

***Promoting Migrant Human Rights: Follow-up to the
Projects of the Regional Network of Civil Organizations
for Migration (RNCOM)***

***Antigua, Guatemala
November 19-21, 2001***

Meeting Report

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I. Background

In March 1996, migration and foreign relations officials from the ten countries of North America and Central America arrived in Puebla, Mexico, for the founding session of the Regional Conference on Migration (RCM). They were greeted on the steps of the conference center by representatives from a binational coalition of Mexican and U.S. non-governmental organizations that had met two days before in Mexico City and who presented them with a document calling for the protection of the human rights of migrants and refugees.

Over the past five years, the civil society coalition has grown and consolidated its membership; the Regional Network of Civic Organizations for Migration (RNCOM) now includes representation from all eleven countries of the RCM. Due to advocacy efforts and the support of officials from various governments of the RCM, the March 2000 Fifth Annual Vice-Ministerial Meeting included two joint sessions for civil society-government exchange, as well as opportunities for informal dialogue. The institutionalization of the relationship represents recognition of the importance of civil society participation by the governments of the RCM.

At the 2000 Vice-Ministerial meeting, the RNCOM presented the governments with an NGO initiative for regional Minimum Standards for Human Rights Protection in Arrest, Detention, Deportation, and Return. The initiative is a regionally coordinated project that both relates to the RCM and has an autonomous existence. At the 2000 Vice-Ministerial meeting, the initiative was “noted” by the RCM governments, and a seminar for joint NGO-government dialogue was approved.

In November 2000, the RNOCM organized a meeting with government participation to discuss the Minimum Standards initiative. During this seminar members of NGOs, international and inter-governmental organizations, and governmental delegates worked in groups to discuss each of the situations covered by the initiative: interception, detention, deportation and return. This meeting served to compare legislation and standards in the region and to prioritize areas to improve the protection of migrants in the region.

During the 2001 Vice-Ministerial meeting, the RNCOM presented a report on current trends in the region that incorporated the discussions from the November meeting. In addition, the RNOCM requested that governments ratify their interest and support of the Guidelines initiative and that they incorporate it in the RCM Plan of Action for the year 2001 by:

- Issuing a declaration of intention by member governments to facilitate access to government information and facilities for RNCOM-sponsored research,
- Appointing a technical committee to work in conjunction with the RNCOM to develop draft Guidelines; and

- Supporting and participating in a joint seminar in coordination with the RNCOM to review the draft Guidelines and to assess research to be presented by the RNCOM.

The RCM incorporated these requests in its final declaration. These steps provided the RNCOM with the necessary tools and cooperation to enter into the phase of drafting the text of the Guidelines. An editorial committee worked on the first draft and presented it to the Technical Committee (Liaison Network for Consular Protection) during the RCM Technical Meeting in Costa Rica, November 14-16, 2001. During this meeting, the group established a timeline to review and incorporate changes to the Guidelines text to achieve approval in the Vice-Ministerial Meeting in March 2002.

II. Introduction

During the annual RNCOM meeting in Costa Rica in March, 2001, members agreed to organize monitoring projects and to continue work on their national reports for publication. In addition, an editorial committee was established to draft the text of the Regional Guidelines for the Protection of Migrant Human Rights in Situations of Interception, Detention, Deportation and Reception (Regional Guidelines). Between March and November, organizations in Mexico and Guatemala established monitoring projects and methodologies. In Mexico, the National Migration Forum interviewed over 300 migrants in detention in eight states. In Guatemala, a member of FLACSO tested its methodology along the Guatemala-Mexico border and organized a regional monitoring training to teach RNOCM members the database system. Meanwhile, the editorial team prepared the first draft of the Regional Guidelines and met in Guatemala in August to discuss and revise the text.

