



ROOTS IN THE STORM:

solidarity and dignity in
a fortified hemisphere



The Impact of Migration Policies in the Americas in
2025

Acknowledgments

This report is, above all, a tribute to migrants and their families, who sustain the fabric of entire societies, defying borders to sow the seeds of hope for a dignified life for all.

We extend our deepest gratitude to the shelters, organizations, networks, and human rights defenders that make up the Binational Roundtable on Migration and Human Rights and the Bloque Latinoamericano sobre Migración (Latin American Bloc on Migration), whose reflections, analyses, resources, and shared knowledge brought this report to life.

Thank you for your work and collaboration. You are the roots that protect us from the storm and illuminate the path toward collective well-being and the full guarantee of rights, wherever people may be.

We honor the living memory of those who came before us in these struggles, whose footsteps paved the road we walk today. In particular, we embrace the women who, through their care and commitment at every stage of this process, make it possible to sustain both the struggle and life itself.

We also thank the Handelman Foundation for its support in the preparation of this report.

Credits

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Introduction

In 2025, **across the Americas**, migration policies have hardened at an unprecedented scale. Monitoring by civil society organizations from the United States to the Southern Cone reveals a systematic pattern of criminalizing human mobility and externalizing borders, driven primarily by far-reaching legislative changes and executive orders in the Global North, and reinforced by narratives that generate devastating domino effects in transit and origin countries.

This report is based on information and reflections shared through the Global Exchange Monthly Roundtable on Migration and Human Rights, the People's Movement for Peace and Justice, and the Latin American Migration Bloc and its working group on migration policy impacts. These spaces bring together human rights defenders, migrants, families of migrants, activists, academics, and civil society organizations. This is not an exhaustive review of migration policies, but a grassroots systematization exercise grounded in collective monitoring and analysis, focused on defending the human rights of people on the move across the Americas.

Based on this information and these reflections, the report is organized around three main axes:

1. **Context:** restrictive policies and regressions in the human rights framework for human mobility.
2. **Impacts:** effects on people on the move across the region and on those who defend their rights.
3. **Responses:** actions by communities and civil society organizations.

I. Regressive contexts and policies in 2025

The political cycle that began on January 20 with the new U.S. administration has accelerated the adoption of regressive migration policies, not only in the United States but also across much of Latin America. Faced with U.S. imperatives and regional and global migration pressures, many governments have failed to adopt policies that promote solidarity and well-being for people forced to migrate, or to create the conditions necessary for dignified, safe, and regular migration.

Containment measures remain a central priority in the design and implementation of migration policies across the region. At the first meeting held on Mexico's northern border, migrant shelters expressed serious concern about the construction and expansion of the Rio Grande wall by the Texas government, highlighting how migration containment, criminalization, and border externalization have continued to intensify.

This year has been marked by intense executive action by the United States and a proliferation of cooperation agreements, memoranda of understanding, and joint declarations. Rather than establishing formal, ratified treaties, the United States has relied on a flexible strategy that allows it to extend and strengthen the externalization of its borders without adequate internal legal oversight or meaningful opposition from other countries in the Americas.

This has led to legislative reforms in multiple jurisdictions across the Americas, increased militarization, the spread of xenophobic and racist narratives, and the adoption of violent and threatening policies. These actions are primarily focused on tightening immigration entry and residency requirements, strengthening border controls, and accelerating deportation processes. These dynamics are reflected in the following key areas across the continent:

- ❖ **The externalization of borders on a continental scale.**
- ❖ **The regression of rights**—legislative, operational, and discursive—related to human rights in migration, including the weakening of the international protection system.
- ❖ **The use of fear and threat narratives** as tools of migration containment, legitimizing heavy-handed approaches such as the deployment of armed forces and the framing of migration as a risk to national security and the economy, amplified through social media and technological tools.
- ❖ **The weakening of checks and balances** on state power, including the erosion of legislative and judicial independence, increasingly subordinated to executive authority.

The externalization of the United States in Latin America and the Caribbean

Several programs and strategies have been implemented since 2023; while some are no longer in effect, others have been intensified. Their political effects and containment measures are increasingly becoming institutionalized in Latin American countries, particularly with the rise of new conservative administrations.

The shift toward right-wing radicalization in Latin America, as noted in the article *"Make LATAM Great Again: The Year the Region Turned to the Right"*,¹ forms part of a broader global trend marked by disillusionment with progressive promises and a reorientation of public priorities toward order, security, and economic growth. This shift has been fueled by media manipulation and by fears linked to crisis, material loss, and the collapse of the promise of neoliberal prosperity. As the article observes, "there is a logic of political leadership that seeks constant polarization; ideas drawn from the alt-right, such as gun deregulation, are replicated, and political alliances and agreements with the United States are actively promoted."

Latin American Electoral Panorama: 2022-2025

Country / Year	Winner / Party	Political Tendency	Status: Government vs. Opposition
Chile / 2025 (Projected)	José Antonio Kast (Republican Party)	Right / Far Right	Opposition (Defeats government candidate Jara) →
Honduras / 2025 (Projected)	Nasry Asfura / S. Nasralla* (Alliance)	Right / Center Right	Opposition (Defeats Libre) →
Uruguay / 2024	Yamandú Orsi (Broad Front)	Center Left	Opposition (Regains power) →
Mexico / 2024	Claudia Sheinbaum (Morena)	Left	Government (Continuity) ↻
Panama / 2024	José Raúl Mulino (RM)	Right	Opposition (Protest vote against PRD) →
Dominican Republic / 2024	Luis Abinader (PRM)	Center-right	Ruling Party (Re-election) ↻
El Salvador / 2024	Nayib Bukele (New Ideas)	Right	Ruling Party (Re-election) ↻
Argentina / 2023	Javier Milei (Freedom Advances)	Right / Libertarian	Opposition (Defeat of Peronism) →
Ecuador / 2023	Daniel Noboa (ADN)	Center-right	Opposition (Early Election) →
Guatemala / 2023	Bernardo Arévalo (Semilla)	Center-left	Opposition (Against the traditional system) →
Brazil / 2022	Lula da Silva (PT)	Left	Opposition (Defeat of Bolsonaro) →
Colombia / 2022	Gustavo Petro (Historic Pact)	Left	Opposition (First left-wing victory) →

Key Trends Identified

-  Anti-Government Wave (Protest Vote): Predominance of opposition victories (9 out of 12), rejecting incumbent governments due to discontent.
-  Ideological Pendulum and Polarization: Oscillation between right (recent surge) and left in key areas, with more pronounced rhetoric.
-  Emergence of Outsiders: Figures and movements that break with traditional politics capitalize on discontent

¹ CONNECTAS. Cristian Ascencio. https://www.connectas.org/analisis/2025-la-region-giro-a-la-derecha/?utm_source=Newsletter&utm_medium=Mailchimp

In the current complex socio-political landscape, regional coordination in Latin America and the articulation of a consistent and reciprocal stance have become increasingly difficult, particularly from a human rights and right-to-migrate perspective. Yet these principles once underpinned some of the region's most significant precedents for free movement, including the CA-4 agreement in Central America and Mercosur in South America, as well as non-detention policies and the implementation of the Cartagena Declaration, which placed the life, safety, and protection of people on the move at the center of migration policy.

