

WRITTEN CONTRIBUTION OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF MEXICO TO THE  
GLOBAL COMPACT ON REFUGEE'S FIRST THEMATIC DISCUSSION

***“Past and current burden- and responsibility-sharing arrangements”***

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Introduction

- The number of asylum seekers in the world is larger than ever. It is a global concern to which the UNHCR has responded in a remarkable manner.
- The UNHCR has been a leading force in addressing the issues at stake, but, most importantly, it has been the main point of coordination among regions and states. We acknowledge its endeavours in Syria, Afghanistan, Northern Africa, South America, and, particularly, in Central America, where Mexico is actively engaged.
- In this context, Mexico values and recognizes the **solidarity** shown by countries that host refugees and maintain an **open door policy**.
- With a **human rights approach**, we supported the **New York Declaration** adopted by the High-Level Summit to Address Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants and co-sponsored the **Leader's Summit on Refugees** convened by the President of the United States in 2016. In both events, the international community made it clear that it will **not remain indifferent**.
- Mexico is fully committed with ensuring the broadest possible participation of all stakeholders **in burden- and responsibility-sharing arrangements**. We are now taking part, as a **pilot country**, in the implementation of the **Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF)**. In coordination with the UNHCR, we are in the **first stage of this process**, which involves **engaging at the local level**. Civil society, UN Agencies, government authorities, private sector and people of interest are being gathered with the aim of identifying **problems, developments and opportunities to strengthen our asylum system**. We are committed with taking the outcome of these consultations to the national level and, soon, to the regional and international levels.

- Once the CRRF consultations have ended, general conclusions on **best general practices** are expected. This will certainly help us reflect on the asylum systems of different states and regions and learn from it as we move forward.
- We expect that the implementation of the CRRF in different countries will provide **concrete results** that can **inform and enrich the discussions** of the Global Compact on Refugees, as stated in the New York Declaration of 2016. We reaffirm our commitment towards an instrument that reflects the best practices, taking into consideration the **individual context** of each country.
- We thus welcome the call for this first thematic discussion towards a Global Compact on Refugees, entitled "*Past and current burden- and responsibility-sharing arrangements*".
- This Compact has a specific legal framework. Mexico seeks to **strengthen its implementation** by taking into account the commitments acquired individually and collectively at the **Summit to Address Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants** and the **Leader's Summit on Refugees**, as well as at the **World Humanitarian Summit** and the **2030 Development Agenda**, among others, and to find appropriate understanding with the **Global Compact for a safe, regular and orderly migration**.
- Mexico will actively work with the UNHCR and with other actors involved in the construction of the Global Compact on Refugees.

#### Mexico's national experience

- Mexico has a **specific and comprehensive legal framework** regarding refugees, which includes a Migration Law; a Law on Refugees, Complementary Protection and Political Asylum; and a Law on the Rights of Children and Adolescents.
- We consider important to acknowledge the **multiple causes** that make people to leave their countries and the challenges these mixed flows represent at the national, regional and global levels, in order to build **comprehensive responses** to the large movements of persons, including those in need of **international protection**.

- At last year's Leader's Summit on Refugees, we promoted addressing the large movements of people under the **principle of shared responsibility** with a **regional approach** that privileges the respect for **human rights**. The need for **regional cooperation** and **strong mechanisms of shared responsibility** has never been greater than today.
- The increasing number of asylum seekers in Mexico has meant a double challenge of **strengthening our institutional capacities** and **updating our procedures** to address their differentiated and particular needs, considering their **condition of vulnerability**.
- With a **long-term vision** and the **support of international organizations and agencies**, such as UNHCR, UNICEF, IOM and the ICRC, **and the valued participation of civil society**, Mexico has promoted **concrete actions** that could become **positive experiences** and **good practices** for other countries facing similar challenges. Some of them include:
  - We have **strengthened eligibility procedures** according to international standards and the QAI (Quality Assurance Initiative);
  - We are developing **alternatives to detention** for asylum seekers applicants, in particular children, based on the principle of the best interest of the child, and family unit;
  - We have encouraged the **social and economic inclusion** of refugees;
  - With the support of UNHCR and civil society, we have implemented **information campaigns** to disseminate information regarding the right to seek international protection; and
  - We have developed **new protocols** to better identify the needs of international protection of unaccompanied migrant children.
- Therefore, Mexico has gradually implemented actions to create a **humane and more efficient system** to process asylum seeker's applications, facilitate adjudication proceedings and promote the integration of refugees.

### Brazil Declaration and Plan of Action

- The **Brazil Declaration and Plan of Action** of 2014 is a landmark achievement, because it **operationalized** Latin America's longstanding **tradition of solidarity** towards persons in need of international protection.
- Mexico would like to highlight some **key components** of this Declaration and its Plan of Action that encourage **burden- and responsibility-sharing mechanisms** in the region, and could serve to inform this first thematic discussion and create value in the process towards the Compact on Refugees:
  - It provides a set of actions, to be jointly undertaken by States, the UNHCR and other stakeholders, aimed at **addressing particular protection needs and challenges** in the region, such as the “*Quality Asylum*” and the “*Borders of Solidarity and Safety*” programs. Both efforts seek to **strengthen national and regional capacities** to improve status-determination procedures, as well as to ease protection in border areas;
  - It goes beyond the three traditional durable solutions by **identifying integration schemes** that could be developed by countries in the capacity to do so, including **labour integration**;
  - Assumes a **comprehensive approach** that takes into account key features of the human mobility phenomenon, including vulnerabilities, mixed flows and community empowerment, and sets the basis for building a **preventive perspective linked to development**;
  - It includes a robust chapter on **regional cooperation** that reinforces the need to **complement and avoid duplication** of activities, programs and resources of sub-regional and other international mechanisms;
  - It distinguishes the **different displacement situations** in the region, which allows to efficiently identify needs, coordinate efforts and provide adequate support to ongoing national, sub-regional and regional actions.
- These features are **compatible with the four pillars of the CRRF** and we see merit in continuing working with States and partners in the region to reinforce priority areas.

- As the **implementation** of the Brazil Declaration and Plan of Action unfolds, we have to pay due regard to specific **areas of opportunity** that are important for Mexico:
  - Develop, adopt and take forward a **preventive approach**. This includes building strong **bridges between the development and humanitarian communities**, taking into account that displacement in the region, specifically in Central America has also economic causes. Mexico works in close **cooperation with the Northern Triangle countries** to address the **root causes of human mobility**, including projects in areas such as infrastructure development, energy, trade and investment;
  - To encourage a close relationship between **government and civil society** to promote a **positive narrative on refugees**;
  - Recognize the leadership and progresses made by countries involved in the implementation of the **CRRF**, in order to stimulate **ownership** and greater **engagement and commitment**;
  - To highlight the importance of providing **reliable data and information** to policy makers;
  - Finally, to foster a **multi-stakeholder approach**. While recognizing the leadership of States in providing protection, **innovative partnerships** with academia, the private sector and civil society could contribute positively to achieve the goals of the CRRF.