RNOCM members decided that it was necessary to hold a meeting in November in order to review projects and experiences and to establish clear steps to reach the goal of government approval of the Regional Guidelines in March 2002. As an internal meeting, members agreed that the objectives should include aspects of evaluation, planning and network strengthening. The specific objectives included the following:

Evaluation

1. Evaluate current trends related to the situation of migrant human rights in the regional and establish monitoring and research priorities within the context of the Regional Guidelines Project.
2. Review the classification of human rights violations pertaining to migrants.
3. Evaluate the application of existing human rights instruments in the region.
4. Evaluate the need, utility and context of the Regional Guidelines.
5. Discuss new migration programs and policies in the region that have an impact on the work of the RNOCM and its goal to strengthen protection mechanisms for migrants in the region.

Planning

1. Design clear responsibilities to achieve approval of the Regional Guidelines in March 2002 including national and regional advocacy efforts.

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2. Plan beyond the approval of the Regional Guidelines to establish monitoring and reporting mechanisms and determine ways to use the dissemination of the national reports as a promotional and educational tool in the region.

Network Strengthening

1. Share experiences and information regarding monitoring projects, national work and the negotiation process of the RNOCM team during the Technical Meeting in Costa Rica.
2. Review the RNOCM plan of action and determine priority projects.
3. Discuss administrative matters including seminar topics, financing, etc.

In order to achieve these goals, the RNOCM decided that the workshop agenda should include the following:

- Presentations on the human rights situation in the region, the application of existing instruments and the context of the Regional Guidelines.
- Open discussion regarding current trends in the region.
- Informal presentations on monitoring work.
- Presentation of the published national reports (Honduras and Guatemala).
- Advocacy training to provide methodology for the national and regional campaigns.
- Planning sessions to determine advocacy strategies to achieve approval of the Regional Guidelines.

III. Summary of Workshop Topics

A. Common Violations of Migrants' Human Rights in the Region

Alicia Junco, director of the Law Clinic of the ITAM in Mexico City and consultant for Sin Fronteras, I.A.P., discussed the importance of identifying human rights frequently violated in the region in order to help in the eventual application of the Regional Guidelines. She presented a list of the human rights most commonly violated in the migration context including:

- Right to no discrimination
- Freedom from cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment
- Freedom of movement
- Right to privacy and integrity
- Freedom from arbitrary detention
- Right to information
- Right to be heard and tried in court
- Right to free and efficient legal representation
- Right to not be deported
- Labor rights
- Right to education and cultural identification

Alicia explained that migrants are more vulnerable to these types of violations due to the fact that they have to confront laws, languages and cultures that are unknown to them. In addition, many societies are xenophobic, discriminate against foreigners, and are ignorant regarding the migration phenomenon.

During the discussion session, RNOCM members questioned the exclusion of health, education, labor and cultural rights in the draft text of the Regional Guidelines. Participants pointed out that the Regional Guidelines consist of a series of principles compiled according to four different situations experienced by migrants in the region and that they emphasize basic rights within these situations. In fact, in the detention section health, education and labor rights are included. Members agreed to review the explicit mention of the treatment of vulnerable groups in the text including women, children, the disabled, refugees and asylees. Alicia emphasized that advocacy for the principles mentioned in the Regional Guidelines does not in any way exclude other rights guaranteed in international and regional instruments; rather, the Regional Guidelines should serve as a complement to these instruments.

B. Application of Regional Instruments pertaining to Migration

Roxanna Atholtz of the Center for Justice and International Law (CEJIL) presented an overview of the work within the Inter-American System related to migration. She stated that in recent years, the Inter-American System has considered cases including:

- Arbitrary detention
- Detention conditions
- Right to education for migrants
- Right to nationality
- Deportation without due process

She explained that the Inter-American System offers several mechanisms that can be used in advocacy efforts including:

- Individual cases presented before the Commission and Court
- Urgent Actions (immediate measures when irreparable damage is demonstrated, exhaustion of internal resources is not required)
- Hearings
- Reports
- Special Rapporteurs

The advantages of the Inter-American System include:

- The OAS instruments afford broad protection (San José Convention).
- Resolutions may impact national legislation (such as the case of Venezuela that reformed its law regarding refugees).
- Hearings can be used as an advocacy and educational forum.

