



In times of uncertainty, we walk with hope with migrants and refugees

Statement of the Annual Assembly of the Jesuit Network with Migrants Central America-North America (RJM CANA)

From September 30th to October 4th, thirty-two organizations that comprise the Jesuit Network with Migrants Central America-North America (RJM CANA), along with two guests from the Caribbean, gathered for our annual assembly in the border cities of Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua, Mexico, and El Paso, Texas, United States. These cities, throughout their histories, have been deeply affected by regional migratory dynamics. On the one hand, they have been the stage for the implementation of migrant control and containment policies. On the other hand, they have witnessed acts of solidarity and hospitality that uphold the **dignity** of migrants and refugees.

Grounded in the voices of those we accompany and the work we carry out on their behalf throughout Central America and North America, we highlight the strength and importance of the role we play as civil society organizations in caring for migrants and refugees. We have found that working in a coordinated manner as a network is essential to our comprehensive approach, which includes direct accompaniment, advocacy, and research. In response to evolving migration dynamics and policies, we have had to adapt our efforts to meet these new challenges, always recognizing that every action must be taken **with and for** migrants, refugees, and displaced people and their families. We acknowledge the importance of learning daily from their strength, solidarity, audacity, and resilience.

We denounce the increased militarization, containment, and externalization of borders over the past year, which has exacerbated the precarious and dangerous conditions surrounding migration. Governments continue to implement policies that prioritize security, allocating more resources to border control than to addressing the root causes of migration. On October 1st, migrants and people in need of protection were victims of military persecution in Villa Comaltitlán, Chiapas, Mexico. This tragic event reveals the consequences of such policies,

which claim lives and often go unpunished. Our network stands in solidarity with the victims and their families.

Simultaneously, pathways for regularization have been opened. However, not all people qualify for these programs, and in some cases, measures have been introduced that limit the right to seek asylum, violating the principle of non-refoulement and exposing individuals to greater risks and increased vulnerability. In this context, we urge countries in the region to apply the expanded definition of the Cartagena Declaration to ensure the protection and integration of those in need of asylum and refuge.

In these uncertain times of political change, our network remains vigilant not only to the implications and impacts of migration dynamics but, above all, to their effects on the lives of migrants and refugees. We will continue to defend their rights and advocate for informed, accompanied, and protected migration. We will promote dialogue at all levels and encourage actions that transform discrimination, racism, and xenophobia into **pathways for hospitality**.

Our network echoes Pope Francis's message for the [110th World Day of Migrants and Refugees 2024](#), which calls us to encounter and accompany migrants and refugees with **hope** in every time and place.

God not only walks with his people, but also within them, in the sense that he identifies himself with men and women on their journey through history, particularly with the least, the poor and the marginalized. (Pope Francis)

Mexico, October 3, 2024