interact or have interacted in the past with the RCM, either as observers, special guests, or as cooperation institutions.

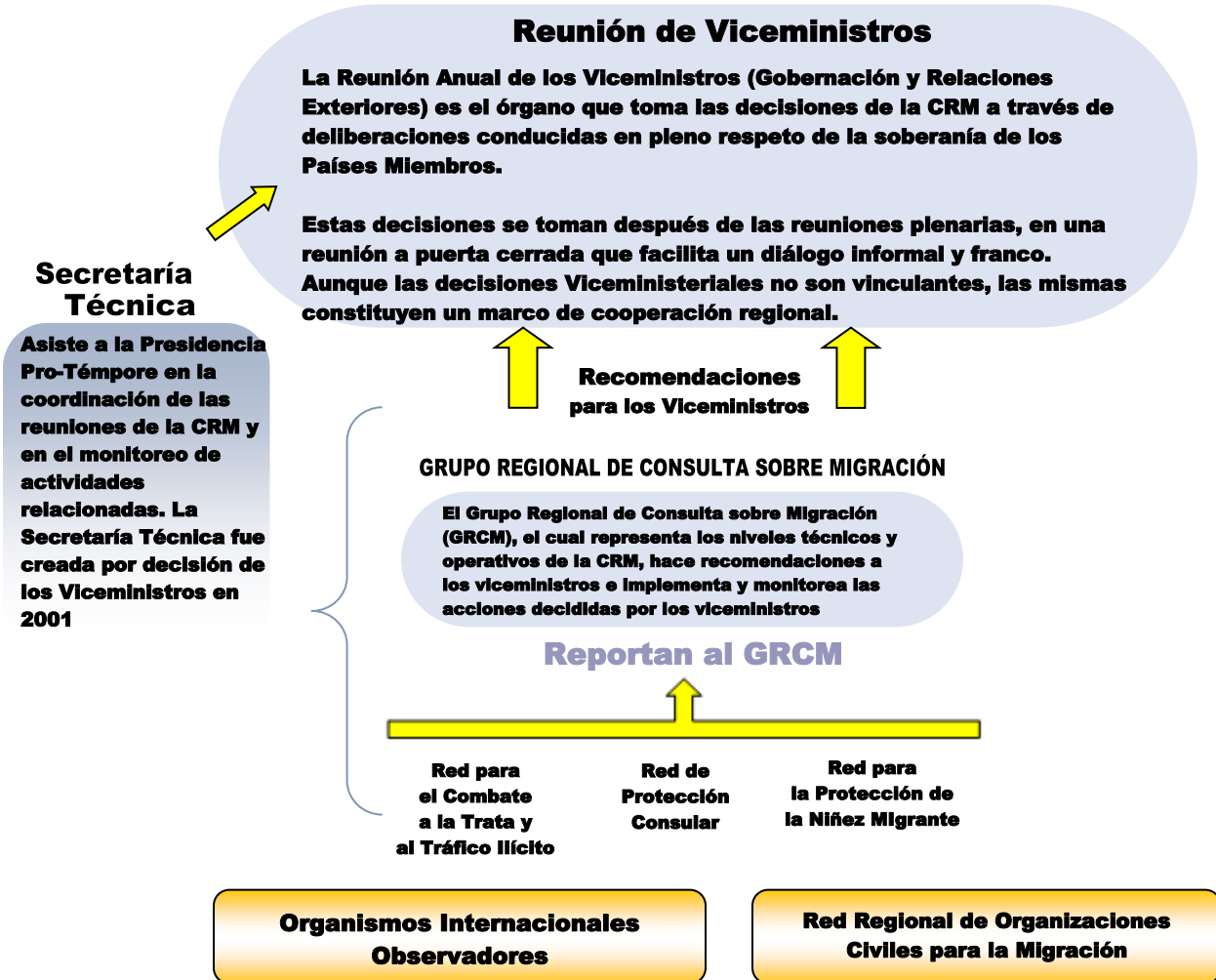
APEC	Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation
EC	European Council

ECLAC/CELADE	Latin American and Caribbean Economic Commission / Latin American & Caribbean Demographic Centre
GCIM	Global Commission on International Migration
HRC	Special Rapporteur of the UN Human Rights Commission for the Human Rights of the Migrants
IACHR	Inter-American Commission on Human Rights
IADB	Inter-American Development Bank
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
OCAM	Central American Commission of General Directors of Migration
OECD	Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development
SICA	Central American Integration System
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

ANEXO I

DIAGRAMA-RESUMEN DEL FUNCIONAMIENTO DE LA CRM

1.



ANEXO 2

2. **Caja de Herramientas** - En este documento se encontrará información básica sobre la Conferencia Regional sobre Migración, su propósito y estructura, un punteo de requerimientos logísticos y técnicos básicos para una reunión del Grupo Regional de Consulta sobre Migración (GRCM) y de la reunión de Viceministros. Contiene además un cuadro básico de las líneas presupuestarias para su realización.