- Direct benefits to individuals (access to education and birth certificates for children in the Dominican Republic, protection for Colombian refugees in Venezuela, protection for peace communities in Colombia).
- The resolutions include specific recommendations and establish mechanisms for implementing the recommendations.

Obstacles to the Inter-American System include:

- Case documentation (corroboration of different sources)
- Fear on the part of the victims (afraid to give their names, undocumented status, mobile population)
- Individualization of the victims (resolutions generally apply to specific victims)
- Requirement of exhaustion of internal resources
- Government attitudes toward the system

Roxanna explained that in order for the system to be effective, it must be utilized. In this sense, she encouraged RNCOM participants to explore ways to access the system including providing information to the Special Rapporteur for Migrants and their Families, Juan Mendez, presenting reports and requesting hearings on topics related to migration.

C. Evaluation of the Regional Guidelines within the context of international and regional instruments

Helena Olea, Doctor of Juridical Science candidate at the University of Notre Dame, presented the context of the Regional Guidelines project. She explained that the Regional Guidelines are not new, but rather a compilation of important principles in the migration context that are contained in other instruments (whether the universal or regional system). In addition, the Regional Guidelines are not legally binding. As such, the strength of the Guidelines will depend on the follow-up by those promoting and evaluating them. Finally, the Regional Guidelines reflect a middle standard adapted to the reality in the region that should not affect countries that currently offer more protection or better conditions.

The Regional Guidelines are necessary to protect migrants who may find themselves in a situation of vulnerability due to their legal status, economic situation, lack of access to due process guarantees, xenophobic and discriminatory attitudes, nationality, etc. It is important to note that because migration is generally regulated in an administrative context, migrants are not afforded the same due process guarantees as people in a criminal proceeding. In addition, the administrative nature of migration procedures generally allows for more discretion among adjudicators.

The Regional Guidelines will serve as a regional framework for research and monitoring projects that involve participants on a wide scale. They will also serve as a guide for governments when establishing migration policies or programs.

D. Situation of Migrants: Regional Panorama

The objective of this section of the meeting was to evaluate the regional situation for migrants and migration policy and analyze how this current situation impacts the mission of the RNCOM to protect migrant rights. In particular, participants discussed the impact of the events of September 11 on migration policy in their countries, including the following:

- Limitation of civil rights of migrants as well as nationals: this phenomenon has been noted throughout the region but particularly in the United States (use of Military Tribunals) and Canada (limits on due process guarantees).
- Change in the public perception of migrants: participants observed how official discourse has altered the image of migrants in a short time. Now, in addition to labeling migrants as “illegal”, “different/the other”, “criminals”, “drug and people traffickers”, migrants have been presented in the media as potential terrorists. This discourse has had an impact on society’s reaction fomenting discrimination, xenophobia, civil rights violations, etc.
- Governments have utilized the attacks as a pretext to invest more resources in the continued militarization of the borders, increased control at ports of entry, and databases, as well as to justify accords that had been placed on hold. Examples include *Plan Sur* in Mexico, increased support to intercept migrants in Central America before they make it to Mexico and the United States, the regional standardization of procedures and documentation such as visa requirements, databases, etc.
- Increase in Regional and Bi-national Accords: examples include the Safe Third Country Agreement between Canada and the U.S., and the continued pressure for countries to enter into the Agreement for the Return of Extra-Regional Migrants with the International Organization for Migration (IOM).
- Economic Impact of the Migration Policies: limits on commerce flows, decreased revenue from tourism, limitations on skilled migrant worker visas, decrease in remittances, criminalization/limitation of the remittance process through increased restrictions on financial transfers, negative economic impact on countries of origin.
- Migration Legislation reforms that incorporate national security language: drafts of legislation in Honduras, Costa Rica and El Salvador contain similar provisions for the criminalization of migration and have used the national security argument to justify ample discretion. The draft legislation in Dominican Republic is an exception and contains provisions to protect migrant human rights.
- National and Bi-national migration negotiations and proposals have been shelved or have changed priority. Examples include the Mexico-U.S. migration negotiations and Plan Puebla-Panama.
- The increase in migration control through bi-national and regional accords combined with the societal perception of migrants as a national security threat will limit access to protection systems for asylum and refugee applicants. This may lead to increased applications in Mexico and Central America as access to U.S. and Canadian processes is restrained.

