



## THE CARTAGENA+40 PROCESS IN BRIEF

### I. BACKGROUND

In 1984, the adoption of the **Cartagena Declaration on Refugees** marked a new milestone in the generous tradition of solidarity, asylum, refugee protection, and regional cooperation in the Americas. It provided an innovative and flexible framework for a comprehensive response to legal and humanitarian challenges related to international protection in the region. In particular, it recommended the adoption of an expanded refugee definition, extending protection to persons forced to flee in situations other than those covered by the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees.

Since then, a **four decades-long tradition was established in the region to commemorate every ten years the Cartagena Declaration adoption**. That marked the beginning of the “**Cartagena Process**” and inspired what came to be known as the “**Spirit of Cartagena**”, which is characterized by a priority focus on refugee protection and solutions; a convergence of existing protection mechanisms and frameworks; a peaceful and humanitarian approach to protection challenges; an evolutionary, pragmatic, flexible and visionary nature of refugee and stateless persons’ protection; a human rights approach which recognizes the correlation between international human rights law and international law, including the contributions of the Inter-American Human Rights System to the establishment of standards and principles; and the principles of solidarity, responsibility sharing and burden sharing among states.

All of this was built up over time through the various phases of the Process:

1994

In 1994, the **San José Declaration on Refugees and Displaced Persons** was adopted in Costa Rica. It discussed the importance of the Cartagena Declaration as a protection tool and included the need to address the situation of internally displaced persons in the region.

2004

In 2004, the **Mexico Declaration and Plan of Action to Strengthen International Refugee Protection in Latin America** was adopted. It broke new ground by including a ten-year Regional Plan of Action that introduced pioneering protection and durable solutions programs: “borders of solidarity,” “resettlement in solidarity,” and “cities of solidarity.”

2014

On the 30th anniversary commemoration, the **Brazil Declaration and Plan of Action (BPA)** was adopted, involving Caribbean states and territories for the first time. As a ten-year roadmap, the BPA implemented the principles of solidarity, international cooperation, and shared responsibility, later included in the 2018 Global Compact on Refugees. The BPA incorporated statelessness as a new area of protection, along with the “quality asylum” and “comprehensive and sustainable solutions” programs. It also set out strategies for the Caribbean and Northern Central America, based on their specific needs. At the end of the decade of implementation of the BAP, UNHCR and Brazil, in compliance with the mandate received by participating States, submitted the BPA Final Implementation Report, reporting on the significant progress achieved in all the BPA’s chapters and programs.

## II. CHILE AND CARTAGENA +40

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On 12 December 2023, **Chile assumed the leadership of the Cartagena+40 (C+40)** process, which was announced at the Global Forum on Refugees in Geneva. UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, will accompany this process and, as a part of it, will coordinate four key activities: a series of **Regional Consultations, a Political Declaration, the Chile Plan of Action for the decade 2024-2034**, and a **Ministerial Event**.

This process will be based on the **region's consensus, progress, and achievements in recent decades, ensuring their inclusion at national and regional levels**. It will give continuity to the Brazil Action Plan, maintaining the validity of its tools and good practices and ensuring that they are strengthened, expanded, and regionalised in Latin America and the Caribbean.

The Process is articulated as a **space for reflection on the current context of the region** – including the new dynamics that affect it – and will foster the adoption of legal and humanitarian solutions to address them. It is a space for debate on existing challenges and those that may arise in the future, to anticipate responses and generate a strategic regional framework of priorities through the development of flexible, adaptable, visionary, and pioneering tools. Finally, the Process seeks to keep advancing in the adoption of concrete measures aimed at providing effective responses to people in contexts of human mobility.

The **core themes** for the discussion and elaboration of the Chile Political Declaration and Plan of Action are as follows:

1. Protection of people on the move and stateless persons.
2. Comprehensive strategies for solidarity-based solutions.
3. Protection in the context of disaster-induced forced displacement.

Therefore, it is essential to address the phenomenon with a **comprehensive protection approach**. That is, strengthening protection and solutions in the countries of origin, transit, destination, and return while addressing the broad spectrum of needs that people have throughout their journey and taking into account the reasons that led them to move, as well as their specific needs. This also requires that countries address this situation in a supportive, coordinated, and articulated manner.

The comprehensive protection approach will be a priority in the Chile Plan of Action, in coherence with the core themes, objectives, principles and tools of the 2018 Global Compact on Refugees. The commitments that each country proposed at the Second Global Forum on Refugees will be crucial to achieving the objectives of (i) alleviating pressures on countries hosting refugees, (ii) developing refugees' self-reliance, (iii) expanding access to resettlement and other complementary pathways in third countries, and (iv) fostering conditions that allow refugees to return voluntarily to their countries of origin in safety and dignity.

The **Chile Plan of Action will be aligned to and articulated with the implementation mechanisms of the Global Compact on Refugees**: Global Refugee Forums and High-Level Officials Meetings. Its first step was the formulation of the Regional Commitment on Cartagena+40 (multistakeholder pledge), in December 2024, on the verge of the 2nd Global Forum. The Chile Plan of Action aims to become a mechanism for articulating all the commitments of Latin American and Caribbean countries, as well as other stakeholders, aimed at strengthening protection and solutions and eradicating statelessness in the region.

Therefore, the **Chile Plan of Action will stand as an adapted regional implementation of the Global Compact on Refugees**, and it will reaffirm values that have been mainstreamed across the while history of the Cartagena Process. In particular, the importance of solidarity, international cooperation, and responsibility sharing among countries to achieve common progress and consolidate a regional protection framework.

### III. CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES

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#### A) Regional Consultations

The **first consultation** of the Cartagena+40 Process was on the protection of persons in situations of human mobility and statelessness. It took place in Mexico City on 4 - 5 April.

The **second consultation** will address comprehensive strategies for solidarity solutions. This meeting will take place in Brasilia on 16 - 17 May.

The **third consultation**, to be held in Bogotá from 19 - 21 June, will focus on disaster displacement and will include a specific consultation on Caribbean Solidarity.

#### B) Negotiations

Negotiations on the Chile Declaration and Plan of Action will take place in Geneva, between September and November this year.

#### C) Ministerial Event

The Ministerial Event will be held at ECLAC, in Chile, on 11 - 12 December, 2024.

**1** I Thematic consultation on Protection, México, 04 - 05 April, 2024

**2** II Thematic Consultation on Solutions, Brazil, 16 - 17 May, 2024

**3** III Thematic Consultation on Disasters and Caribbean Subregional consultation, Bogotá, 19 - 21 June, 2024

**4** Meeting with Civil Society, August, 2024

**5** Political Declaration and Plan of Action Negotiations, Geneva, September-November, 2024

**6** High-level event for the adoption of the Chile Declaration and plan of Action, Chile, 11 - 12 December, 2024

### IV. USEFUL LINKS

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- Cartagena Declaration on Refugees - [Link](#)
- Multi-Stakeholder Commitments: Cartagena+40 - Chile Declaration and Plan of Action - [Link](#)
- Cartagena 40 updates and public documents - [Link](#)