



Tel: +39 06 684 919
Fecha: 11/julio/2024

***“Let us take our most vulnerable brothers and sisters by the hand, let us recognize in them the face of Jesus, and let us walk part of the path together.”
Pope Francis***

July 9, 2024
Public Statement

PATH OF SURVIVAL

Migration in Latin America has a class connotation: it's a forced displacement due to violence, poverty in homes, and insecurity of human integrity, therefore, the one who migrates will always be the weakest, the poor, the oppressed, the disposable of a consumer society.

As Franciscan Network for Migrants, we condemn the signing of the agreement made between the governments of the United States and Panama in which they seek to implement the repatriation flight program for the irregular migration through the Darién Gap. These immigration containment policies promote violations of the human rights of migrants in irregular situations who arrive through said route, first, by considering the migrant as illegal, in the line of criminalization or delinquency, a discourse that promotes xenophobia and racism. Likewise, the “repatriation” of migrants violates the principle of non-refoulement and due process.

In that sense, the Franciscan family and allied organizations reject the border externalization that prevents the arrival of migrant and refugee-seeking populations through the Darién Gap. Likewise, we reiterate our commitment to ensure, care for and defend the dignity and integrity of the life of each migrant who crosses these lands, mainly the most vulnerable





Tel: +39 06 684 919
Fecha: 11/julio/2024

groups that arrive along the Darién path, such as children and adolescents, who, with women, are easy prey for organized crime.

We ask the authorities of Panamá:

1. To work jointly and in a network between civil society, churches, and the state to take up the issue of migrants arriving to the Darién, through an approach of respect for human rights, bringing back the need for a coordinated regional and international response to address irregular migration with the possibility of building a more articulate, fair and inclusive region for all.
2. To adopt narratives that promote the dignity of people in irregular migration, delegitimizing the dissemination and political discourse of “border protection” in order to counteract the xenophobia and discrimination entailed by the signing of the agreement signed by the United States and Panama.
3. We demand from the government of Panama a public commitment to respect its legal frameworks.
4. To guarantee full and unrestricted respect for the principle of non-refoulement and due process for people in the context of irregular mobility.
5. The Los Angeles Declaration should not be the only approach to addressing migration as set out in the agreement. Broader measures are required to protect the rights of people on the move, more concrete, binding and human rights-focused actions to address the complexities of migration in the region.
6. To guarantee the transparent process for full attention to the specific needs and vulnerabilities of different groups of people on mobility, such as children, women, LGBTQ+ people, people with disabilities and minority ethnic groups. These individuals may face additional risks and discrimination during the repatriation process, requiring specific protection measures.



Inspired by the spirituality of Sts. Francis and Clare of Assisi, we remain firm in the position of being brothers and sisters of all, in considering each migrant person as a “gift” on the path of life, as Francis considered (Thes 14). Also, we value the dignity of each person as an image of God, who becomes unique, free and authentic in his or her human being, therefore, we welcome and accompany each migrant because we are all children of God, united by the human experience, regardless of our borders. Migration is part of the history of humanity, a dance of cultures that enriches our societies and fraternal and sisterly spirituality in this same common home.

--

The Franciscan Migration Network is a network composed of the following entities:

RFM México: Equipo México; Albergue Frontera Digna, Piedras Negras; Comedor San Francisco de Asís para Migrantes, Mazatlán; Casa Franciscana Guaymas A.C; Comedor Itinerante Franciscano, Monterrey, Nuevo León; La 72, Hogar Refugio para Personas Migrantes, Tenosique, Tabasco; HFIC México (JPIC).. RFM Guatemala: Casa Peregrina del Migrante “Santo Hermano Pedro”, Guatemala; Equipo Guatemala. RFM Honduras. RFM El Salvador. RFM Panamá. RFM Colombia. RFM Brasil. RFM Estados Unidos: Equipo de Estados Unidos de América; Immaculate Conception Church of Durham, North Carolina, Carolina del Norte (USA).

Colaboradores de incidencia: Quixote Center. Franciscans Action Network. Franciscans International. Las Americas: Immigrant Advocacy Center.