

Final Declaration:

DECLARATION OF ANTIGUA

At the First International Forum on Migration and Peace

In the city of Antigua, Guatemala, on January 29 and 30, 2009

CONVENED BY **the Scalabrini International Migration Network (SIMN)**: A federation of over 270 non-governmental organizations committed to the protection of the human rights of people on the move, and the promotion of a culture of peaceful coexistence between migrants and local communities. The role of SIMN is that of a mediator for the establishment of a more interconnected society, through its social and Christian commitment, prioritizing the most vulnerable people within the phenomenon of human mobility;

WITH THE SUPPORT OF:

The Guatemalan Conference of Bishops and the sponsorship, among others, of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, the Cassamarca Foundation, Trocaire, the Soros Foundation-Guatemala, CRS-Guatemala, and 218 participants who attended **the First International Forum on Migration and Peace** representing:

NOBEL PEACE PRIZE LAUREATES, GOVERNMENTS, INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS, CHURCHES, ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS, MEDIA, MIGRANTS, AND PRO-MIGRANT ORGANIZATIONS, SUMMONED TO A FORUM on "Borders: Walls or Bridges?"

AWARE OF:

THE conflicts generated by the negative and misguided perception of migration as an element linked to security, the reason behind building new, physical and legal walls;
THE opportunity created by the coexistence of migrants and local communities in the establishment of a society of cultural exchange and mutual enrichment;
THE sustainable development, created by the migrants in the countries of origin, transit and destination;
THE need to recognize the rights of every human being and ensure their safety in their right of movement and in their right of not having to migrate;
THE need to establish and nurture a culture of peace on the borders (geographical and human, political and cultural, individual and collective) to overcome division, racism, discrimination, conflict and poverty and to eliminate human trafficking and human rights violations, in particular violence and abuse against the most vulnerable;
THE desire to develop the full potential of international migration in the construction of a peaceful society and in the conception of borders as bridges, not walls.

CONSIDERING:

THAT migration is a phenomenon inherent to human nature, which has always existed and cannot be contained by restrictive policies or walls;
THAT social instability, inequality, natural disasters, armed conflicts, lack of a political culture of individual and collective responsibility in seeking the common good, and institutional weakness are some of the main causes of migration, both globally and in the Americas;
THAT the current process of globalization, the deepening social inequalities, and the economic imbalances among countries are factors contributing to forced migration, the movement of men, women and children who, because of their extreme poverty and need of a livelihood, are forced to leave their homes and places of origin; THAT migrants expose such asymmetries and injustices and the need for structural change;

THAT human mobility, traditionally perceived as a significant contribution to the economies and societies of sending and receiving countries, is currently perceived, by many countries of transit and destination, as a problem;

THAT migrants are all too often viewed as a threat and are subjected to discrimination, rejection and harassment, stemming from xenophobic actions by some segments of society; THAT this negative perception is caused by the introduction of anti-immigration policies by governments in transit and destination countries, placing the migrants in situations of high vulnerability;

THAT the principles of reciprocity in social exchange are ignored and that each country should apply internally all they require internationally from other countries; THAT borders, the “no man’s land” of displaced people, are the “best place” for dialogue and communication, and contain in themselves the possibility of establishing a “new place” for mutual understanding and peaceful coexistence;

THAT migration policies in sending as well as transit and destination countries are too often not conducive to the creation of bridges of peaceful coexistence;

THAT this lack of consistency requires a redefinition of immigration policies that places at its core the protection of the human rights of all people, particularly the most vulnerable, such as migrants (understood as any person in mobility, be it within or without their country of origin).

DECLARE:

THAT building walls is only the overt and symbolic act of the current immigration policies, characterized by their restrictive principles, and whose real purpose is not to close the avenues of migration, but to create a climate of terror and persecution against undocumented migrants, exposing them to extreme levels of vulnerability and exploitation, which foreshadow new forms of slavery;

THAT in this climate of suspicion, not only are there violations of human, political, economic (including employment), social and cultural rights, but also a denial of the significant and positive contributions migrants make to the host economies and societies;

THAT the countries of origin have become exporters of human capital, thereby jeopardizing, in the long run, their own development, even though migration may lift millions of families out of poverty, thus enhancing opportunities for future generations and providing the possibility of improving their wellbeing;

THAT migrants are actively involved in generating the necessary conditions for sustainable development in their home countries through their remittances, through the demographic changes that migration produces, and by becoming bridges of communication and cultural exchange;

THAT governments in the countries of origin may not use migrants’ remittances to exempt themselves from their obligation to implement development policies that reduce the existing imbalances and prevailing social inequalities, and guarantee their people the right not to migrate;

THAT international migration, besides helping the development of the countries of origin, is a contributing factor on all levels for development in the countries of transit and destination;

THAT it is necessary to work for the designation of the border as a new place of enrichment and exchange, and to overcome the notion of multiculturalism with inter-culturalism based on those principles of reciprocity and solidarity which internal and international migrations call for;

