**Conceptual Paper**

**XX REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON MIGRATION (RCM):**

**“INTEGRATION, RETURN AND SOCIAL AND PRODUCTIVE REINTEGRATION OF MIGRANTS”**

North America and Central America are territories characterized by complex human movements, including all four dimensions of migration – documented as well as undocumented: origin, transit, destination and return. In order to effectively address this reality and mitigate the extremely vulnerable situations of a large number of migrants to the greatest possible extent, an approach of unwavering cooperation and shared responsibility is required at a regional level.

The Regional Conference on Migration (RCM) has addressed, on various occasions, the topics of integration, return and reintegration of migrants. The actions that were agreed upon on each occasion have been useful; however, they have covered only some of the challenges and have been insufficient to generate effective medium- and long-tem solutions to the problems caused by the phenomenon of migration. The efforts implemented to date should be examined in view of the recent evolution of this phenomenon[[1]](#footnote-1) to ensure that they support the design and implementation of policies, strategies and actions that are agreed upon within RCM and achieve a more active participation of international organizations, organized civil society, the private sector and academia. This will facilitate the implementation of migration management mechanisms ensuring the full enjoyment of the human rights of migrants as well as their personal safety, integration and social and productive reintegration.

With this objective, Mexico as President Pro Tempore (PPT) proposes that the Vice-Ministerial Meeting of the XX RCM be entitled **“Integration, Return and Social and Productive Reintegration of Migrants”.** This topic is consistent with previous agreements of RCM[[2]](#footnote-2) and is part of the three central themes of the Plan of Action of the Conference, agreed on in Antigua Guatemala: Migration Policy, Human Rights, Link between Migration and Development.

The proposed approach recognizes that migrants are subjects of rights and essential partners for development. In addition, it seeks to highlight the need for public policies to be based on a regional dimension, adequately reflecting the shared responsibility of the various governments and potentiating the integration and social and productive reintegration of migrants. Furthermore, it highlights that in order to be effective, policies need to be translated into specific actions and programmes in the short and medium term.

Two specific objectives are pursued:

1. To reduce the gaps between the situations of undocumented migrants and those living in societies of destination in a regular manner.
2. To promote mechanisms to effectively address the needs of returning migrants and their families, with the aim of supporting their social and productive reintegration in their countries of origin.

The PPT will promote the following actions, with the aim of achieving these objectives:

1. To design comprehensive public policies that, in addition to reflecting a preventative approach, ensure respect for human rights, promote the empowerment of migrants and strengthen the links between migration and development and the role of migrants as partners for development in societies of destination as well as the countries of origin where they reintegrate.
2. To exchange best practices, information, training and technical assistance on integration, reintegration and empowerment of migrants in countries of destination and return.
3. To involve countries of destination and other actors in creating conditions that are conducive to development in societies of origin, with the aim of alleviating the pressure of irregular migration and combating forms of organized crime such as migrant smuggling and trafficking.
4. To identify clear commitments concerning budget allocation and efforts to promote the integration of migrants and the social and productive reintegration of populations of returned migrants, with the aim of providing not only programmes but in addition, optimal living conditions that enable personal, family and professional development and potentiate the well-being of communities of origin and destination, in an environment of cooperation and responsibility shared between every country in the region.
5. To strengthen the dialogue with international organizations, civil society, the private sector and other relevant actors to ensure that they contribute to the design and implementation of public policies adopted within RCM.
1. The increasing trend of irregular migration in the region in recent years should be highlighted. For example, in 2011 Mexico detained 61,202 aliens and returned them to their countries of origin. This figure almost doubled in as few as three years (Source: Migration Policy Unit). And in 2014, a dramatic increase was observed in the number of unaccompanied migrant boys, girls and adolescents with irregular migration status that entered the country with North America as their main destination. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Recommendation No. 2 of RCGM (June 2014) to adopt the document proposed by Costa Rica: “Guiding Principles for the Development of Migration Policies on Integration, Return and Reintegration of the Regional Conference of Migration”. In addition, Decision No. 4 of the XIX Vice-Ministerial Meeting of RCM held in June 2014 to adopt the above-mentioned document. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)