Possible Projects Concerning the Regional Migration Panorama:

- Combat myths about migrants and migration through education, public awareness campaigns.
- Emphasize greater need for protection mechanisms in light of the increased controls and discretion utilized to investigate migrants.
- Ensure the incorporation of international human rights obligations in draft migration legislation.
- Monitor the impact of the new migration policies and programs.
- Strengthen protection mechanisms for refugees.
- Emphasize the economic benefits of migrant workers in the agricultural and service sectors during public awareness campaigns and educational projects.
- Stress the need to eliminate the association of migration with national security and terrorism.

E. Update on the Monitoring Projects in Each Country

Carol Girón (FLACSO-Guatemala) discussed the monitoring project FLACSO is working on with other Central American organizations. They have developed a questionnaire and a database of information that can be shared with other organizations. Training workshops to carry out fieldwork will take place in Belize, Honduras, Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Costa Rica. They are going to integrate the databases and they want to present a regional report at the seventh meeting of the CRM next March. This monitoring work is based on the methodology of the sociologist Olivia Ruiz in Mexico, who has created maps of the risks that migrants face as they move northward toward the U.S.

The Jesuit Service Corp. in the Dominican Republic has helped to create the Jeannet Succes Bi-national Network in the Haiti/Dominican Republic border zone. The human rights situation in that region is characterized by grave abuses such as Dominican police and military personnel who commonly deport Haitian migrants who have appropriate documents. In addition, significant corruption and abuses by Dominican officials have been documented. The Jeannet Succes network has organizations on both sides of the border, which are documenting human rights abuses. These abuses are documented in public places (e.g., markets) and in jails. The network collects information by filling out forms it has created, processes the information, and is in the midst of creating a common database. One difficulty with collecting information is that the members of the military do not want to be observed.

During August-October 2001, the Mexican National Immigration Forum conducted over 300 interviews with migrants detained in 8 states as part of a project to monitor detention conditions and access to due process. The data is currently being compiled and the final report will be presented in March 2002.

In Canada, the Toronto Detention Center is ironically called Celebrity Inn as it is a combination hotel and detention facility. The Quaker Committee for Refugees

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coordinates weekly seminars and “know your rights” presentations, and accompanies people throughout their legal proceedings. There are no mechanisms by which detainees can express their complaints regarding this detention facility. In all of Canada, there are only three detention centers equipped to house migrants. However, during the meeting, the Canadian participants expressed concerns that Canada would increase detentions as a reaction to the September 11 events.

F. Advances in National Reports and Discussion of March Meeting

The Guatemala National Survey on Current Procedures for the Interception, Detention, Deportation, and Reception of Migrants was published in November and presented to Network members at the seminar. The Honduras National Survey has also been published. The Canada, Belize, and U.S. National Surveys will be published within the next several months as well.

Irene Palma discussed some of the plans that MENAMIG and FLACSO have for the dissemination of national reports. They plan to distribute them to all MENAMIG members; to various agencies that participated in the research/data collection; to the migration shelters and authorities along the border, to the regional roundtables in each department, and to various governmental agencies. Additionally, they will put the report on FLACSO’s webpage.

Participants agreed that the major theme of the March RNCOM seminar, as suggested at the RNCOM seminar parallel to the VI RCM meeting last March, would be human trafficking. Other issues that will be addressed at the meeting include: a presentation of Action Canada for Population and Development’s study on migrant children; FLACSO’s study on migration and risks of human rights abuses; and other national surveys which will be completed at that time.

In terms of financing, the RNCOM has no funds to plan or carry out the March meeting. It was agreed that each country will try to assume the travel costs to Guatemala of one participant, but there will also be a need to secure more funds from another source. Since the theme of the meeting will be human trafficking, the network will approach the IOM for funding. Also, FLACSO will begin discussing with Catholic Relief Services (CRS) the possibility of funding for the meeting. The MENAMIG, as the civil society migration forum in Guatemala, will take responsibility for planning the logistics of the RNCOM meeting.

