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U.S. and Guatemalan organizations speak out on U.S. Vice President's upcoming visit and the regional immigration situation

Guatemala, June 3, 2021 — In light of Vice President Harris’ upcoming visit to Guatemala, Alianza Americas, American Friends Service Committee, Pop No’j Association, Center for Justice and International Law (CEJIL), FLACSO Guatemala, Civil Society Articulating Group on Migration Issues for Guatemala, Root Causes of Migration Initiative, Presente.org, Migration and Development Platform, and Red Jesuita Con Migrantes (RJM) issued recommendations for VP Harris that address human mobility within, from, and to Guatemala.

The principal issues addressed in the [document](#) are related to governance and the rule of law, socioeconomic conditions, organized crime and gender violence, climate justice and the environment, and comprehensive immigration systems.

“We open a space for dialogue recognizing the U.S. government’s interest in addressing the root causes of international migration. We appreciate Vice President Kamala Harris’ leadership in creating spaces of dialogue, management, and advocacy with the governments of Central America and Mexico. We agree that this is no easy task, given it implies addressing the structural causes that affect us and contribute to many factors that encourage human mobility from Guatemala,” said **Mirtha Colón, President of the Alianza Americas Board of Directors.**

Some of the specific recommendations include:

- Support with resources for research and training in the administration of justice, criminal prosecution, and adjudication. Strengthening the Guatemalan justice system should be a priority and contributes to strengthening the independence of public authorities and the fight against corruption.
- U.S. international cooperation is essential to strengthening local economies, the governance of community mayors and authorities, the improvement of local infrastructure, fiscal management, access to services, and development of the nation.



- Promote the incorporation of a human rights approach in the work of state armed forces, where the individual is protected and, in the specific case of human mobility, armed forces should be actors of protection and not of repression or migratory control.
- Designate Guatemala for Temporary Protected Status so that Guatemalan citizens in the United States can help finance economic recovery from recent weather events.
- Guarantee regular migration, facilitating and expanding options for regular migration. In the area of migration and labor, strengthen controls over recruiting agencies and/or intermediaries to avoid labor rights violations, and guarantee access to labor justice for all migrant workers regardless of their immigration status.
- Guarantee the non-separation of families and family reunification.
- Ensure compliance with the principle of non-deportation and due process for accessing options for regular migration or asylum, ending arbitrary removals and detentions. This includes the end of Title 42 and the possibility of entering the United States by land to seek asylum.

“It’s important to emphasize that as civil society organizations we are willing to contribute to the implementation of these recommendations and those derived from the dialogue process we hope to maintain with your government,” added Rosario **Martínez of FLACSO Guatemala**.

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Alianza Americas: *A network of organizations led by immigrants working in the United States and at the transnational level to create an inclusive, equitable, and sustainable way of life for communities in North, Central, and South America. For more information, visit www.alianzaamericas.org.*

Presente.org *is the nation’s largest online Latinx organizing group — and the nation’s premier Latinx digital organizing hub — advancing social justice with technology, media, and culture. Build Power. Change Culture. ¡Stay Presente! www.presente.org*

American Friends Service Committee: *A Quaker organization dedicated to service, development, and peace programs across the world. Their work is based on belief in the value of each person and faith in the power of love to overcome violence and injustice. www.afsc.org*



Pop No'j Association: A nonprofit Civil Association that promotes reflection, research, exchange, and learnings. www.asociacioinpopnoj.org

Center for Justice and International Law (CEJIL): Works for the defense of human rights to reduce inequality, discrimination, and violence through the strengthening of democracy, the protection and promotion of human rights, and the fight against prevailing impunity in the region. www.cejil.org

Faculty of Latin American Social Sciences Guatemala: Was created by UNESCO recommendation in 1957, and has established itself as a Latin American and Caribbean international organization that is academic, autonomous, and dedicated to the promotion, teaching, research, and technical cooperation in the field of social sciences. It is currently formed by 18 member States. www.flasco.edu.gt

Civil Society Articulating Group on Migratory Issues: A political platform with over 10 years of experience in migration management, based on the Human Rights of migrants and their families. It is made up of around 20 Guatemalan civil society organizations with various focus areas and expertise, which are necessary for defending this population. One of the main contributions and commitments of this platform has been to promote the creation of the country's Migration Code.

About the Root Causes of Migration Initiative: A network among organizations in Central America, Mexico, and the United States working to identify and address the causes that drive migration throughout the region. Our objective is to work for change in public policies while addressing the conditions that make it impossible for families to stay in their country of origin and possible to be punished for leaving to seek a better situation.

Red Jesuita Con Migrantes (RJM): Seeks to promote and defend the human rights of the most vulnerable migrants, displaced, and refugees and their families. www.redjesuitaconmigranteslac.org