

SOUTH AMERICAN CONFERENCE ON MIGRATION (SACM)

**SPECIAL STATEMENT TO THE INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION REVIEW FORUM
(IMRF)**

On May 17, 2022, in the City of New York, United States of America, the South American Conference on Migration (SACM) Member Countries, namely, the Argentine Republic; the Plurinational State of Bolivia; the Federative Republic of Brazil; the Republic of Chile; the Republic of Colombia; the Republic of Ecuador; the Cooperative Republic of Guyana; the Republic of Paraguay; the Republic of Peru; the Republic of Suriname; the Eastern Republic of Uruguay; and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela welcome the International Migration Review Forum as a space to review the progress in implementing the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM), and are pleased to set out the coincidence between the founding principles of the Conference and those contained in the Compact.

We stress the significance of the Global Compact as a highly relevant framework to improve governance for migration, address human mobility issues in all its dimensions and strengthen the protection of migrants' human rights worldwide, regardless of their migratory status.

The SACM is a regional consultative process created in 2000 by South American countries willing to generate a space for dialogue and consensus aimed at comprehensively addressing migration issues.

In spite of the nearly two decades separating the Conference from the Global Compact, there is a clear convergence between their principles and objectives, characterised by their universal and timeless nature. Thus, the defence of migrants' human rights arises as the basic, cross-cutting and constituent principle.

Both of them acknowledge the fact that States have the sovereign right to control their borders and that the control mechanisms used by them must respect migrants' human rights, regardless of their migratory status.

Within both frameworks, the irregular status of migrants is considered to be an element that increases their vulnerability, exposing them to the risk of being victims of human trafficking and/or smuggling of migrants, and preventing the full exercise of their rights. The regularisation of migration status is the first and necessary step towards integrating migrants in host societies.

In keeping with the foregoing, both the Conference and the Compact call for the implementation of measures that help to fight against irregular status and not against migrants in an irregular situation.

In this sense, we underscore the region's commitment to the protection and guarantee of migrants' rights, and call on migration receiving countries around the world to act within the framework of human rights and international standards.

The SACM Member Countries condemn all acts of xenophobia, discrimination and racism, as well as the utilitarian treatment of migrants, regardless of their migration status, rejecting any attempt to criminalise irregular migration.

In addition, we advocate for migrants' labour and social security rights, and argue for the positive contribution of migrants to social, economic and education development, as well as to the processes of integration and cooperation among countries.

Since 2021, already within the framework of the Global Compact and for the purpose of furthering and systematically supporting the tackling of certain issues, we have designed and implemented a mechanism of six networks in the SACM, in line with its guiding principles as well as with the objectives of the Global Compact, namely:

- Network on Border Management
- Network on Human Trafficking and Smuggling of Migrants
- Network on Migrant Children and Adolescents
- Network on Environment, Climate Change, Disasters and Migration
- Network on Gender and Migration
- Network on Social and Labour Integration: Work and Education.

We permanently seek to update these networks considering the context and reality of the countries and the region, so that we can best respond to migrants' needs.

In accordance with the Global Compact, the South American Conference Member Countries, as a way to enable the performance of the actions proposed in favour of migrants, encourage the cooperation and coordination among countries, as well as the construction of a regional vision, a purpose which, in turn, is intended to be reflected in the theme of this 2021-2022 period, namely "*Migration, integration and cooperation: towards a regional migration agenda*".

The SACM Member Countries acknowledge the efforts made by the countries in the region to assist migrants in the context of various migration processes, such as intraregional and extraregional migration, and flows from other continents.

In this light, we emphasise the efforts made by the countries in the region to implement processes of migrant regularisation and comprehensive integration into host communities, and to provide health care and vaccines to migrants in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. We also underscore the importance of boosting mechanisms to fight human trafficking and smuggling of migrants at a national, regional and global level.

The Global Compact states that most international migration takes place within regions. In view of this, it invites regional consultative processes to contribute their opinions, experience, recommendations and best practices. For this reason, we commend the countries that have submitted their voluntary reports in the framework of the Compact, and we encourage those which still have not done so to do it.

The South American Conference on Migration Member Countries are grateful for the invitation to participate in this first International Migration Review Forum, and highlight the need for greater international cooperation in terms of human mobility, as well as the importance for donor countries, organisations and institutions to keep mobilising resources for migrants, who are the main focus of our efforts.

SANTIAGO DE CHILE, MAY 2022.