G. Report on Meetings with Regional Conference on Migration in San José

A team of representatives of the RNCOM executive committee met with governmental representatives at the Regional Conference on Migration meeting (November 13-16) in San José, Costa Rica to present a draft of the Regional Human rights Guidelines. RNCOM representatives had only a brief opportunity to meet with the governmental representatives, and did not engage in a substantive discussion of the document with

them. They issued a statement at the meeting reaffirming the importance of the RCM as a regional and multilateral space for ongoing exchange between governments, international and inter-governmental organizations, and civil society regarding migration issues, and reasserting the need for the development of a new legal framework to deal with migratory flows that reflects the economic and social benefits migrants bring to the region. The RCM named a list of representatives from various countries who will serve as key contacts in the process of development and negotiation of the Guidelines. The current list is incomplete, and will grow to include representatives from each RCM member country as the process evolves.

There are differences amongst RNCOM network members regarding the substance of the Guidelines that need to be addressed before a final version is presented to the governments. The editorial committee has already begun to address some issues in the Guidelines that need to be further developed, including arrest in international waters and protection of vulnerable migrant populations (i.e., women and children). Additionally, it will be important to include in the final version of the document explicit recognition of the international collaboration involved in the development of the Guidelines.

An editorial committee, consisting of Gilma Perez (El Salvador), Helena Olea (United States), Alicia Junco (Mexico), and Eusebio Garcia (Canada), has been created to take responsibility for revising the document and preparing it for presentation to the governments. Oscar Chacón, a member of the RNCOM's executive committee, will act as coordinator for the editorial team. The timeline for the revision process is as follows:

November 30, 2001 – Deadline for member organizations of the RROCM to turn in comments regarding the first draft of the Regional Guidelines (this deadline is already passed).

December 14, 2001 – The editorial committee will send the second draft to the governmental representatives and to the member organizations of the RNCOM. The Canadian government will translate this second draft to English.

January 7, 2002 – The RNCOM will receive the English version of the Guidelines from the Canadian government and will send it to the governments and member organizations of the RNCOM.

January 25, 2002 – The governments and member organizations of the RNCOM will turn in their final comments to the editorial committee.

February 8, 2002 – The third and last draft will be sent to all governments and RNCOM members by the editorial committee.

March, 2002 (date to be determined) – A meeting of the RNCOM executive committee, supported by members of the editorial committee, with governmental representatives will be proposed during the Meeting of the Consultative Group of the RCM that will take place immediately before the VII Vice-Ministerial meeting.

The goal of the network is to emerge in March 2002 with the Guidelines approved by the member governments of the RCM. Attainment of this goal will require a coordinated regional advocacy effort, and it is important that all network members know the document very well and are actively involved in its promotion and dissemination throughout various branches of RCM member governments. Additionally, as part of a well-crafted advocacy strategy, it will be necessary to be attentive to the governmental representatives who are sent to the RCM meetings, and who are designated to work on the Guidelines. RNCOM members will need to remain in consistent communication with their governments to ensure that all RCM members send in comments on the Guidelines.

IV. Advocacy Training

As noted earlier, the RNCOM will need to undertake a coordinated regional advocacy campaign to promote the adoption of the Guidelines. Luis Fernando Morales Lopez, a consultant brought in by FLACSO-Guatemala, spent one afternoon with RNCOM members conducting an advocacy training session in order to prepare the network for this advocacy campaign. Morales noted that advocating for the rights of migrants is a difficult task. By nature, migrant populations are transitory and often lack political power. As with all advocacy campaigns, it will be important for the network to maintain perspective on its long-term goals. This lobbying effort should not become an end in and of itself; it will be the first step in the process of advancing the human rights of migrants throughout the region.

