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A Year After Central America Executive Order, Biden is Falling Short of Upholding Humane Migration Policies

One year ago on February 2, President Biden signed [an executive order](#) that called for the development of a strategy that addresses root causes of migration from Central America. Since then, as follow-up, some of the Biden administration's most notable actions to address migration's root causes has included:

- Proposed a \$4 billion multi-year plan to address migration from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras (January 2021).
- Released [a five-pillar strategy](#) (July 2021) that identifies combating economic insecurity, corruption, criminal violence and gender-based violence, and promoting human rights, as the priorities for addressing root causes of migration from the region.
- [Announced an initiative](#) (May 2021) to work with the private sector to deepen investment in Central America.
- Sent Vice President Kamala Harris to Mexico and Guatemala (June 2021) for her first foreign trip, where she told migrants "do not come" — a message that many advocacy groups found troubling, as it does not account for the reality that many asylum seekers and migrants have little choice in fleeing living conditions that are intolerable.

In other key areas, the Biden administration has faced criticism from advocacy and civil society groups for failing to take actions that would protect migrants and uphold the rights of refugees and asylum seekers at the U.S.-Mexico border. The administration has maintained the CDC order that keeps the border virtually closed to those seeking protection. Additionally, as part of an ongoing court battle, the Biden White House has reimplemented Trump's "Remain in Mexico" policy, that forces asylum seekers to wait for their court dates in Mexico border cities where they are not safe. Nor has the administration moved to issue new designations under the Temporary Protected Status (TPS) humanitarian program, which would allow Hondurans, Nicaraguans, Guatemalans, and Salvadorans already living in the U.S. to apply for immigration protections.

In this context, Alianza Americas released the following statement:

"There's no doubt that the Biden administration is a welcome departure from the appalling cruelty and blatant racism of the Trump years, but in key areas, the Biden White House continues to uphold the hateful spirit of Trump migration policies," said Hazel Contreras, Alianza Americas' regional coordinator in Central America. **"The Biden administration needs to recommit and reset, in order to uphold its core promise of building a safe, orderly, and rights-respecting immigration system in the U.S."**

“The devastation from climate disasters in Honduras, Guatemala, and Haiti will continue to fuel migration,” said Melanie Minuche, climate justice organizer at Alianza Americas.

“Given how much the global north, including the United States, has fueled the climate crisis through greenhouse gas emissions, the Biden administration has a moral responsibility to prioritize creating legal pathways so those fleeing climate disasters in Central America have options for seeking a better life.”

“Temporary Protected Status was created to welcome and protect those already living in the U.S., who are unable to return to their home countries because of natural disasters and other humanitarian crises. This is precisely the case in Central America. The Biden administration’s failure to promptly redesignate TPS for Central American countries is one of the biggest disappointments of his migration agenda thus far,” said Yanira Arias, national campaign director for Alianza Americas.

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Alianza Americas is the premier transnational advocacy network of Latin American migrant-led organizations working in the United States, across the Americas, and globally to create an inclusive, equitable and sustainable way of life for communities across North, Central, and South America.