THAT the creation of bridges of dignity requires the establishment of tools that enable the development of personal and individual responsibility in the knowledge of their rights and duties, in the trust of the institutions of the sending, transit, and receiving countries, and the recognition of their rights;

THAT this must be accompanied by a renewed concept of citizenship and the building of a greater confidence in the institutional apparatus of sending, transit and receiving countries,

strengthening their role as protectors of the rights of all, both local citizens and migrant citizens, announcing the need for change towards the utopia of a universal citizenship; THAT it is not through walls and anti-immigration policies that we can move towards effective dynamisms for building true bridges between Migration and Peace and develop a peaceful and mutually rewarding existence, but through the establishment of means for the recognition and protection of the rights of every person, like the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members their Families passed in 1990 by the UN;

THAT although there has been significant progress at the policy level, relating to the protection and defense of migrant rights in the framework of regional and international bodies, the fact is that these conventions have not been ratified or applied by any of the major receiving countries.

WE COMMIT OURSELVES TO:

DIRECT our joint efforts to maximizing the positive impact international migration has on development, both in the sending and receiving countries, calling on them to minimize the negative consequences of migration;

UNIFY our efforts to remove the issue of security from the core of the immigration agenda, and replace it instead with the issue of recognition and protection of all human, political, economic, social and cultural rights, while promoting peaceful coexistence, in recognition of the prime role of migration in the comprehensive development of sending and receiving societies, thus avoiding the criminalization of migrants as a way of regulating immigration flows;

PLACE development at the heart of our joint activities, which means attacking the root causes of forced migration and moving towards: a) Eradication of extreme poverty b) Creation of decent jobs c) Consistent migration policies d) Respect for the free movement of persons e) A commitment to migrants, as both a personal and institutional responsibility f) The adoption of principles of cooperation, solidarity, and fraternity, as guidelines for peaceful coexistence;

PROMOTE activities to eradicate all forms of violence, both institutional and from organized crime, as well as all forms of racism, xenophobia, discrimination, and abuse, in the societies of origin, transit, and destination of migrants, rising above the walls of altero-fobia and building the bridges of altero-filia;

JOIN FORCES so that countries of destination ratify international conventions and treaties on migration, especially the UN International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members their Families;

RECOGNIZE that migrants are the key players in building bridges of peaceful international coexistence;

CONSIDER the migrant always as the center of every policy, action, law, convention, or project on migration issues.

Antigua, Guatemala, January 29-30, 2009.

**FIRST INTERNATIONAL FORUM
ON MIGRATION AND PEACE**

BORDERS: WALLS OR BRIDGES?

January 29-30, 2009

Antigua, Guatemala,

Program:

Agenda

Words of Welcome and Forum Inauguration

Rev. Leonir Mario Chiarello

Executive Director and Head of Advocacy, SIMN

Dr. Oscar Perdomo Figueroa

Personal Secretary of the Vice President of Guatemala

Most Rev. Pablo Vizcaíno Prado

President of the Guatemala Conference of Catholic Bishops

Rev. Sergio Olivo Geremia

General Superior, Missionaries of Saint Charles Borromeo-Scalabrinians

Dr. Juan Estaban Belderrain

Regional Director for Latin America, Porticus Foundation

Dr. Gerhard Wahlers

Director of International Cooperation, Konrad Adenauer Foundation

Most Rev. Alvaro Leonel Ramazzini

President of the Commission for the Pastoral Care of Migrants Guatemala Conference of Catholic Bishops

Panel I - Reconciliation and Peace-Building Processes: Their Impact on International Migration

Introduction: Dr. Joseph Chamie

Director of Research Center for Migration Studies of New York (CMS)

Mrs. Rigoberta Menchú Tum

Guatemala, 1992 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate

Mr. Giorgio Negro

Deputy Head of Operations for Latin America and the Caribbean

International Committee of the Red Cross

1917, 1944 and 1963 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate

Mrs. Wendy Batson

Executive Director, Handicap International

1997 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate

Dr. Aitor Zabalgogazkoa

General Director of Spain Section

Agenda

Doctors Without Borders, 1999 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate

Panel II - Migrations: Walls or Bridges for a Peaceful Coexistence?

Introduction: Rev. David Ungerleider Kepler

Assistant to the Rector Universidad Iberoamericana of Tijuana

Dr. Jorge Rodríguez Grossi

Former Minister of Economy of Chile and Dean of the Faculty of Economics and Business Alberto Hurtado University, Santiago de Chile

Dr. Raúl Delgado Wise

Director of the Doctoral Program in Development Studies, Autonomous University of Zacatecas and Executive Director International Network on Migration and Development

Mr. Einardo Bingemer (Ekke)

Consultant for Latin America, Kolping Organization

Dr. Jorge Bustamante

The United Nations' Special Rapporteur on Migrants' Rights

Panel III - The Role of the Church in the Promotion of a Peaceful Coexistence between Migrants and Local Communities

Introduction: Rev. Rui Manuel Da Silva Pedro

General Director, SIMN Rev. Novatus Rugambwa

Deputy Secretary Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People

Mr. Johan Ketelers

Secretary General of the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC)

