

## HARNESSING REGULAR MIGRATION PATHWAYS AS AN ENGINE OF DEVELOPMENT FOR ALL: HIGH-LEVEL PANEL

Second Regional Review of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration in  
Latin America and the Caribbean

*Concept Note (12.03.2025)*

**Date:** 19 March 2024

**Time:** 10:15 to 12:00 hrs.

**Place:** Headquarters of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)

**Format:** In person event

**Language:** English and Spanish (simultaneous translation available)

### BACKGROUND

Latin America and the Caribbean remain at the forefront of global migration trends, with millions of migrants leaving their communities of origin in search of a more promising future due to multiple drivers that include poverty, lack of decent employment opportunities, economic disparities, political instability, violence, gender-based violence, human rights violations, disasters, environmental degradation and the impacts of climate change, among others.

Further to long-standing migration patterns, the region witnessed a sharp increase in irregular migration between 2021 and 2023 which remained relatively high in 2024. This situation has made regular pathways the cornerstone of the migration agenda in the region. While not a *silver bullet* to address all migration-related challenges, regular pathways, are a critical tool and an essential condition for ensuring safe, dignified, and orderly migration.

In the [Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration](#), Member States committed to enhance the availability of pathways for regular migration in a manner that facilitates labour mobility and decent work, optimizes education opportunities, upholds the right to family life, and responds to the needs of migrants in a situation of vulnerability (Objective 5). They also committed to facilitate access for migrants in an irregular status to an individual assessment that may lead to regular status (Objective 7).

The establishment, enhancement, and expansion of regular pathways, from a people-centred, sensitive, humane and gender-responsive approach, provide migrants with access rights, opportunities, and protection, enabling their full participation in society and fostering mutual benefits for all. Regular pathways also have the potential to prevent and address vulnerabilities and

mitigate risks often associated with irregular migration,<sup>1</sup> as well as promote more inclusive and equitable societies.

Regular pathways include regularization, a procedure through which someone can apply for a residence permit from inside the country, including when residing irregularly. Both temporary regularization programmes and permanent regularization mechanisms benefit migrants, governments and society at large. Regularization serves as a first step towards economic and social integration, increases tax and social security revenues for the State, improves the availability of data, and weakens the underground economy.<sup>2</sup>

From a labour mobility perspective, regular pathways align the supply of workers with pressing labour market demands, addressing shortages in key economic sectors and enhancing regional complementarity. Under skills mobility partnerships (SMP), capacities and skills are also enhanced in countries of origin, addressing care burdens, while ensuring the availability of key human resources in the national labour market.

Immigration does not have to be a zero-sum proposition<sup>3</sup>. Well-managed migration can serve as a prominent driver of inclusive economic growth and development, creating opportunities for individuals and communities to thrive, while enriching societies through human, socioeconomic and cultural capacities<sup>4</sup>. Migrants, particularly women, can also be important agents of change in peacebuilding and reconstruction processes, bringing their experiences, skills and resources to the rebuilding of infrastructure, social cohesion and political processes and the development of local solutions and opportunities<sup>5</sup>.

Labour migration is a particularly powerful tool for poverty reduction and social integration, enabling the transfer of skills, knowledge, and innovation across borders. Moreover, evidence shows that migrants contribute to the growth of Latin American and Caribbean economies from different roles and functions such as workers, entrepreneurs, investors, consumers, taxpayers, and savers<sup>6</sup>. The estimated contribution of international migrants to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of a host

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations Network on Migration (2021). *Guidance Note. Regular Pathways for Admission and Stay for Migrants in Situations of Vulnerability*. Available [here](#).

<sup>2</sup> Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants (2023). *How to expand and diversify regularization mechanisms and programmes to enhance the protection of the human rights of migrants*. Report available [here](#).

<sup>3</sup> Amy Pope (2025). *Migration can work for all: A plan for replacing a broken system*. Foreign Affairs. Publication available [here](#).

<sup>4</sup> United Nations (2023). *Political Declaration adopted at the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) under the auspices of the General Assembly in September 2023*. Available [here](#).

<sup>5</sup> United Nations (2016). *New York Declaration for Refugee and Migrants*. Available [here](#).

<sup>6</sup> ECLAC (2023). *Migrants make a valuable contribution to inclusive social development, in Social Panorama of Latin America and the Caribbean*, pp. 153-161. Publication available [here](#). Carlos Escobar (2023). *Five Contributions of Migrants to the Growth of Latin American Economies*. International Organization for Migration (IOM). Publication available [here](#). Cano and Martinez (2023). *Contributions of international migration to development in Latin America and the Caribbean*. ECLAC. Publication available [here](#).

middle-income country average 7%.<sup>7</sup> In Latin America and the Caribbean, in 2022, the contribution of international migrants to GDP varied between 4.5% in Argentina to 11.5% in Chile.

In this context, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), as the Co-Chairs of the Regional United Nations Network on Migration (UNNM), are convening a high-level panel on regular pathways during the Second Regional Review of the GCM in Latin America and the Caribbean, which will take place on 18-20 March 2025, in Santiago de Chile, Chile.