Regression in migration regulations, asylum, and refugees

Several countries have adopted regulations that limit access to asylum and refugee status by prioritizing the consideration of claims in designated "safe third countries."

Restrictive trends and policies in Latin America.

The prevailing trend is securitization, in which migrants are no longer regarded as subjects of rights but as a "threat" to national stability, security, and the economy, even in countries with high emigration rates.

Militarization and Border Control: Countries such as Mexico, Chile, Peru, and Ecuador have deployed armed forces along their borders, not only for migration control but also as a political response to the demand for "citizen security."

Border Externalization: Following the U.S. model, the governments of El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, and Mexico have taken on "containment" roles, applying the same coercive mechanisms they use against their own citizens when those citizens migrate.

Obstacles to Regularization: Although some countries, such as Colombia and Brazil, maintain regularization processes and limited protections exist for vulnerable individuals in Mexico, others—including Argentina, Chile, and Panama—have tightened economic or criminal requirements, driving people into irregular status and exploitation.

Criminalization of Solidarity: A worrying trend has emerged, ranging from public discrediting to judicial harassment of human rights defenders and migrant shelters, as seen in countries such as El Salvador and Nicaragua.

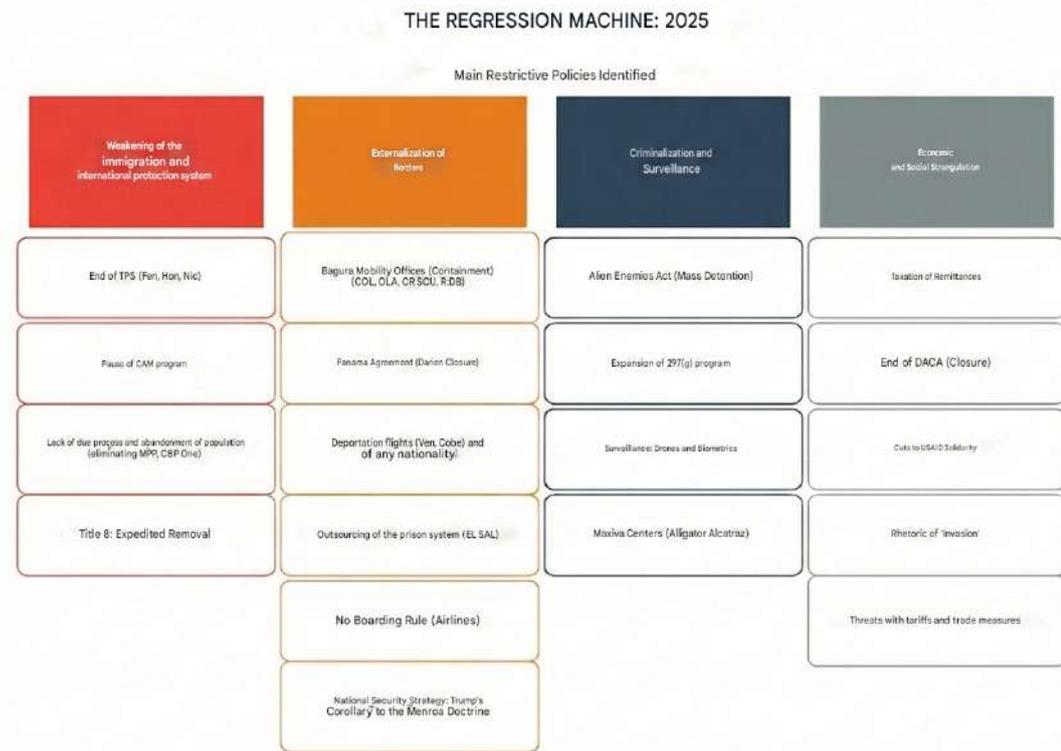
In the United States, the expanded use of the Expedited Removal process through executive action has significantly increased immediate deportations, further eroding due process protections.

US MIGRATION POLICY SHIFT: 2025



- **Temporary Protected Status (TPS)** has been terminated for most Latin American countries that had previously benefited from the program, including Venezuela, Honduras, and Nicaragua. TPS remains in effect only temporarily for El Salvador, until December, and for Haiti, until February 2026. Those who lose TPS either revert to a previous immigration status, if still valid, or fall into undocumented status and face the risk of deportation.
- **The Central American Minors Program (CAM)** was indefinitely suspended in January 2025 as a result of an executive order affecting the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP), under which CAM operates. As a result, all new applications, interviews, and travel were halted for children seeking family reunification in the United States.
- **DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals)**. The program faced effective closure during 2025 following a January 17, 2025 ruling by the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals, which found the program unlawful but allowed existing protections to remain temporarily in place while litigation continued. Renewals are still being accepted nationwide; however, in Texas, renewals no longer include work authorization and provide only temporary protection from deportation. New applications under the program were officially reinstated on January 21, 2025.
- **"Remain in Mexico" (Migrant Protection Protocols - MPP)**: The program undermined the asylum system by leaving asylum seekers unprotected and exposed to dangerous conditions, setting an early and consequential precedent for border externalization.

- **Title 42** (and similar expedited removal measures) is no longer in effect; however, it was widely used—particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic—as a containment and summary expulsion mechanism, and its logic has been carried forward and refined through the current implementation of Title 8.
- **The "Safe Mobility" initiative (Safe Mobility Offices - SMO²)** has been one of the most aggressive bilateral migration strategies and was implemented from mid-2023 through 2025. While its official objective was to “offer legal pathways,” in practice it functions as a mechanism to filter and contain people before they reach the U.S. border. Applicants lose the ability to seek asylum in the country where they feel safest and are instead required to wait in countries that have entered into bilateral agreements with the United States. When an SMO application is denied—based on discretionary criteria established by the U.S. government—individuals are left in limbo in the country where they applied, without protection and with their biometric data recorded. Countries that entered into bilateral agreements under the SMO framework include Ecuador, Colombia, Costa Rica, and Guatemala.



² **Colombia** <https://www.cancilleria.gov.co/newsroom/news/colombia-estados-unidos-acuerdan-terminos-fase-exploratoria-iniciativa-movilidad>

Guatemala <https://help.unhcr.org/guatemala/2024/07/29/movilidad-segura/>

Ecuador <https://sv.usembassy.gov/es/estados-unidos-y-guatemala-lanzan-programa-piloto-de-movilidad-segura/>

Costa Rica <https://www.centroamerica360.com/region/eeuu-extiende-el-programa-movilidad-segura-en-costa-rica-hasta-diciembre-de-2025/>

Ecuador <https://2021-2025.state.gov/translations/spanish/anuncio-de-oficina-de-movilidad-segura-en-ecuador/>

Panamá

<https://pa.usembassy.gov/es/consejo-de-seguridad-nacional-de-ee-uu-da-la-bienvenida-al-memorandum-sobre-migracion-con-panama/>

Mechanism: The United States establishes physical offices in these countries, where individuals are required to apply for asylum or refugee protection, family reunification, or humanitarian visas.

