



Workshop on the Comprehensive Regional Protection and Solutions Framework Regional Conference on Migration and MIRPS

Date and time: *October 6th and 7th, 2020. 9:00 a.m.- 11:00 a.m. (San José time)*

Concept Note

I. Context

The Regional Conference on Migration (RCM) was created in 1996 as a result of the Tuxtla II Presidential Summit. The RCM is a voluntary, non-binding Regional Consultative Process that allows decision-making by consensus and provides a space for respectful, frank and honest discussion among Member States on regional and international migration, ensuring greater coordination, transparency and cooperation.

This multilateral forum works to promote regional efforts to strengthen effective migration governance, protect the human rights of migrants, especially groups of people in vulnerable situations, promote appropriate links between migration and sustainable development, define priorities and strategies to address the main challenges faced by the region in migration matters, as well as the strengthening, modernization and management of borders.

The objectives set for this regional action scheme are:

- Act as a platform for the discussion and articulation of national positions regarding migration issues.
- Promote dialogue and regional cooperation on migration to address its challenges and opportunities in the short, medium and long term.
- Foster the exchange of information, best practices and procedures that lead to the establishment of collaborative mechanisms, to help guarantee effective migration governance in the region and access to international protection.



II. *Justification*

The RCM has gathered decades of experience as a mechanism for discussion and coordination of actions to improve migration management at the regional level. In 2019 and in response to the dynamics of human mobility, the RCM began a process of reviewing its mandate and guiding principles of the Conference, to address the realities and challenges that the region faces in migration matters, and to respond to emerging situations and unforeseen. This exercise was aimed at strengthening and consolidating the Conference as a first-rate space for political dialogue on migration issues and coordination of joint actions that promote effective migration governance in all its dimensions, with a human rights approach in all of its work.

As a result of this process, the member states adopted a new Statutory Charter, as the framework for action of the Conference, with priority themes and three pillars which guide the development of its mandate. The Statutory Charter reiterates the importance of collaborative work with alternative processes, international cooperation aligned with the principle of shared responsibility, in order to strengthen migration governance and protect the human rights of migrants, especially those who are in a situation of vulnerability.

It is in this spirit that the need to define possible areas of convergence and opportunities for collaborative work with the MIRPS arises. The MIRPS was created in 2017, when Belize, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico and Panama adopted the Declaration of San Pedro Sula and committed to designing a comprehensive response that addresses the root causes of forced displacement.

The San Pedro Sula Declaration follows up on the 2016 New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, which presented a vision of a more predictable response to the situation of forcibly displaced persons, known as the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF). The CRRF also specifies the elements for a comprehensive response to large refugee movements. The New York Declaration invites UNHCR to develop and initiate the application of the CRRF in specific situations with relevant States, other agencies of the United Nations System and stakeholders.

The MIRPS is an application of the CRRF in the region and includes the countries that signed the Declaration of San Pedro Sula (2017) and El Salvador, that joined in 2019 and who holds the second pro-tempore presidency (PPT) of this regional framework. It is also a concrete contribution to the Global Compact on Refugees, which fosters regional cooperation between countries of origin, transit and destination for greater shared responsibility for prevention, protection and durable solutions.

Trends in forced displacement in the world have reached unprecedented figures. According to the latest UNHCR annual report, 1% of the world's population had been forcibly displaced by the end of 2019. The dynamics in the Americas reflects the upward trend; the deterioration of the situation in Venezuela, the increase in violence and insecurity in North Central America and other displacement situations have caused an increase in the number of asylum applications in the last year. UNHCR's most recent report on global trends indicates that between 2016 and 2019, Central Americans and Venezuelans have submitted a total of 1.6



million asylum applications in the Americas, in contrast to the 220,000 applications submitted between 2010 and 2015. This situation places the region as the largest recipient of asylum applications in 2019¹.

The situation worldwide and the mitigation and risk management measures for COVID-19 implemented by the states, could have an impact on the mobility of people with international protection needs. Hence, the need to coordinate actions between different regional frameworks, promote international cooperation and develop the capacities of states and other actors to address these scenarios.

Therefore, and in line with Pillar # 3 stipulated in the Statutory Charter on “Preparation, Protection and Irregular Migration”, this Joint Workshop has been planned with the MIRPS to facilitate a space for discussion on the current context of mixed movements and facilitate coordination between the two platforms.

III. Objectives

1. General Objective:

- Strengthen the coordination and strategic alignment of the MIRPS and RCM, to provide articulated responses and implement effective regional mechanisms for mixed movements in Mexico and Central America.

2. Specific Objectives:

- Identify common objectives (and challenges) in the work of both regional mechanisms that can enhance and improve the complementarity between both platforms.
- Review the strategic plans of both platforms to become familiar with their work platforms and avoid duplication of efforts.
- Consider opportunities for collaboration at the country/cross-border level, based on the humanitarian operational context, related to both forced displacement and irregular migration.