Negotiations and Effective Advocacy

After leading participants in a role-play activity that revealed many of the adversarial – and counterproductive – dynamics that tend to arise when individuals face an apparent conflict of interests, Mr. Morales discussed several approaches to deal with differences of opinions and negotiate solutions. He highlighted the contrast between position-based negotiations and interest-based negotiations. *Position-based negotiations* are generally characterized by a contentious, adversarial approach. Each party typically has an idea of a solution that s/he thinks is best and tries to convince the other party to accept it. They bargain back and forth until they find a solution that satisfies both of them to some degree. The attitudes that are often demonstrated during position-based negotiations include a certainty that one side's win is equivalent to the other side's loss; a feeling that concessions are signs of weakness, and a conviction that there is only one correct solution. Position-based negotiations rarely lead to a satisfactory solution for both parties.

Effective lobbying campaigns must utilize *interest-based negotiations*. Interest-based negotiations generally begin with an affirmation of the importance of the relationship to both parties, and then lead to a discussion of the needs of each party. This discussion focuses on separating out the substantive needs of each party from procedural issues and psychological factors. The parties involved look for solutions based on these articulated needs, instead of trying to force a solution from the beginning. The attitudes that are generally present in interest-based negotiations include a certainty that the relationship is

important, an awareness that many different solutions to the problem exist, and a determination to cooperate to find a mutually acceptable solution.

The following are general principles that should be followed when engaged in effective interest-based negotiations:

- Begin by affirming the importance of the relationship between the two negotiating parties.
- Indicate your desire to look for solutions.
- Avoid discussion of solutions at the beginning of the discussion; try first to uncover the interests of the other party.
- Emphasize the points upon which the two parties agree.
- Refocus the problem in a way that the negotiations are seen as a way to satisfy interests and not as a way to force the other side to agree with a certain position.
- Remove the problem from the involved parties; create a “triangle” to objectively evaluate the interests of both parties in order to identify a possible solution.
- Respond with proposals and suggest ways of expanding on them to see if the interests of both parties can be satisfied.

The Advocacy Campaign for the Adoption of the Guidelines

Networks members turned to a specific discussion of the Guidelines advocacy campaign, noting particular issues that they will need to be attentive to as they work towards the adoption of the guidelines next March. There are multiple governmental agencies involved with the development and implementation of migration policies, and all of these agencies in each country should know about the Guidelines initiative. It will also be important to consider the ways in which the political landscape has changed (or is changing) because of the elections in Nicaragua, Honduras, and Costa Rica.

Additionally, it is important to note that a common interest of many governments in the region has to do with remittances. Continued remittance flows – which sustain the economies of many sending countries - depend on the well-being of migrants. Migrants themselves should play a major role in this advocacy effort, as they can have a significant impact on the government of their country of origin.

Lobbying Efforts

Lobbying is an advocacy strategy that relies on careful, specific tactics to win the support for a particular proposal of people who have the power to influence policies. In general, the steps that need to be taken to prepare a lobbying strategy include:

- Identify the key players and a few “targets.”
- Prioritize the importance of various targets – who are the ones that really need to be convinced that the proposal should be approved?
- Analyze individually the interests and styles of the important targets.

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- Prepare individualized arguments designed to convince the targets.

When making a lobby visit to try to convince a selected “target” to support a particular proposal, there are several steps that should be taken in advance:

1. The group that is going to make the lobby visit should prepare a clear and concise summary of the proposal, preferably written out on no more than one page, which should be given to the target at the beginning of the visit.
2. If the group is going to designate a spokesperson, they should also designate a back-up, in case the spokesperson gets nervous or the official ignores him or her.
3. All members of the group should be able to answer basic questions about the proposal that will be represented in the visit – what is it, why has it been developed, and how can it be implemented.
4. Before making the visit, the group should formulate possible scenarios and plan tactics and strategies for every possible situation (it helps to do role-plays ahead of time).
5. The group should define the specific objective of each visit.

During the visit, the group should make optimal use of time, taking no more than five minutes for greetings and initial “small talk” to break the ice. The presentation should be concrete and precise, and include discussion only of what is necessary. Value and pejorative judgments should be avoided, as should long discussions about the historical-structural causes of the problem. The governmental official should be listened to attentively and with respect. The group should not aim to achieve the approval of the proposal in the first meeting; it is important to give the official time to analyze the proposal, but establish a follow-up process (i.e., set a new date).