It also generates **repatriation agreements** and so-called “**deportation flights**,” which function as operational arrangements for the expedited removal of individuals³.

✪ **Panama (Darién Agreement - 2024):**

- **The Pact:** The United States signed a memorandum of understanding to finance repatriation flights departing from Panama.
- **Objective:** To “close” the Darién Gap by returning people who manage to cross it and preventing onward movement toward the north.
- **Impact:** The agreement criminalizes migration along one of the world’s most dangerous routes, disproportionately affecting women and children who have already survived extreme risks in the jungle.

✪ **Venezuela:**

- Volatile agreements have enabled the acceptance of direct deportation flights from the United States, which are used as political bargaining tools and fluctuate according to the state of diplomatic relations at any given time.

✪ **Cuba:**

- Previously suspended agreements have been reactivated to allow for the acceptance of deportation flights returning Cuban nationals from the southern border of the United States.

○ **The Vertical "Great Wall" (Bicentennial Framework and de facto Agreements)**

✪ **Mexico:** Although the “Remain in Mexico” program (MPP) has formally ended, bilateral cooperation continues to make Mexico an executor of U.S. immigration policy through the following mechanisms:

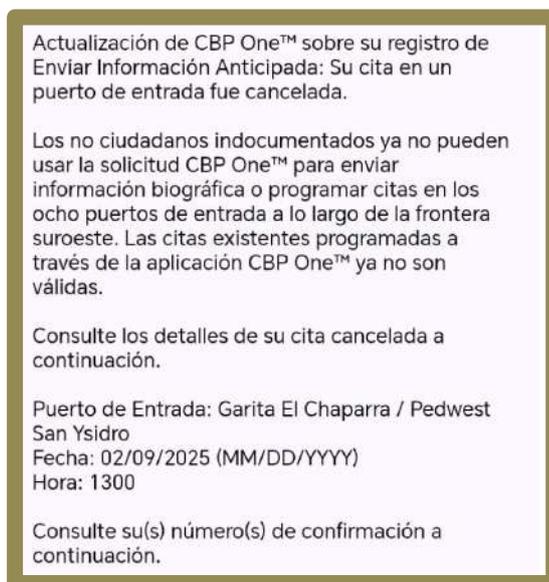
- **Acceptance of expulsions (Under Title 8):** Mexico accepts non-Mexican nationals—including Cubans, Haitians, Nicaraguans, and Venezuelans—deported by the United States, effectively denying them the opportunity to seek asylum on U.S. soil. This practice extends and intensifies the use of Expedited Removal, replicating rapid deportations in an even more severe form.
- Previously, expedited removal under Title 8 applied only to individuals apprehended within 100 miles of the border and who had been in the country for less than two weeks. Since January 21, 2025, its use has been expanded to the maximum extent permitted under existing law. It now allows for the rapid deportation—without a prior hearing before an immigration judge—of any undocumented person encountered anywhere in the United States who cannot demonstrate continuous residence for at least two years.
- Under Title 8, individuals deported through this process receive a formal deportation order that includes a re-entry ban of five to ten years—or, in some cases, a lifetime ban—as well as potential criminal charges for any subsequent attempt to re-enter the United States.

³ <https://mire.gob.pa/memorandum-entre-el-gobierno-de-la-republica-de-panama-y-el-gobierno-de-los-estados-unidos-de-america-sobre-asistencia-y-cooperacion-en-asuntos-migratorios>

- **CBP One:** A tacit agreement—now defunct—restricted transit through Mexico to individuals with a confirmed appointment obtained through the CBP One application, effectively trapping thousands of people in the southern and central regions of the country. Following the cancellation of this mechanism, hundreds of individuals and families were left in legal and humanitarian limbo.

In April 2025, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) announced the revocation of parole status for approximately 985,000 individuals who had entered the United States via the CBP One application, ordering them to leave the country immediately or face consequences for irregular status. At the same time, more than 30,000 people remained stranded in Mexico, including accompanied and unaccompanied children and adolescents, unable to continue their legal processes in the United States and without access to adequate legal or social support in Mexico.

On March 12, 2025, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) announced on its website the rebranding of CBP-One to "CBP Home." Currently, the application is used by individuals who are being forced to return to their countries.



- **Militarization and Deportations:** Cooperation under the *Bicentennial Understanding* (2024), while formally framed around security, has, in practice, financed and supported the deployment of the National Guard to border regions for immigration enforcement. Wall construction has resumed, and more than 9,000 additional agents have been deployed. Reports also indicate an increase in expedited deportations to Mexico of individuals detained within the United States, including long-term residents.

In parallel, harsher penalties have been introduced based on the point of entry into the country. In areas such as Texas, land has been transferred to the U.S. military, effectively militarizing certain border zones. Crossing through these areas carries enhanced penalties, in some cases resulting in prison sentences of several years.

The Los Angeles Declaration (“A Multilateral Umbrella under a U.S. Mandate”)

Although framed as a regional agreement and signed at the 2022 Summit of the Americas, the Los Angeles Declaration has functioned primarily as a framework for pressuring countries into specific bilateral migration control agreements.

- **Signatory countries:** Twenty-two countries signed the Declaration, encompassing most of the region, including Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, and Central American countries.
- **The trap of “shared responsibility”:** Under the discourse of shared responsibility, the United States has pressured Latin American governments to tighten visa regimes and border controls in exchange for economic cooperation and political alignment.

Multilateral agreements rooted in the United Nations system, such as the *Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration*⁴, are frequently invoked in forums associated with the Los Angeles Declaration. However, these references are largely rhetorical, lacking binding commitments and occurring alongside strong opposition from the United States government and from states governed by openly anti-immigrant administrations or conservative parties in power. In practice, these governments are increasingly aligning themselves with U.S. containment policies and agreements that prioritize migration control, economic nationalism, and security cooperation over respect for human rights in migration.

Fear, threats, and migration control through the use of technology

A significant increase in investment in advanced border management technologies has been observed, along with expanded international cooperation in this area.



AI and big data → prediction and management of migration flows.



Surveillance drones → monitoring of border areas, including the use of Israeli-developed technologies.



Facial and biometric data recognition → identification, tracking, and entry records at border control points and within administrative migration procedures.

There are credible concerns, based on unofficial information, that these agreements involve the exchange of biometric data. This poses significant risks to migrants and human rights defenders, particularly given the potential for data sharing between governments and non-state actors.