## GENERAL OBJECTIVES

The high-level panel **“*Harnessing Regular Migration Pathways as an Engine of Development for All*”** will convene government and civil society representatives from across the Americas to engage in a regional dialogue. The focus will be on seizing opportunities presented by regular and orderly migration to drive economic growth, resilience, and development in countries of origin and destination, while enhancing migrants' well-being and human rights. Panellists will explore opportunities, challenges, best practices, and lessons learned in establishing, enhancing, and expanding regular pathways across different stages of the migration cycle, while providing evidence of migrants' contributions to development and society when they are fully integrated into host communities.

The high-level event will build on regional discussions to advance regular pathways in the Americas through a shared responsibility approach<sup>8</sup> and will serve as a high-level prelude to the 2026 edition of the *International Migration Review Forum* (IMRF). This will contribute to advancing the objectives of key global and regional migration frameworks, such as objective 5— *“Enhance availability and flexibility of pathways for regular migration”* and 7 – *“Address and reduce vulnerabilities in migration”* of the GCM —, and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, while leveraging regional migration cooperation under existing mechanisms.

## SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

The high-level panel seeks to address the nexus between regular migration pathways and sustainable development, looking into specific stages of the migration cycle and highlighting the numerous benefits of regular and orderly migration, as well as the relevance of enhancing migrants' multidimensional and sustainable integration. Member States and other stakeholders from Latin America and the Caribbean, will engage in a conversation that seeks to address the following three key, interconnected dimensions:

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<sup>7</sup> OECD and ILO (2018). How Immigrants Contribute to Developing Countries' Economies. Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Publication available [here](#).

<sup>8</sup> Among others, the first Hemispheric Meeting on Regular Pathways for Labor Migration, co-hosted by the Government of Mexico and IOM in June 2024, in Mexico City.

- a) **Enhancing migrants' access to legal identity and regularization programmes and mechanisms in host countries as a precondition to sustainable integration.** Not only this serves as a critical tool to reduce vulnerabilities and risks, but it also lays the foundation for multidimensional integration, granting access to formal livelihoods and key social protection services, while enabling migrants to contribute to society fully and sustainably.
- b) **Facilitating access to regular pathways for labour migration as well as decent employment opportunities for in-situ migrants.** This includes addressing issues such as accreditation of education credentials, skills matching mechanisms, labour protection and gender equality, workforce integration, and private sector engagement, among others.
- c) **Promoting migrants' contribution to socioeconomic development.** This includes expanding the fiscal base and GDP, transferring skills to the national workforce, fostering cultural diversity, driving innovation, advancing the green transition, and more.

## EXPECTED RESULTS

The outcomes of this panel aim to share actionable insights and practical tools to support the development and strengthening of regular migration pathways in Latin America and the Caribbean. In particular, expected outcomes that will follow discussions are:

- A policy brief outlining key recommendations from a public policy perspective to establish, enhance, and expand regular migration pathways in Latin America and the Caribbean, with a focus on themes discussed during the panel, drawing on data and successful examples from the region.
- Dissemination of best practice and practical examples related to the themes addressed by the panel, providing inspiration and guidance for replication in other countries across the region.

## GCM OBJECTIVES



## MODERATOR AND SPEAKERS

**Moderator: Ms. Paula Berrutti, Human Rights Officer, O.I.C. of the Regional Office for South America (OHCHR).**



Ms. Paula Berrutti serves as Human Rights Officer at the Regional Office for South America (OHCHR). She is Uruguayan, with a degree in International Relations from Universidad de la República de Uruguay - UDELAR, and a postgraduate degree in Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law from Universidad Externado de Colombia. She joined the United Nations at the Peace Mission in Guatemala and since 2002 she has been working as a human rights officer at the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in Colombia, Paraguay, the Regional Offices for Central and South America, as well as at its headquarters.

**Keynote speaker: Ms. Amy Pope, Director General, International Organization for Migration (IOM) and Coordinator of the United Nations Network on Migration (UNNM).**



Ms. Amy Pope became the Director General of IOM on 1 October 2023, marking the first time a woman has held this position in the organization’s 73-year history. With a strong background in addressing migration issues, she has set a new strategic direction for IOM, focusing on both immediate responses to migration challenges and proactive measures to prevent crises. Pope has also implemented organizational reforms to better align IOM's structure and resources with field operations. Prior to joining IOM, she served as Senior Advisor on Migration to President Biden and Deputy Homeland Security Advisor to President Obama, where she developed strategies on topics such as human trafficking, refugee resettlement, and climate-related migration. Pope has held roles at the US Department of Justice, the US Senate, and as a Partner at Schillings law firm. She holds a JD from Duke University and a BA in Political Science from Haverford College.