IV. Methodology

The workshop will take place in two sessions of 2 hours each. The modality of the workshop will be virtual. Both sessions will be facilitated by the Technical Secretariat of the MIRPS and the CRM and will include the intervention of the PPTs, the presentation of an expert on international protection and a working session, as follows:

¹ Source: <https://www.unhcr.org/news/press/2020/6/5ee9db2e4/1-cent-humanity-displaced-unhcr-global-trends-report.html>



Session 1 (2 hours) Introduction to the MIRPS and protection response in the context of forced displacement

- Presentation of the MIRPS Pro-tempore Presidency on the framework, strategic vision of the MIRPS (international instruments, application of the CRRF at the regional level, pillars, support for the implementation of national plans), achievements, priority areas, and PPT 2020 workplan
- Presentation of the RCM Pro-tempore Presidency on its strategic plan, priority areas and 2020 workplan.
- Presentation by a UNHCR expert on the context of international forced displacement, analysis of the legal frameworks applicable to people with international protection needs, identification of good practices and recommendations (10 Point Plan).

Session 2 (2 hours) Participatory Segment

- Opening remarks and summary of the previous session.
- A working segment will follow. Participant will be organized in subgroups to identify priorities and opportunities for joint work on the context of forced displacement, taking the COVID-19 / post COVID-19 context into consideration. Each subgroup will include representatives of the national delegations of the RCM and, in the case of the MIRPS countries, a representative of the National Technical Team, to make contributions related to the MIRPS. Four working groups will be formed, with equal representation from both regional platforms. The working session will be virtual, and they will both have moderators from the Technical Secretariat of the MIRPS and the Executive Secretariat of the RCM.
- At the end of the working session, participants will reunite at the “plenary” to discuss the conclusions and agreements of each working group, propose opportunities for joint work, technical cooperation and resources that can be created within the framework of both platforms, and propose mechanisms for follow-up.
- This session will finalize with the identification of agreements for joint work and communication between the RCM and the MIRPS.

Virtual simultaneous interpretation will be available throughout the workshop, including the working session. At the end of the workshop, the MIRPS and CRM Technical Secretariats will prepare a joint report with recommendations for future follow-up actions.

V. Participants

The workshop is aimed at the representatives of the national delegations that are members of the RCM. Each member country is invited to nominate a maximum of 2 people from its representation to participate in the workshop. The profile of the participant should be that of an official of the National Migration Authority that dictates the processes for determining refugee status, with direct responsibilities in the procedures for the care of refugee applicants or refugees.



The second participant should come from a governmental institution that participates in the direct response to people with international protection needs (Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, National Commissions for Refugees, Ministry of Labor, etc.).

In the case of the delegations of Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico and Panama, which are MIRPS member states, it is possible that the delegations hold concurrent representation in both the RCM and the MIRPS, which enriches the dialogue. If this is not the case, the delegations of the countries mentioned above are invited to include within their delegations a representative of the MIRPS National Technical Team.

RCM Observer Organizations and RROCM are also encouraged to participate.

VI. Draft agenda

SESSION 1		
Time	Activity	Coordinator
09:00-09:10	Opening remarks (10min): – RCM Pro-tempore Presidency; – MIRPS Pro-tempore Presidency.	RCM Executive Secretariat
09:10-09:20	Introduction to the workshop (10min): – Objectives; – Methodology; – Agenda.	MIRPS Technical Secretariat
09:20-09:50	MIRPS PPT Presentation (30 min) – MIRPS Strategic vision (international instruments, application of the CRRF at the regional level, pillars, support for the implementation of national plans); – MIRPS 2020 PPT: workplan, priority areas for 2021.	MIRPS PPT and MIRPS Technical Secretariat
09:50-10:10	RCM PPT Presentation (20 min): – Strategic plan; – Priority areas; – 2020 workplan.	RCM PPT and RCM Executive Secretariat
10:10-10:50	International Protection Expert Presentation (40 min): – Current Context of Forced Displacement and identification of people with international protection needs; – Analysis of the legal frameworks / commitments in the region; – 10 Point Plan – Comments, inquiries from delegations	UNHCR Expert MIRPS Technical Secretariat
10:50-11:00	Closing remarks for session 1 (10min): – MIRPS PPT; – RCM PPT.	RCM Executive Secretariat



SESSION 2		
Time	Activity	Coordinator
09:00-09:10	Opening remarks (10min): – RCM Pro-tempore Presidency; – MIRPS Pro-tempore Presidency.	RCM Executive Secretariat
09:10-09:20	Summary of session 1 and introduction to session 2 (10min): – Objectives for session 2; – Methodology; – Organization of subgroups; – Agenda / Time.	MIRPS Technical Secretariat
09:20-10:20	Working session in subgroups (60 min) <i>“Strategic dialogue on the common opportunities and challenges of the MIRPS and the RCM”</i> : – Identify opportunities for joint work or technical cooperation (bilateral / multilateral); – Propose mechanisms for CRM / MIRPS work follow-up.	MIRPS Technical Secretariat
10:20-10:50	Plenary and agreements (30min).	MIRPS PPT and Technical Secretariat
10:50-11:00	Closing remarks (10 min) – MIRPS PPT. – RCM PPT.	RCM Executive Secretariat