

40th Anniversary of the 1984 Cartagena Declaration on Refugees: Towards a New 10-year Declaration and Plan of Action on Protection

Principles and Premises of the C+40 Process

In 2024, reflections on the new Declaration and Plan of Action could consider the following elements:

- **Key features of the Cartagena Process** – Maintaining a deeply humanitarian, apolitical, cross-cutting, and unique scope – which characterizes the Cartagena Process – across Latin America and the Caribbean, by bringing together all countries in the region (without any exception); fostering the idea that forced displacement goes beyond a country's actions and transcends common forms of persecution and violence; preserving the innovative, adaptable, and effective nature of the tools it has created; and remaining visionary by foreseeing future scenarios (natural disasters, new forms of conflict, and new violence agents).
- **Pillars of the Global Compact on Refugees** – Pursuing its objectives: i) ease pressures on host countries; ii) enhance refugee self-reliance; iii) expand access to third-country solutions; and iv) support conditions in countries of origin for return in safety and dignity; resorting to the principles of solidarity, international cooperation, and shared responsibility, as well as relying on burden distribution mechanisms – when proposing solutions and attending to protection needs – and on innovative tools to successfully distribute the burden (financing, using resources efficiently and effectively, partnerships with multiples stakeholders, and strengthening empirical information and data).
- **Broad perspective on need-based international protection** – Acknowledging that refugees, asylum-seekers, stateless people, internally displaced people, returnees, and people in transit – including other forcibly displaced people who cannot return to their countries of origin, such as people displaced by natural disasters – are people in need of protection, or in need of other kinds of temporary or complementary protection, as is the case of victims of human rights violations, people exposed to risks that threaten their life in their country of origin, or survivors of human trafficking, among others.
- **Age, gender, and diversity approach** – Incorporating a mainstreamed age, gender, and diversity approach (considering children, older people, LGBTQI+ people, people with disabilities, survivors of gender-based violence, afrodescendant and indigenous people).
- **Collaboration with relevant stakeholders**¹ – Integrating constructive proposals and contributions (from organizations led by refugees, internally displaced and stateless people; community leaders; faith organizations; civil society; academia; private sector and development actors; local governments and authorities); establishing effective collaboration mechanisms.
- **Integrated national approaches** – Trying to find a balance between the States' legitimate security concerns (national security), international protection needs, and the safeguarding of human rights.
- **Regional and sub-regional approach** – Emphasizing the particularities and specific needs that each sub-region has: the Andes region, Mesoamerica (northern Central America and southern Mexico), the Caribbean, and the Southern Cone.
- **Solution adaptability, sustainability, and effectiveness** – Designing flexible tools, responses, mechanisms, programs, and solutions that can adapt to changing scenarios, including any relevant update to ensure they are sustainable over time – which may require legal or other types of adjustments – while always making sure resources are rationally and efficiently used.
- **Outlook for the future and assessment of progress** – Resuming successful programs and tools from the Mexico Plan of Action and the Brazil Plan of Action (including the Quality Asylum Program, as well as Safe and Solidarity Borders, Solidarity Resettlement, Local Integration, and Eradicating Statelessness); recovering best practices, as effectively developed and implemented in the last decades, which not only have proven to be sustainable, innovative, and pragmatic, but also assured an efficient use of resources; maintaining an innovative and groundbreaking approach when it comes to develop new tools to address current and future challenges throughout an entire decade.
- **Realism and effectiveness as regards the implementation and monitoring mechanism** – Establishing a system that, on the one hand, allows the Plan of Action to be implemented progressively and realistically, which requires that it adapt to national realities, capacities, and needs; and, on the other hand, a system that considers the synergy and complementarity among existing initiatives and mechanisms.

¹ The purpose of the Global Compact on Refugees is to lay the foundation for predictable and equitable burden and responsibility sharing and distribution among UN Member States, as well as other relevant stakeholders, including international organizations within or beyond the UN System (for example, those comprising the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement), other humanitarian and development actors, international and regional financial institutions, regional bodies, local authorities, civil society (including faith organizations), academia and other experts, private sector, media, host community members, as well as refugees themselves (hereinafter, "Relevant Stakeholders").

Eventually, this will result in a collaborative system, facilitated by the comprehensive, cross-cutting, apolitical, and exceptionally wide geographical scope of the Cartagena Process.

- **Mainstreaming regional cooperation** – Ensuring cooperation remains a fundamental tool to effectively implement the Plan of Action by:
 - mobilizing actions within global international cooperation mechanisms, such as the Global Refugee Forum;
 - reinforcing solidarity, responsibility sharing, and international coordination/cooperation mechanisms;
 - maintaining and strengthening links with those mechanisms that gave substantial contributions to the Cartagena Process;
 - addressing the main causes of forced displacement from a regional and sympathetic perspective, including support and cooperation mechanisms in the countries of origin, the purpose of which is to foster economic growth, as well as strengthen the institutions and the judiciary branch, including peace processes and transitional justice; and
 - creating joint regional mechanisms – such as a support platform or a regional financing/cooperation fund – before the international community to provide technical and financial assistance to relevant stakeholders, including States, international bodies, intergovernmental institutions, development actors, financial institutions, academia, and the private sector.