Individuals who conduct lobbying visits should be very familiar with the proposal that is being advocated. They should work well in teams, and not be individualistic. They should know how to listen actively – not just hear, but process what others are saying and know when to respond. Institutions and organizations that conduct lobbying campaigns should have the capacity to collect and analyze information regarding the issue on which the campaign is based. They should have institutional resources for monitoring information, and should prioritize the execution and follow-up of the campaign.

V. Advocacy Strategies for the Approval of the Regional Guidelines

On the last day of the seminar, network members came together to plan region-wide and country-specific advocacy strategies for the adoption of the human rights Guidelines by next March. During the RCM Annual Meeting in Guatemala in March 2002, RNOCM members will request that government members take the following actions:

1. Adopt the Regional Guidelines;

2. Incorporate a strategy for implementation of the Regional Guidelines in the Plan of Action; and
3. Facilitate access to government information and facilities to assist in the evaluation of the Regional Guideline implementation.

It was determined that the following steps will be taken by the network to move towards the approval of the Regional Guidelines.

1. The network will request that the RCM create a governmental outreach group to focus on the Guidelines initiative.
2. The editorial committee will revise the Guidelines based on comments received from network members, governmental representatives, and experts. The committee will produce a final version for the March VII RCM meeting.
3. Heartland Alliance will take responsibility for sharing all comments and revised versions with the network.
4. The Executive Committee of the RNCOM will approve the final version of the Guidelines and will send them to the RNCOM and governments.
5. In order to address the concerns of some network members, appendices will be used in the Guidelines to clarify that adopting them does not in any way release governments of their responsibility to safeguard the rights of immigrants, or sanction the reduction of current standards of protection.
6. All network members should undertake the following to ensure that their respective governments are appropriately engaged in the Guidelines development process:
 - a. Identify actors and key “targets” that will play a role in the decision to approve or not approve the guidelines.
 - b. Meet with these targets and other actors to discuss questions and concerns.
 - c. Ensure that all governments are reviewing the Guidelines and that they send in their comments before January 25, 2002.
 - d. Turn in the final version of the Guidelines to the key actors and point out the incorporation of their comments.
 - e. Communicate information regarding all communication/interactions with the governments to the executive committee of the RNCOM before the March meeting.

National Advocacy Strategies to Promote the Adoption of the Guidelines

Participants separated into groups based on countries and developed the following national-level advocacy strategies:

Dominican Republic

1. They will work to identify the key contacts in Foreign Relations Department.
2. They will set up a meeting with Alejandro Alaye so that he will facilitate subsequent meetings.

3. They will create a public dialogue with Jacques Vieux, Conga to attract public attention to the issue.
4. They will take advantage of other dialogue opportunities and host a seminar regarding the RROCM and the Dominican Republic.
5. They will work with the COIM, which has a project that focuses on migration to Europe.

Canada

1. They don't anticipate problems in terms of governmental support for the Guidelines.
2. They will help support regional advocacy efforts.
3. They will contact the Vice-Minister of Citizenship and Migration, Michelle Dore, who has demonstrated significant interest in the Puebla Process.
4. They will contact Holly Edwards, Senior Advisor (Minister of Foreign Relations).
5. They will have a meeting with Michelle Dore in which we ask her to review the Guidelines.
6. They will look for alliances in the various regions of Canada and the projects that work with detention centers and inform local networks.
7. They will utilize the Guidelines for asylum petitions and for the new detention center.

Costa Rica

1. The targets are Elain Wrighte and Ricardo Otara, who is the person designated to review the Guidelines.
2. Migration – Eduardo Uilchez and Virginia Liano.
3. Political parties – discuss with various political parties before the election.
4. Advocacy with international organizations – IOM (Robert Kozak), UNCHR (Andres Ramirez).
5. They will send a written report to the RROCM by the end of February.