**Keynote speaker: Ms. Karin Herrera, Vice-president of the Republic of Guatemala.**



Ms. Karin Herrera is the Vice-president of the Republic of Guatemala. She served as a professor for over 30 years at the Faculty of Chemical Sciences and Pharmacy at the Universidad San Carlos de Guatemala. She is also an environmental activist, advocating for clean water, biodiversity protection, potable water regulations, and quality public education. Her research has contributed to microbiological studies on water and air quality, collaborating with various public and environmental organizations. She has held leadership roles in professional and academic institutions, including serving as Vice President of the Board of the College of Pharmacists and Chemists and as a representative in Guatemala’s Food and Nutritional Security System. Ms. Herrera is a Biochemist who graduated from the Universidad de San Carlos de Guatemala, with a Master’s in Environmental Studies from Universidad del Valle de Guatemala and a Ph.D. in Sociology from Universidad Pontificia de Salamanca.

**Mr. Mauricio Jaramillo Jassir, Vice Minister of Multilateral Affairs, Colombia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs**



Mr. Mauricio Jaramillo was appointed as the Vice Minister of Multilateral Affairs in February 2025. He has served as a professor at the Faculty of Political Science and Government and the Faculty of Foreign Relations at Rosario University. Additionally, he was an advisor to the office of the Secretary-General of the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) and to the Corporación Escenarios y Vivamos Humanos. He served as an advisor to the Air Force Department at the Superior War College and to the Presidency of the House of Representatives. He has authored several academic articles and research studies, primarily focused on politics. Mr. Jaramillo holds a PhD in Political Science from the University of Social Sciences of Toulouse I in France, a Master's in International Relations and Security from the Institute of Political Studies of Toulouse, and a Master's in Geopolitics from the French Institute of Geopolitics in Paris.

**Mr. Jean Keiji Uema, National Justice Secretary, Brazil's Ministry of Justice and Public Security**



Mr. Jean Keiji Uema serves as the National Justice Secretary of Brazil's Ministry of Justice and Public Security. Among other roles, he has served as judicial analyst at the Supreme Federal Court and as legal consultant for the Ministry of Health and Secretary for Parliamentary Affairs at the Presidency of the Republic. Mr. Uema has also worked as Head of the Special Advisory Office of the Secretariat for Institutional Relations of the Presidency of the Republic. He is a member of the Board of Directors of BNDES - National Bank for Economic and Social Development. He has been a professor of Constitutional Law and he has experience in the field of Law, with an emphasis on Constitutional Law, Legislative Law, and Health Law. Mr. Uema holds a Master's in State Law from the Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo. He graduated in Law from the Federal University of Mato Grosso.

**Ms. Antonette Richards, Programme Director, Planning Institute, Jamaica.**



Ms. Antonette Richards serves as Program Director at the Planning Institute of Jamaica. She is a development professional with a background in urban planning and expertise in negotiation, project management, and conflict resolution. As a Community Development Specialist at the Planning Institute of Jamaica, she conducts research and provides technical advice on policies, programs, and projects related to national security, justice, community development, and governance. She contributed to Jamaica's Community Renewal Programme and the National Security and Correctional Services Sector Plans for Vision 2030. She is actively involved in citizen security initiatives, policy development, and program evaluation. With experience in both Jamaica and Trinidad, she is skilled in data analysis, policy preparation, and project management for underserved communities.

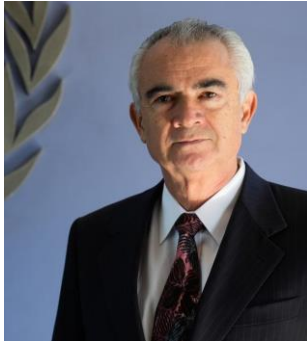
**Mr. Diego Morales, Director, Litigation and Legal Defense, Center for Legal and Social Studies (CELS)**



Mr. Diego Morales has served as director of CELS' Litigation and Legal Defense area since April 2013. He joined CELS as an attorney in 1998. After working for the Ombudsman's Office in the City of Buenos Aires from 2000 to 2003, he returned to CELS as director of Litigation, coordinating legal strategies in all the cases in which CELS intervened. Diego has vast experience in strategic litigation, migration legislation, and the development of legal clinics. He was director of the ESCR and Social Inclusion area from December 2010 to March 2013. He teaches Human Rights and Guarantees at the University of Buenos Aires Law School, the National University of Avellaneda and the National University of Lanús. He has also taught Master's degree courses on migration legislation and human rights. In addition, he has contributed to publications on labour outsourcing, migration and corporate responsibility for gross human rights violations, and authored several papers published in books and legal journals in Argentina and abroad on human rights and democracy. He received his law degree from the University of Buenos Aires.



**Closing remarks. Mr. José Manuel Salazar-Xirinachs, Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)**



Mr. José Manuel Salazar-Xirinachs of Costa Rica was appointed Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) by UN Secretary-General António Guterres on 1 September 2022. Salazar has extensive experience in economic development and policy, having served as Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean at the International Labour Organization (ILO) from 2015 to 2018, and in various roles at the ILO since 2005, including Executive Director of the Employment Sector and Assistant Director-General for Policy. He has also held positions as Director of the Trade Unit at the Organization of American States, Minister of Foreign Trade of Costa Rica, and Executive President of the Costa Rican Development Corporation. In academia, Salazar has authored numerous works and taught at institutions such as Cambridge and Georgetown Universities. He holds a master's in Development Economics and a doctorate in Economics from Cambridge.