

REGIONAL WORKING GROUP FOR THE BRAZIL PLAN OF ACTION

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OUR STORY

After the celebratory meeting on the Cartagena Declaration on Refugees of 1984 in December of 2014, the countries from Latin America and the Caribbean adopted the Brasilia Declaration and Plan of Action (also known as the Brazil Plan of Action). The plan seeks to maintain the highest protection standards internationally and regionally, in order to implement innovative solutions for refugees and displaced persons and to put an end to statelessness in the region.

From this framework, the **Regional Working Group for the Brazil Plan of Action (Grupo Articulador Regional del Plan de Acción Brasil - GAR-PAB)** rose as an initiative to articulate the position of civil society on the state of international protection and promote the implementation and follow-up of the Brazil Plan of Action. The **Regional Working Group** unites more than 30 civil society organizations, experts and key actors in topics related to international protection in the region. Many contributed to a previous work, entitled the “Cartagena +30 Initiative”, which gave place to the proposals and goals established in the Brazil Plan of Action.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES:

	Objectives	Activities
1	Promote the implementation of the programs and proposals from the Brazil Plan of Action by the States and joint efforts between civil society organizations and international organisms that work in international protection.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a strategic plan for the medium and long term, including regional, subregional and national strategies. • Establish monitoring and follow-up mechanisms that facilitate the publication and distribution of reports, statistics and case studies. • Promote participation of civil society groups in the implementation of the Brazil Plan of Action. • Encourage the creation of tripartite commissions that foster inter-institutional cooperation.
2	Promote GAR-PAB as an intermediary in the region, seeking the development of a common viewpoint on international protection.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and detect new issues and challenges, considering the regional context of forceful displacement. • Promote strategies and mechanisms of capacity building and internal strengthening. • Share information, experiences, learned lessons and best practices among GAR-PAB members. • Compile materials to update the Acting Protocol for those who administer justice in cases that affect migrants and people subject to international protection and to the “<i>Serie Migración y Asilo de la Suprema Corte de la Justicia de la Nación de México</i>”.



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Monitor and publish findings on detention centers in the region. ● Publish reports regarding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Borders ○ The right to work for refugees in Latin America and the Caribbean ○ Trends and challenges for international protection
3	Strengthen dialogue among civil society, intergovernmental organizations, and national and local governments in order to implement the best possible solutions and mechanisms, nationally and regionally.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Follow-up, support, and strengthen implementation of the Brazil Plan of Action activities instituted by actors at a national level. ● Participate in regional and international spaces, including the Inter-American System of Human Rights and bodies from the United Nations. ● Follow-up of the thematic audiences of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and its resolutions. ● Participate with strategic objectives in the Annual Consultations of the UNHCR.
4	Position Latin America and the Caribbean as a model region in the prompt and effective activation of the international protection system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Activate the social and political capital of organizations for local advocacy to guarantee the proper activation of the international protection system in the region. ● Clearly articulate the position of civil society on the protection of refugees before regional and international organizations.

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

As the **Regional Working Group for the Brazil Plan of Action**, we emphasize that despite the complex and diverse challenges presented by the implementation of the Brazil Plan of Action, we can highlight the advancements that have been made in the last year.

We underline the growth of UNHCR's presence on the Southern border of Mexico, and in some offices in Central America, particularly in El Salvador and Honduras and the Returned Migrant Attention Center in Omoa to identify deported people in need of international protection. We recognize the advocacy work that has made the refugee crisis in the Northern Triangle of Central America visible and promoted cooperation among relevant actors from Mexico, the United States, and the European Union. As a result international cooperation agencies now include violence-induced forced displacement as one of their agenda priorities.

The member organizations of the Regional Working Group continue to protect and promote the right of people in need of international protection to free legal representation.

The member organizations of the Regional Working Group have promoted the need to monitor the use of migratory detention in the region in order to promote advocacy and foster alternatives. To position the issue on the regional stage, the *Regional Forum on Latin*



America, free mobility, the international protection of people and integration processes was held to unite government representatives and civil society organizations from the entire region to discuss alternatives to migratory detention. As a result, there have been advancements in national legislation to limit the use of migratory detention in countries like Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Bahamas and Panama.

In August 2015, organizations from the Regional Working Group participated in the Sub-regional Encounter of Civil Society of Mesoamerica. The meeting prompted the topic of regional integration and specific goals were set for the achievement of the Brazil Plan of Action.