Guatemala

1. At the beginning of January, they will make a visit on the part of the MENAMIG to the Foreign Ministry to make sure that Guatemala puts a representative on the outreach group.
2. MENAMIG will organize a breakfast with important actors – the director of Consular Issues (Herbert Beck), the Vice Minister of the Interior, the new Director of Migration.
3. At the breakfast MENAMIG will present the diagnostic and the report and the guidelines.
4. In the MENAMIG, the coordinator of each working group will meet next week to specifically organize.

5. They will present a brief overview to CRS to begin the process of securing funds for the meeting.

El Salvador

1. They will discuss the Guidelines document in the Migration Forum in El Salvador.
2. They will develop a plan of action to secure the support of the officials in the Interior Ministry and the Foreign Ministry.
3. The Vice-Minister and the new director of Migration are those that will go to RCM meetings and the Forum will try to schedule a meeting with them.
4. The Migration Forum will develop an action plan.

Panamá

1. They will meet with the new Director of Foreign Policies.
2. On December 15, they will have a meeting with the government to present the document.
3. They will send updates to the executive committee.

Nicaragua

1. They will plan a meeting with other civil organizations in Nicaragua and other forums to develop links with them.
2. They will meet with Migration, the National Police, the Army, Commissions of the National Assembly (Human Rights and Foreign Relations).
3. They will conduct public-relations activities: offer interviews to the MCS.
4. They will get articles published about the Regional Guidelines in the *Nuevo Diario*.
5. They will communicate the results of their actions to the executive committee of the RROCM.
6. The responsibilities for all this will be shared by *Caritas* and CENIDH.
7. There is the problem of the change in government.

Honduras

1. They will meet immediately with Migration and Foreign Relations (Carlos Sanchez).
2. There have been many difficulties in the FONAMIH because of the deaths of forum members in the accident in August.
3. They also have the problem of the change in government.

Belize

1. There is no interest in the Guidelines on the part of the government and no one has seen them.

2. The migration network which is currently consolidating will meet.
3. They will meet again with the Minister of Education, Minister of Health, etc.
4. They will need to have the Guidelines in English to be able to circulate them so they are going to pull out the key points in the document and translate them.
5. They imagine that a point of contention will be in the section on detention, since in Belize they detain all migrants in jail.

Mexico

1. The Migration Forum will distribute the document so that the members will promote it with various authorities and they will present the document in other forums.
2. They will send the document and work calendar to the Foreign Ministry and the Mexican Immigration Institute immediately.
3. They will ask for a meeting at the beginning of January to discuss the comments with the key contact people and ensure that they will send their comments.
4. During the second week in February they will again solicit a meeting to review the incorporation of their comments.

United States

1. They are going to continue to be in communication with the key people in the Department of State and Justice
2. They will try to do more outreach – linking with other NGOs in the U.S. that work on migration issues.

VI. Conclusions

The November 2001 RNCOM meeting provided migrants' advocates from throughout the region a chance to come together to share observations and experiences regarding the dramatically altered post-September 11 environment in their respective countries. The discussions that arose in this forum indicate that the post-September 11 regional context poses a whole new set of challenges for civil society advocates concerned with the human rights of migrants, and that the need for a coherent set of principles for the protection of these rights (such as the Regional Guidelines) has never been greater.

The seminar provided the opportunity for members to deepen their shared understanding of the role of the Regional Guidelines in the framework of international and regional human rights law and to share advances in their work on projects related to the Guidelines project. The advocacy training workshop presented a specific methodology and framework for developing the national and regional strategies necessary to effectively promote the adoption of the final draft of the Guidelines by all RCM member governments in March 2002. As noted by RNCOM members throughout the meeting, governmental adoption of the guidelines will represent one step towards ensuring the

protection of migrant human rights in the region. Diligent, coordinated monitoring efforts on the part of advocates and civil society will be necessary to ensure that the Guidelines constitute a viable document that has meaning for millions of migrants vulnerable to human rights abuses throughout North and Central America and the Dominican Republic. The continued consolidation of the RNCOM through meetings and seminars such as this one represents the development and institutionalization of an active, regional civil society coalition that has the capacity to advocate persuasively for policies and practices which guarantee the human rights of migrants and reflect the benefits migrants bring to sending and receiving countries alike.