⁴ Global Compact on migration <https://docs.un.org/es/A/RES/73/195>

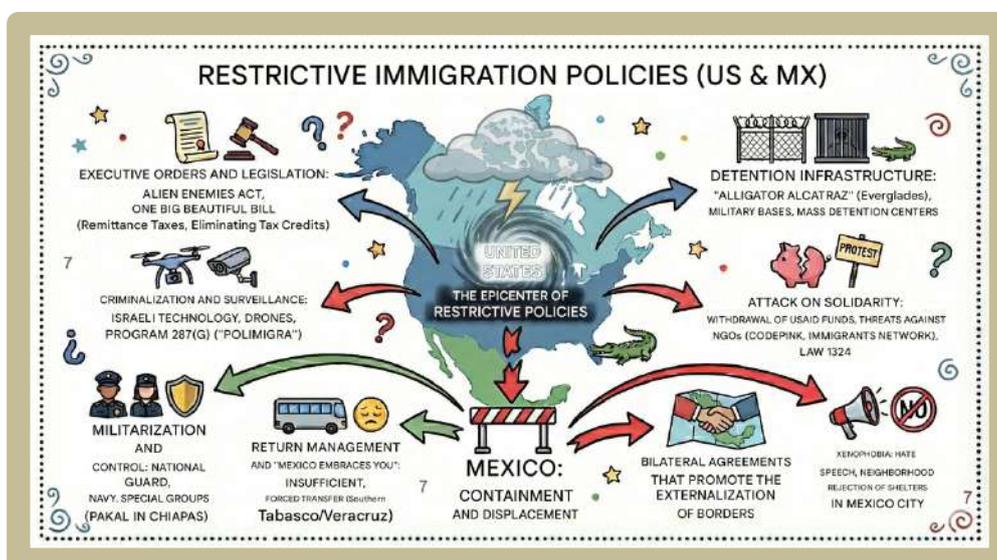
II. Impacts

The landscape has changed dramatically since January 2025, with the reactivation of restrictive measures and the closure of legal humanitarian pathways by the United States. Increased immigration controls, detentions, and pushbacks—understood as collective expulsions carried out without individual assessments of protection needs—combined with the rise of hate speech, the criminalization of migrants, and the reinforcement of negative racial stereotypes, have placed intense pressure on migrant communities and fueled social tensions and violent reactions across societies.

At the same time, U.S. immigration policy has undergone a sustained process of criminalization, whereby matters traditionally governed by civil and administrative law have increasingly incorporated the logics, practices, and rationales of criminal law. Behaviors previously treated as administrative infractions—including irregular entry, unauthorized stay, or unauthorized work—have been discursively reframed as acts of criminality and threats to security. This shift has driven the expansion of detention, surveillance, and coercive control mechanisms.

This criminalization has not been confined to the penal sphere but has permeated other areas of the legal system, including labor, family, and even constitutional law, altering procedural standards and eroding fundamental guarantees such as due process, proportionality, and the presumption of innocence.

Practices such as the detention of individuals by ICE agents while they appear in immigration court exemplify this erosion of due process. These policies create significant barriers to accessing legal representation and ensuring personal safety, while making it increasingly difficult for lawyers and family members to locate and support detained individuals.



🌐 **The epicenter of restrictive migration policies: the United States** **Main policies identified by civil society:**

At the beginning of his second term, the Trump administration issued executive orders aimed at **criminalizing migration** and **aggressively externalizing border enforcement**, mobilizing the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the Border Patrol, and the State Department through security cooperation and foreign aid.

Executive orders and legislation: Implementation of measures such as the invocation of the Alien Enemies Act to justify mass detentions without due process, alongside proposed legislation such as the *One Big Beautiful Bill*, which includes taxes on remittances and the elimination of child tax credits.

Criminalization and surveillance: Use of surveillance technologies, including Israeli-developed drones, and the expansion of programs such as 287(g), which deputize local law enforcement officers as immigration agents (“polimigra”).

Detention Infrastructure: Opening and expansion of large-scale detention centers under inhumane conditions, notably the facility known as “Alligator Alcatraz” in the Florida Everglades, as well as the use of military bases for detention purposes.

Attack on solidarity: Withdrawal of USAID funding and threats of investigation against organizations such as CODEPINK and the Immigrants Network under Section 1324 of U.S. law, which criminalizes the alleged “harboring” of undocumented individuals.

🌐 **Mexico (Containment and Displacement)**

Militarization and control: Increased presence of the National Guard, Navy, and special forces (including the Pakal unit in Chiapas).

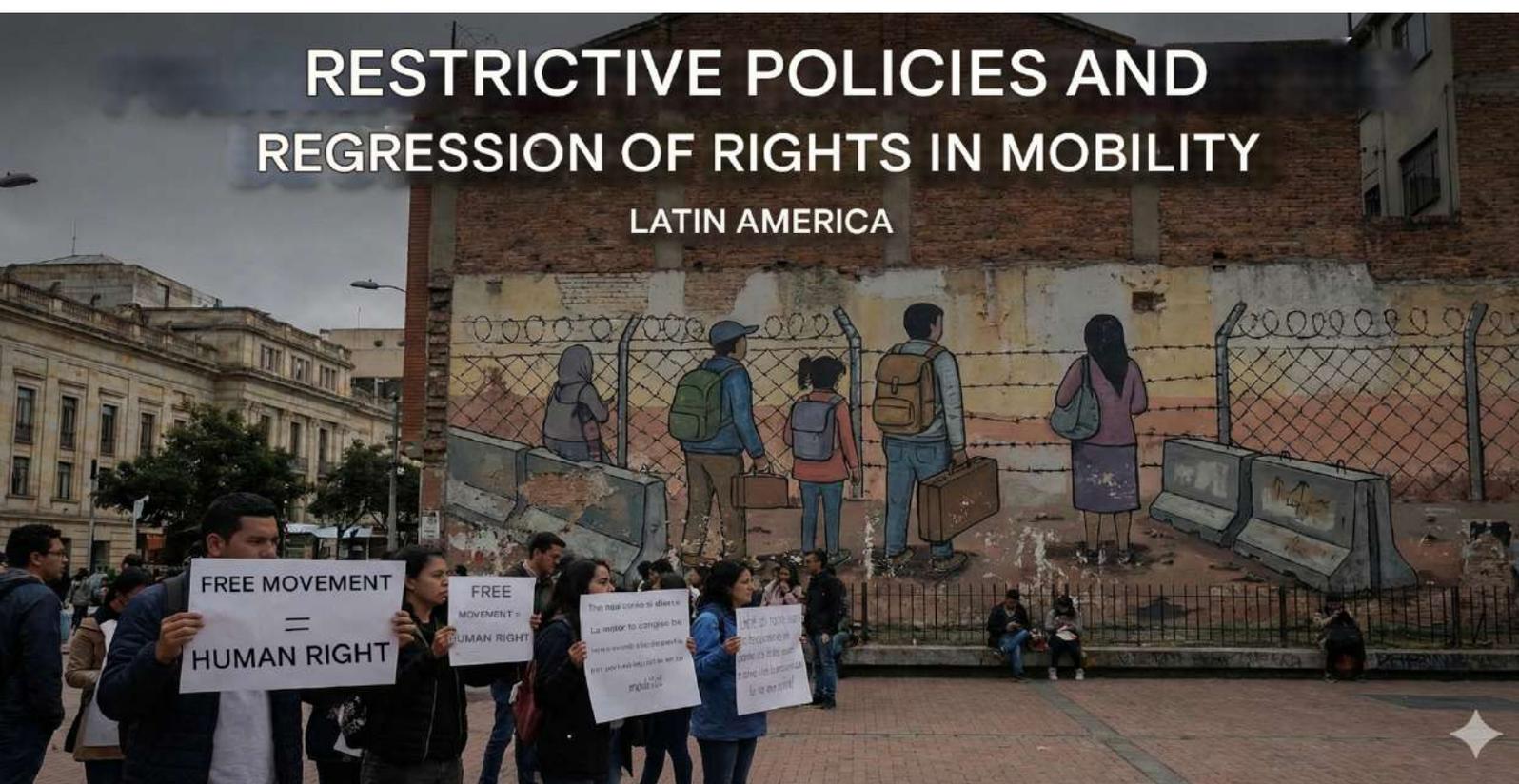
Return management and “Mexico Embraces You”: The federal program “Mexico Embraces You” has been widely criticized for its insufficiency. It is largely limited to providing financial support and transportation, without guaranteeing meaningful integration measures such as access to identity documents, CURP (Mexican national ID number), or employment. There are no adequate reintegration policies for returnees—particularly children and adolescents—nor a comprehensive strategy to identify and provide legal or psychosocial support to individuals who were forcibly returned after leaving family members in the United States. Reports also indicate the forced transfer of deportees to southern states (such as Tabasco and Veracruz) as a deterrent to re-crossing.