Rev. Sister Erta Lemos

Secretary for the Human Mobility Commission of the CELAM

Rev. Sister Janete Ferreira

Coordinator of the Migration and Traffic Program of SELACC

Rev. Maurizio Pontin

Coordinator of the Human Mobility Commission Colombia Conference of Catholic Bishops

Panel IV - Experiences of Promotion of a Peaceful Coexistence along the Borders

Introduction : Rev. Mauro Verzeletti

Secretary of the Commission for the Pastoral Care of Migrants Guatemala Conference of Catholic Bishops

Rev. Flor María Rigoni

Director of Casa del Migrante of Tapachula

Rev. Claudio Holzer

Agenda

Director of the Welcome Center for Migrants, Chicago

Mrs. Rosana Mejía

Migrant, Guatemala

Mr. Marvin Danilo Pérez Gómez

Migrant, Guatemala

Mr. Mardoqueo Valle Callejas

Migrant, Guatemala

Mr. Luis Argueta

Movie Director, Guatemala

Panel V - The Role of Politics in Building Bridges for Peaceful Coexistence and Integration among the People of the Americas

Introduction: Ms. María Isabel Sanza Gutiérrez

Legal Advisor, SIMN

Mr. Josef Merx

Representative of UNHCR, 1954 and 1981 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate
 Dr. Luis Alberto Cordero Arias

Executive Director of the Oscar Arias Sánchez Foundation for Peace and Human Progress, founded by Oscar Arias Sánchez, President of Costa Rica, and 1987 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate

Mr. Jorge Jamil Mahuad Witt

Former President of Ecuador, 1999 Nobel Peace Prize Nominee

Panel VI - Migration Policies and Reconciliation Processes in the Americas

Introduction: Mr. Ramón Cadena Director of the International Commission of Jurists, Central America

Ambassador Miguel Angel Ibarra González

Guatemala Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs

Representative Lorena Peña Mendoza

Vice President of the Central American Parliament

Commissioner Cecilia Romero Castillo

Head of the National Migration Institute of Mexico

Mr. Günter Müssig

Head of Mission, IOM Guatemala

Most Rev. Alvaro Leonel Ramazzini

President of the Commission for the Pastoral Care of Migrants Guatemala Conference of Catholic Bishops

Panel VII - Beyond National and International Walls: New Challenges for a Peaceful Coexistence

Agenda

Introduction: Ms. Irene Palma Executive Director, Central America Institute of Social and Development Studies, Guatemala

Representative Luis Fernando Galarreta Velarde

Representative of the National Congress of Peru

Dr. Lelio Mármora

Director of International Migration Policies Master Program University of Buenos Aires

Dr. Bela Hovy

Chief of the Migration Section Population Division of the United Nations, New York

Ambassador Alfonso Quiñones

Executive Secretary for the Integral Development Organization of American States (OAS)

Rev. Alfredo Gonçalves

Provincial Superior Scalabrinian Missionaries, São Paulo, Brazil

Workshops / Thematic Groups

Migrants: Opportunity or Challenge for Peaceful Coexistence?

Rev. Mario Santillo

Director of the Centro de Estudios Migratorios Latinoamericanos (CEMLA), Buenos Aires

Rev. Ademar Barilli

Director of Casa del Migrante, Tecún Umán

Public Policies and Human Rights: Legal and Ethical Implications

Rev. Sister Rosita Milesi

Director of the Instituto Migrações e Direitos Humanos (IMDH), Brasilia

Rev. Algacir Munhak

Vice President Instituto Católico Chileno de Migración (INCAMI), Santiago of Chile

Migrants as Builders and Messengers of Peace through Work, Culture, Values, and Family

Relationships

Rev. Fabio Baggio

Director of Scalabrini Migration Center (SMC), Manila

Rev. Francisco Pelizzari

Director of the Casa del Migrante, Nuevo Laredo

Groups on Best Practices for Promoting Peaceful Coexistence

Best Practices Promoted by Catholic Relief Services

Mr. Richard Jons

Deputy Regional Director for Justice and Solidarity Catholic Relief Services (CRS)

Best Practices Promoted by TROCAIRE

Mrs. Blanca Blanco

Program Officer, TROCAIRE, Guatemala

Best Practices Promoted by Soros Foundation of Guatemala

Agenda

Dr. María Teresa Rojas

Deputy Director of U.S. Justice Fund, Open Society Institute (OSI)

Dr. Elena Yolanda Díez Pinto

Executive Director of Soros Foundation of Guatemala

Conclusion and Pending Challenges

Dr. Frank La Rue Lewy

President of Instituto DEMOS and Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Opinion and Expression

Rev. Alfredo Gonçalves

Provincial Superior of the Scalabrinian Missionaries, São Paulo, Brazil

Rev. Sergio Olivo Geremia

General Superior of the Scalabrinian Missionaries

Closing Remarks

Rev. Leonir Mario Chiarello

Executive Director and Head of Advocacy, SIMN