A National Working Group for the follow-up of the Brazil Plan of Action in **Mexico** was formed to unite the voices of civil society in the country. This group has had an important position in high-level meetings with authorities from different levels of government and UNHCR.

When the **Honduran** Government recognized violence as a main contributor to forced displacement, the Interinstitutional Commission for the Protection of People Displaced by Violence was created with participation from four civil society organizations. PCS created a Verification Project for the Honduran migrant population, which presented its results and recommendations on the topic of international protection to the governments of Mexico and the United States, the National Commission of Human Rights in Honduras, and UNHCR.

In **Colombia**, the Commission on Forced Migration, Exile, and Reconciliation was created to tend to rights violations of the victims of the Colombian armed conflict living abroad and near the borders. Additionally, an International Conference on Peace and Asylum will seek to achieve a political compromise among States to guarantee durable solutions for the Colombian victims living abroad, ensuring conditions of dignity and respect for their rights in the local integration, relocation and return processes.

In **Chile**, strategic litigation programs have been implemented to address statelessness and due process during the refugee status determination (RSD) process.

In October 2015, a national meeting of the articulated Network from IMDH in **Brazil** named the “Solidarity Network for Migrants and Refugees” UNHCR and members of civil society presented the challenges and opportunities of implementation of the Brazil Plan of Action. As a result of the meeting, Brazil ratified the International Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness in the framework of the Plan of Action.

MEMBERS OF THE REGIONAL WORKING GROUP FOR THE BRAZIL PLAN OF ACTION

Argentina: Comisión Argentina para los Refugiados y Migrantes (CAREF).



Bolivia: Pastoral de Movilidad Humana CEB-ACNUR.

Brazil: Caritas Arquidiocesana do Rio de Janeiro, Caritas Arquidiocesana do São Paulo, Instituto Migrações e Direitos Humanos (IMDH).

Chile: Clínica de Migrantes y Refugiados de la Universidad Diego Portales.

Colombia: Consejería en Proyectos Colombia (PCS-Colombia), Consultoría para los Derechos Humanos y el Desplazamiento (CODHES), Comisión de Exilio y Reconciliación¹.

Costa Rica: Asociación de Consultores y Asesores Internacionales (ACAI), Centro Internacional para los Derechos Humanos de los Migrantes (CIDEHUM).

Ecuador: Asylum Access Ecuador (AAE), Consultoría para los Derechos Humanos y el Desplazamiento (CODHES), Comité Permanente por la Defensa de los Derechos Humanos (CDH), Fundación Esperanza, Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS - Ecuador), Servicio Jesuita a Refugiados (SJR).

El Salvador: Fundación Cristosal, Grupo de Monitoreo Independiente de El Salvador (GMIES).

Guatemala: Consejería en Proyectos Centroamérica y México (PCS-CAMEX).

Honduras: Asociación para una Vida Mejor, Honduras (APUVIMEH), Centro de Investigación y Promoción de los Derechos (CIPRODEH), Centro de Prevención, Tratamiento y Rehabilitación de las Víctimas de la Tortura y sus Familiares (CPTRT).

México: Asylum Access México (AAMX), Centro de Derechos Humanos Fray Matías de Córdova A.C. (CDH Fray Matías), Comisión Mexicana de Defensa y Promoción de los Derechos Humanos (CMDPDH), Casa del Migrante de Saltillo - Frontera con Justicia A.C., Programa Casa Refugiados A.C., Sin Fronteras I.A.P., SMR, Scalabrinianas: Misión con Migrantes y Refugiados.

Nicaragua: Nicasmigrante.

Panamá: Asylum Access Panamá (AAP), Consejo Noruego de Refugiados (NRC).

¹ CODHES, Servicio Jesuita de Refugiados (SJR - Col), el Proyecto PRODEM, Fundación Esperanza, Consejo Noruego para Refugiados (NRC), El Comité Permanente por la Defensa de los Derechos Humanos (CPDH), Rodemos al diálogo y PCS).



Dominican Republic: Centro de Formación y Acción Social y Agraria (CEFASA).

Trinidad and Tobago: Living Water Community. Refugee Program (LWC).

Uruguay: Servicio Ecuménico para la Dignidad Humana (SEDHU).

Latin America (regional organizations): Asylum Access América Latina (AALA), Center for Justice and International Law (CEJIL), Consejería en Proyectos para Refugiados Latinoamericanos (PCS), Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS), International Detention Coalition (IDC).