Weakened Institutional Framework: The de facto—and in some cases total—operational merger of COMAR (the Mexican Commission for Refugee Assistance) with the National Migration Institute (INM) has resulted in COMAR’s loss of field presence and institutional autonomy, undermining the asylum system and jeopardizing the right to asylum.

Xenophobia: An increase in hate speech and neighborhood opposition to the establishment of migrant shelters, particularly in Mexico City.

Regular pathways: Since 2024, the Mexican government has stopped issuing visitor cards for humanitarian reasons to asylum seekers and, more broadly, to most individuals protected under the Migration Law through this status. This disregard for the existing legal framework has left hundreds of asylum seekers and migrants in Mexico without a viable pathway to regular status. Ongoing blockages in the issuance of humanitarian visitor cards, combined with high costs and excessive requirements for accessing other forms of legal status—such as temporary or permanent residency, even through family ties with Mexican citizens—have pushed many into prolonged irregularity and vulnerability.

Limited Access to Rights: The absence of regular migration pathways means that many people on the move—including individuals and families in need of international protection—face severely restricted or entirely denied access to health care, housing, education, and decent, paid, and safe work.



Central and South America (Outsourcing and Regression)

- 🌐 **El Salvador:** Approval of the Foreign Agents Law, which imposes a 30% tax on NGOs receiving international funding and criminalizes the work of human rights defenders. The continued use of a state of emergency and prisons such as CECOT to receive deported individuals profiled as criminals further deepens repression and rights violations.

- ✪ **Guatemala and Honduras:** Acceptance of deportees of other nationalities—including Mexican nationals and others—under agreements with the United States, despite the lack of institutional capacity to provide adequate reception, protection, or care.
- ✪ **Ecuador:** The government has signed a Safe Third Country Agreement with the United States to receive asylum seekers who are required to wait in Ecuador while their claims are processed by U.S. authorities. The terms, scope, and implementation mechanisms of this agreement remain unclear.
- ✪ **Argentina:** Although Argentina has historically maintained more open migration frameworks, recent developments indicate regressive, restrictive shifts in both law and practice. These reforms signal a move away from an integration-oriented approach toward one centered on migration “regulation,” control, and selectivity. Notably, Decree 366/2025, published on May 29, 2025, modifies the Migration Law by tightening entry and residency requirements, accelerating deportations, restricting access to public services such as health care and education for non-residents, and facilitating citizenship by investment, including new health insurance requirements for entry and measures aimed at discouraging so-called “birth tourism.” Additionally, Provision 1399/2025 (DNM), issued on September 11, 2025, further entrenches the alignment of migration policy with internal security, border control, and international cooperation, including border agreements with neighboring countries.

Human Rights Situation

These impacts are felt disproportionately by the most vulnerable populations. Non-governmental organizations have reported a rise in human rights violations and xenophobia across affected communities. Some of the most significant impacts identified—drawing in part on findings from the *Cancelled Dreams* report—include the following⁵:

- **Trapped and vulnerable populations:** Thousands of people whose appointments were canceled were left in prolonged limbo in Mexico. Organizations reported an increasing diversity of nationalities among those affected, including people from Brazil and India, as well as heightened exposure to crimes such as kidnapping, extortion, and abuse by both authorities and organized criminal groups.

⁵ Sueños Cancelados. Primeros impactos de la administración de Trump en la migración. Red Pedro Pantoja de Casas y Centros de Derechos Humanos de Migrantes de la Zona Norte (Red Pedro Pantoja). Instituto Fronterizo Esperanza - Hope Border Institute (HOPE). Derechos Humanos Integrales en Acción (DHIA). Servicio Jesuita a Refugiados México (JRS MX). Iniciativa Kino para la Frontera. Casa del Migrante Saltillo. Centro de Atención al Migrante Exodus (CAME). Centro para Migrantes Jesús Torres 24/7, https://www.hopeborder.org/_files/ugd/e07ba9_7a93398c64c44bbcab1d7c3136d2b1ae.pdf

- **Mental health crisis:** High levels of despair, anxiety, and emotional distress were documented. In the absence of viable options, some individuals considered returning to their countries of origin despite facing serious risks of persecution or violence.
- **Separation and lack of protection:** Cases of family separation and the return of individuals to dangerous territories without due process or credible fear assessments were reported.
- **Human rights violations:** Systematic violations include the denial of due process, incommunicado detention, and forced transfers without consent. The scale of opacity and arbitrariness in migration procedures prompted the UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants to issue a dedicated report with recommendations on the phenomenon of missing and forcibly disappeared migrants. The Rapporteur underscores that these disappearances are not “tragic accidents”, but human rights violations rooted in political decisions and failures of state protection. Disappearances extend suffering beyond migrants themselves, violating families’ right to truth and producing ongoing psychological harm. The report further links border militarization, pushbacks, and the absence of legal pathways to the forced use of deadly routes—through deserts, jungles, and seas—directly contributing to disappearances, while highlighting the lack of effective mechanisms to search for survivors or identify remains.
- **Risk and impunity in the face of organized crime:** Across all meetings throughout the year, organized crime was consistently identified as a primary driver of forced displacement and migration, compounded by the absence of access to justice and development. Violence generated by the consolidation of criminal groups—alongside state omission, collusion, or incapacity—intersects with gender-based violence, institutional violence, and xenophobic and criminalizing migration policies. These dynamics disproportionately affect migrants of specific nationalities and racialized profiles, further intensifying vulnerability and harm.
- **Weakening of the International Protection System:** The right to seek asylum at the U.S. southern border has been prohibited or severely restricted, a policy approach that has permeated the region. This has resulted in violations of the principle of non-refoulement and the widespread absence of individualized case assessments. As a result, people are forced into clandestine migration routes dominated by organized crime. State responses remain weak, and legal frameworks across Latin America are increasingly shaped by containment negotiations rather than by the standards established in the Cartagena Declaration or the Refugee Convention.
- **Erosion of democracy and regional cooperation:** The suspension of legal mechanisms for safe migration—such as CBP One—without viable alternatives has intensified pressure on Mexico and Central American countries, including Guatemala and Panama, to function as de facto “safe third countries” and contain northward migration. South American countries face similar pressure to adopt U.S.-driven agreements. This

dynamic deepens dependency on U.S. policies, expands military and police presence within national territories, and weakens multilateral spaces essential for balancing Global South–North relations and advancing human rights–based frameworks.

- In this context, the application of IATA Article 10, known as the No Boarding Rule, has become increasingly significant. With the elimination of parole pathways and the reactivation of strict Title 8 enforcement, airlines are effectively acting as private immigration enforcers, denying boarding in countries such as Colombia and Mexico to individuals without stamped visas—even when they have pending asylum claims.
- **Risk to life:** The closure of safe routes and the tightening of restrictions force migrants onto increasingly dangerous pathways, including the Darién Gap and the Sonoran Desert. This has raised migration costs and strengthened transnational criminal networks. Women, girls, and LGBTIQ+ individuals face a dramatic increase in exposure to sexual violence, kidnapping, and extortion across Mexican and Central American territory, as criminal organizations exploit desperation and impunity.
- **Deportation and remittances:** Authorities have announced an acceleration of mass deportations, including operations such as “Operation Aurora,” alongside the expanded use of expedited removal within the United States. Additional restrictive measures targeting remittances—through taxation or increased oversight—are anticipated, with direct consequences for migrant families and communities in countries of origin.
- **Decreased humanitarian funding:** Sharp cuts to international cooperation funding, including USAID and UNHCR resources, are severely affecting the operation of migrant shelters and humanitarian support systems from the United States through Central America and beyond.
- **Racialization and xenophobia:** The framing of borders as “invaded zones” and the criminalization of migration increasingly shape public and political discourse in the Americas and globally. This rhetoric fuels intolerance, xenophobia, and hate speech in transit and destination communities, portraying migrants—particularly Indigenous and Afro-descendant populations—as threats to social stability and well-being. Racial profiling permeates detention practices, migration enforcement, and access to rights, revealing how risks faced by migrants stem not only from legal status but also from racialization⁶ as an “invisible architecture” sustaining structural discrimination.
- **Insufficient government programs:** In response to summary returns and mass deportations, governments have implemented return programs and strategies that fall short of addressing real needs.

⁶ Understanding racialization as a sociopolitical and historical process through which identities, hierarchies, and social meanings are assigned to groups of people based on physical characteristics (phenotype) or cultural traits. It is not a biological phenomenon—since races do not exist according to science—but rather a power construct that justifies exclusion and inequality.

- ★ In Mexico, the federal strategy *Mexico Embraces You* was launched with limited clarity regarding its scope and implementation. Civil society organizations supporting returnees, families, and communities report that information has emerged only gradually through meetings with government agencies, including indications of training efforts in select states, without a comprehensive or rights-based reintegration framework.

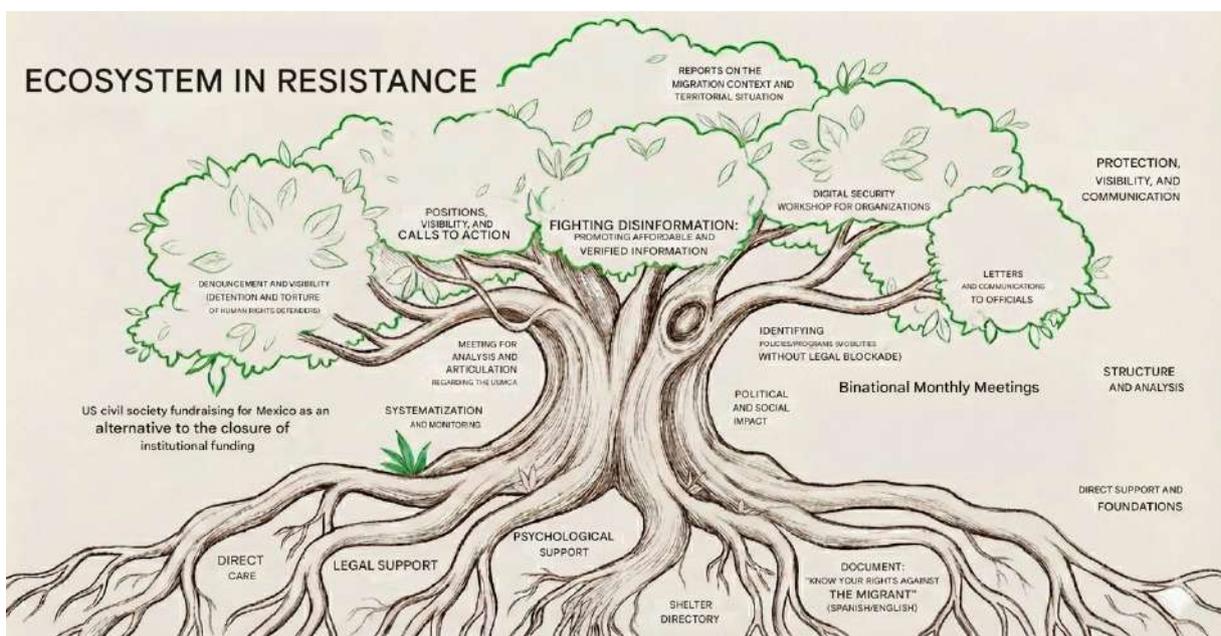
International cooperation and human rights

The “America First Policy Directive” has reduced the priority given to international cooperation on human rights, gender equality, and humanitarian assistance, conditioning foreign aid on migration control. This shift, combined with the discrediting of international organizations and civil society actors, weakens development and protection programs and undermines civic participation, multilateral spaces, and mechanisms of accountability.

At the same time, the dynamics of international cooperation have become increasingly polarized, marked by the expansion of bilateral border externalization agreements, often at the expense of human rights standards. Support for migrants, women, and LGBTQIA+ individuals has steadily declined amid the dominant narratives and policy orientations of the United States government. This has directly affected cooperation agencies and philanthropic foundations, jeopardizing the sustainability of migrant-led organizations and collectives that defend human rights and support transnational families.

III. Response Actions

From civil society and peoples on the move, we affirm that just as biodiversity sustains forests, the diversity brought by migrants—their families, communities, and those who defend their rights—sustains societies and generates well-being and development. This diversity creates the conditions for people to have a real choice: to migrate or to remain in their territories. Our responses emerge from a systemic vision, rooted in an ecosystem of resistance and collective action that nourishes life, dignity, and solidarity.



1. Intertwining the roots: Political articulation and radical solidarity as the foundation that sustains alliances and regional cooperation. Just as the roots of mangroves intertwine to withstand strong tides, we are strengthening Latin American and continental cohesion from the ground up, preventing people on the move from being swept away by currents of xenophobia and exclusion.

- **Regional fabric:** Consolidation of a Latin American network grounded in solidarity and reciprocity, rejecting the fragmentation imposed by militarized borders and exclusionary government policies.
- **Fertile ground for development:** Strengthening grassroots leadership and advancing inclusive public policies aimed at genuine development—development that addresses structural causes of displacement and fosters dignified living conditions.

- **Collective support:** Strengthening alliances among human rights defenders, labor unions, faith-based organizations, and academia to provide mutual support in the face of criminalization, while promoting social protection across peoples and communities.

2. Bark and refuge: Comprehensive defense and care for life. Through accompaniment, legal defense, and guidance in accessing rights, as well as the promotion of inclusion and integration, we create safe spaces—a protective “bark” that safeguards dignity and life in the face of violence, discrimination, and the many risks encountered along the migration journey.

- **Legal and human protection:** Deployment of legal support and human rights advocacy strategies to guarantee access to justice, due process, and the full recognition and inclusion of rights for all people on the move.
- **Care centers:** Provision of direct humanitarian assistance, psychosocial support, and pathways toward integration through compassionate, community-based care.
- **Community self-care:** Implementation of collective security and protection protocols for human rights defenders and activists, with particular attention to safeguarding caregivers, who are predominantly women.

3. Vital wisdom: Research, monitoring, and truth. Internal nourishment through the systematization of case support, the monitoring and documentation of violations, and the analysis of policies, programs, and legal frameworks. This work builds collective memory, strengthens proposals, and enables informed responses to misinformation, fear, and criminalizing narratives.

- **Photosynthesis of reality:** Ongoing monitoring and systematization of data on human rights violations and related issues, transforming grassroots experiences into collective evidence.
- **Systemic analysis:** Contextual assessments and the identification and visibility of migration policies from an intersectoral and systemic perspective, revealing their real impacts and promoting narratives that counter disinformation and criminalization.

4. Pollination and wind: Impact, communication, and memory. Through the generation of information and the expansion of inclusive narratives, we refuse silence. We scatter the seeds of truth and justice, challenging stereotypes and advancing equality and non-discrimination across societies.

- **Voices out loud:** Public denunciation and visibility of migration policies and their impacts on people and communities, naming those responsible and creating spaces for the voices of those directly affected to be heard.
- **Knowledge exchange:** Creation of training spaces and channels for information-sharing that flow freely across borders, breaking cycles of informational isolation.

- **Narratives of dignity:** Construction of a discourse that affirms both the right to migrate and the right to remain, while honoring the resilience, agency, and contributions of peoples and migrants.

Above all, we accompany the journey toward life with dignity, grounded in accompaniment, solidarity, defense, and humanitarian support. Our foundation rests on the protection and solidarity of human rights defenders, migrants, and organizations working with communities, as well as monitoring, systematization, analysis, information sharing, and social and political advocacy. All of this allows us to resist and grow stronger, while continuing to raise awareness, denounce injustices, inform the public, and generate resources for communities in resistance and people on the move.

STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN



IV. Conclusions

Migration policies in 2025 have been shaped by escalating tensions—particularly within the United States and among aligned governments—between assertions of national sovereignty and binding international human rights obligations. The growing trend toward the externalization and digitalization of borders has introduced new ethical and legal challenges, with direct consequences for access to rights, personal security, and the right to life.

This year concludes with the publication and dissemination of Trump's *National Security Strategy*, which explicitly outlines an objective of strengthening U.S. influence over Latin America, at times framing the region as a strategic “backyard.” The strategy elevates the fight against drugs, organized crime, terrorism, and the protection of maritime routes as central priorities, while combining these aims with sanctions, financial pressure, diplomatic isolation, and information campaigns designed to delegitimize governments identified as adversaries⁷. It also situates U.S. policy in relation to Europe and repeatedly identifies China as a central threat within a broader global reconfiguration.

Within this framework, the strategy explicitly advances the goal of ending so-called “mass” migration by reinforcing border security as a core pillar of national security policy.

Faced with exclusionary policies rooted in fear and deterrence, the Latin American Bloc on Migration, the People's Movement for Peace and Justice, and Global Exchange have come together, inspired by the radical solidarity of peoples across the Americas and grounded in an understanding of migration through its structural and root causes. For us, migration is a human right—and so is the right to remain in one's place of origin. Forced migration and displacement are symptoms of a model that exploits nature and communities. Accordingly, the struggle for migrant rights is inseparable from broader struggles for gender equality, racial, economic, and climate justice, as well as the defense of territories and ways of life.

We organize from an intersectional and inclusive vision, generating cross-border solidarity and collective responses rooted in memory, resistance, and shared struggle.

⁷ De Monroe a Trump: la presión de EE.UU. sobre América Latina. Gustavo Queiroz. <https://www.dw.com/es/de-monroe-a-trump-c%C3%B3mo-ee-uu-mantiene-bajo-presi%C3%B3n-a-am%C3%A9rica-latina/a-74990339> 02.12.2025

In doing so, we affirm a commitment that transcends any single administration: to defend dignity, well-being, and the right of all people—migrants and non-migrants alike—to live with dignity.



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Tools

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- **Mnemonic (Organización matriz):** <https://mnemonic.org/>. Aquí puedes ver cómo han aplicado esta tecnología en archivos específicos como el *Sudanese Archive* o *Ukrainian*
- Escucha este **podcast** que destaca contribuciones, valores y aspiraciones para los migrantes, tanto en Canadá, Estados Unidos y México como en sus países de origen <https://ckut.ca/playlists/NM>
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MOVIMIENTO DE LOS PUEBLOS POR LA PAZ Y LA JUSTICIA (MPPJ)

PLATAFORMAS CONSTITUYENTES

Co-Redes Negras por la Paz y la Justicia (MPPJ)
Plataforma Constituyente de Pueblos Indígenas y Nativos (MPPJ)
Mesa Redonda binacional de Migración y Derechos Humanos
Red de Redes de sobrevivientes de Violencia Armada

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Black Lives Matter–YYC

MÉXICO

ALDEA
Americas Program AMERICAS.ORG
Afropoderosas
Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla
Casa Tochan
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Centro de Atención a la Familia Migrante Indígena (CAFAMI)

Centro de Atención al Migrante Exodus
Centro de Estudios Afromexicanos Tembembe
Centro de Estudios Ecuménicos A.C.
Centro Regional de Defensa de Derechos Humanos José María Morelos y Pavón
Comisión Mexicana de Defensa y Promoción de los Derechos Humanos (CMDPDH)
Comunidad Afromexicana de Temixco, Morelos.
Cuerpo académico Procesos Transnacionales y Migración BUAP CA 230
Desaparecidos justicia A.C. Querétaro
Hospitalidad y Solidaridad, A.C.
Huella Negra
Iniciativa Ciudadana región Puebla
Instituto RIA
LV Acompañamiento y Arte por los Derechos de las Mujeres, A.C. (Las Vanders)
Mano Amiga de la Costa Chica
México negro, AC
Movimiento de Pueblos originarios en Resistencia (MOPOR CHIAPAS)
Mujeres Afrodescendientes CDMX
NuestraRed.mx
Padres y Madres de Ayotzinapa
Red de Juventudes Afrodescendientes de América Latina y El Caribe
Red de mujeres afrodescendientes CDMX
Red de mujeres de los pueblos originarios y afrodescendientes de Chiapas (REMIAC)
Red Nacional de Juventudes Afromexicanas
SERAPAZ
Servicio Internacional para la Paz (SIPAZ)

ESTADOS UNIDOS

Alianza Migrante (Migrant Alliance)
Black Lives Matter–South Bend
Change the Ref
Consejo de Pueblos Originarios
CODEPINK
Enlace de Pueblos y Organizaciones Costeñas Autónomas
Friends of Latin America
Fundación Avina
Global Exchange
Hacer las Paces
Lila LGBTQ Inc.
Migrant and Minorities Alliance
Mexico Solidarity Project
National Lawyers' Guild- SF Bay Area chapter
Newtown Action Alliance
North American Indigenous Center of New York
Red de Pueblos Trasnacionales
San Francisco Living Wage Coalition
Tribunal Internacional de Conciencia de los Pueblos en Movimiento
Witness at the Border/Testigos en la Frontera

BLOQUE LATINOAMERICANO SOBRE MIGRACIÓN (Bloque LAC)

Centro de Estudios Legales y Sociales (CELS)- Argentina, Comisión Argentina para los Refugiados y Migrantes (CAREF)- Argentina, Red Nacional de Líderes Migrantes en Argentina, Programa de Migración y Asilo de la Universidad de Lanús-Chile, Centro de Apoyo Pastoral do Migrante (CAMI)- Brasil, Instituto Migrações e Direitos Humanos- Brasil, Clínica Jurídica de Migrantes y Refugiados de la Universidad Diego Portales-Chile, Secretariado Nacional de Pastoral Social-Caritas Colombia, Asociación Comité de Familiares de Migrantes Fallecidos y Desaparecidos de El Salvador (COFAMIDE) – El Salvador, Cristosal, Advancing Human Rights in Central America - El Salvador, Asociación RUMIÑAHUI. Red de Ecuatorianos en Europa, Centro de Atención y Desarrollo Integral Migrante (CADIM), Latinas en el Poder- Estados Unidos, National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (NNIRR), South Texas Human Rights Center (El Centro de Derechos Humanos Del Sur de Texas), Asociación Coordinadora Comunitaria de Servicios para la Salud (ACCSS)- Guatemala, Asociación de Familiares de Migrantes Desaparecidos de Guatemala (AFAMIDEG), Asociación Pop No'j – Guatemala, Equipo de Estudios Comunitarios y Acción Psicosocial (ECAP)- Guatemala, Mesa de Coordinación Transfronteriza Migraciones y Género (MTMG), Action Secours Ambulance (ASA)- Haití, Comisión de Acción Social Menonita (CASM)- Honduras, Comité de Familiares de Migrantes Desaparecidos del Centro de Honduras (COFAMICENH)-Honduras, Comité de Familiares de Migrantes Desaparecidos del Progreso (COFAMIPRO)- Honduras, Organismo Cristiano de Desarrollo Integral de Honduras (OCDIH)- Honduras, Casa del Migrante de Saltillo (CDMS)- México, Casa Monarca Ayuda Humanitaria al Migrante- México, Centro de Atención a la Familia Migrante Indígena (CAFAMI)- México, Centro de Derechos Humanos de la Montaña-Tlachinollan (CDHM)- México, Estancia del Migrante González y Martínez- México, FM4 Paso Libre-México, Formación y Capacitación (FOCA)-México, Global Exchange, Instituto para las Mujeres en la Migración, AC (IMUMI)- México, Pueblos y Comunidades Indígenas Transfronterizos (PUCOMIT), Sin Fronteras IAP- México, Proyecto de Derechos Humanos, Económicos, Sociales y Culturales A.C (Prodesc)-México, Red de casas de Migrantes y Centros de Derechos Humanos de la zona norte, Pedro Pantoja- México, Red de Mujeres del Bajío AC-México, Unión Nacional de Organizaciones, Regionales Campesinas Autónomas. A.C. (UNORCA A.C.), Voces Mesoamericanas, Acción con Pueblos Migrantes (VM-AP)-México, Red Nacional de Jornaleros y Jornaleras Agrícolas-México, Servicio Ecuménico para la Dignidad Humana (SEDHU)-Uruguay, Mesa Transfronteriza Migraciones y Género (MTMG), CTA de Trabajadores, Fundación para la Justicia y el Estado Democrático de Derecho (FJEDD)- México, Guatemala, El Salvador y Honduras, Red Mesoamericana Mujer Salud y Migración (RMMSYM)- México y Centroamérica, Red Jesuita con Migrantes Latinoamérica y el Caribe (RJM LAC)-Regional, Red Sudamericana para las Migraciones Ambientales (RESAMA)-Regional, Red Internacional de Migración y Desarrollo, Red de Pueblos Transnacionales, Dejusticia, Coalición de Derechos Humanos, Arizona, USA, Defensoras y defensores de derechos humanos: Aaron Ortiz Santos, Elba Coria, Efraín Jiménez, Federico Fornazieri, Karina Sarmiento, Martha Rojas, Patricia Zamudio y Berenice Valdez Rivera.

This report is not just paperwork and data; it is the echo of voices of resistance and action. We invite migrants, their families, human rights defenders, decision-makers, and the general public to be part of this hive of change.

Contact us if you are interested in more information or collaboration with both spaces:

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