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COSTA RICA: Participation in international coordination platforms

As of August 2024

Background

Throughout its democratic history, Costa Rica has demonstrated its **commitment to human rights and respect for international law**, principles recognized by the international community. The country also recognizes the **value of multilateralism in promoting common action**; thus, these values have been translated into concrete action lines of Costa Rican foreign policy through its **leadership and proactive participation in regional and global coordination spaces and platforms**.

Costa Rica, as a **country with a history of hosting in solidarity** people from different places and situations in the continent, is aware of the dimension of the challenge of forced displacement. For this reason, Costa Rica is a signatory country of various **international mechanisms** that call for the efforts and political commitment of other States for the timely and comprehensive assistance, protection and inclusion of people in human mobility.

Similarly, **the country has consolidated its leadership** and is a recognized voice in such spaces for political dialogue, particularly those on protection and solutions to forced displacement. **Costa Rica participates in at least seven of these spaces, of which it has assumed or will soon assume the *Pro-Tempore Presidency* (PTP) of four of them.** This broad participation positions Costa Rica as a **strategic actor to promote complementarity between the different spaces** and avoid duplication of efforts (Table 1 at the end of this document shows the points of convergence between the work areas, or thematic areas, of the platforms).

©: Natalia Diaz/UNHCR.

Through our dialogue with local authorities, who know first-hand the challenges and opportunities of the territories, UNHCR operationalizes the principle of shared responsibility in the response. Credit: Natalia Díaz / UNHCR.

The leadership of the Costa Rican State in these international governance bodies, in alignment with the objectives of the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR), allows the country to:

a) **Position issues of interest on the regional and international agenda.**

b) **Propose a vision that serves as a 'road map' at the international and national levels.**

c) **Have more clear and effective approaches with the donor community.**

d) **Make visible its good practices in addressing forced displacement.**

e) **Operationalize the principle of shared responsibility. This remarkable political effort is technically accompanied by some international organizations, among them UNHCR.**

UNHCR's role

According to its mandate, UNHCR has assumed the role of technical secretariat for some of the spaces and as a permanent guest of the Platform on Disaster Displacement (PDD). In these fora, UNHCR gains capacity to **influence the Government of Costa Rica and other key actors to place priority issues** on the state agenda at different levels. Hence, multilateral efforts are strengthened in a way **that refugees, asylum-seekers and stateless persons are at the center** of the design and implementation of strategies to assist, protect and integrate this population.

UNHCR also contributes to the **operationalization of this work by monitoring the progress of the commitments** made by the country in each platform or process. To this end, **UNHCR liaises with the institutions** in charge of the sectors and issues in the Government of Costa Rica, with which it also interacts in the framework of the implementation of its programs and projects. This liaison also **ensures effective communication flows and identifies common opportunities and challenges.**

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Timeline

2014

Signing of the Brazil Plan of Action (2014-2024) in commemoration of the 30th Anniversary of the Cartagena Declaration on Refugees.

2015

Nansen Initiative consultative process, precedent for the creation of the Platform on Disaster Displacement - PDD (2016).

2016

Adoption of the New York Declaration, precedent for the creation of MINARE (2022).

2017

Signing of the San Pedro Sula Declaration, as a contribution to the consultations and discussions around the **Global Compact on Refugees (GCR).**

2018

Adoption of the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR), precedent for the creation of the Comprehensive Regional Protection and Solutions Framework (MIRPS) (2018) and the quadrennial holding of the GRF.

2018

Creation of the Quito Process (PdQ).

2019

First Global Refugee Forum (GRF) where Costa Rica was a co-sponsor.

2020

Endorsement of the Regional Conference on Migration (RCM), created in 1996. Costa Rica assumes its *Pro-Tempore Presidency* (PTP)

2022

Costa Rica formalizes the **Protection and Solutions Response to Refugees in Costa Rica (MINARE)** through Executive Decree 43393.

2023

Costa Rica participates in the Summit of the Americas, which results in the Los Angeles Declaration on Migration and Protection (LAD).

2023

Second Global Refugee Forum (GRF), in which Costa Rica presented 19 pledges.

2024

40th Anniversary of the Cartagena Declaration, a reference for the Cartagena+40 process, which will hold regional technical consultations, negotiations for the Chile Plan of Action 2024-2034, and the Follow-up and Coordination Mechanism for the implementation of the Plan throughout the year.

2024

Costa Rica assumes the PTP of the Quito Process (QP).

2025

Costa Rica plans to take on the PTPs of MIRPS, PDD and, for the second time, RCM.

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Coordination platforms and mechanisms

Protection and Solutions Response to Refugees in Costa Rica (MINARE)

Description and scope

It is **Costa Rica's national refugee forum**, i.e., it is the formally agreed inter-institutional coordination space to guide the response of the State and other actors to refugees, asylum-seekers and stateless persons. MINARE is the **national** expression of the MIRPS, which is **regional** in scope.

Objective and actions

Operationalize the principle of **shared responsibility, whole-government and whole-society**, thus summoning all social actors to join efforts and provide a comprehensive and predictable response to refugees and asylum-seekers in Costa Rica. It includes **23 concrete actions** to address the needs of forcibly displaced persons in terms of employment and livelihoods, social protection and education.

Membership and working structure

Lead: Ministry of Government and Police. **Participants:** Ministries of Foreign Affairs, National Planning and Political Economy (MIDEPLAN), Labor and Social Security (MTSS), and Public Education (MEP); Vice-Ministry of Human Development and Social Inclusion; General Directorate for Migration (DGME), Joint Institute for Social Assistance (IMAS). **Technical Secretariat:** UNHCR.

The **working structure** has two levels: a technical level made up of a multidisciplinary team of officials with expertise in refugee issues, who follow up on the agreements, and a political level that brings together the heads of the MINARE member institutions, who give political viability to the actions proposed.

MIRPS event at the Global Refugee Forum 2023 with government representation from Spain, Costa Rica, El Salvador and USA; the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and mexican company FEMSA. UNHCR Geneva.

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Regional Conference on Migration - CRM

Description and scope

Non-binding consultative, regional intergovernmental forum for dialogue and exchange of ideas, experiences for joint reflection and cooperation on migration issues of common interest.

Objectives and Pillars

Promote regional efforts to strengthen effective **migration** governance, protect the human rights of migrants, and address key regional challenges in migration issues and border strengthening, modernization and management.

As defined in its Strategic Plan 2023-2026, the CRM has three **programmatic pillars**, which are subdivided into thematic areas, namely:

a) Migration Governance.

b) Integration, Migration, and its Links to Development.

c) Preparedness, Protection, Assistance, and Irregular Migration; this last pillar includes the international protection systems of asylum and refuge.

Structure and Membership

Lead: Each member state holds the ***Pro-Tempore Presidency*** annually, on a rotating basis (Belize in 2024, Costa Rica in 2025). **Participants:** Belize, Canada, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama and USA. **Observers:** 5 countries (Argentina, Colombia, Ecuador, Jamaica and Peru) and 12 international organizations (UNHCR, ECLAC, ICRC, IACHR, IOM, ILO, Special Rapporteur on Human Rights, UNDP, Ibero-American General Secretariat, SICA, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNODC). **Civil Society Partner:** Regional Network of Civil Organizations for Migration (RNCOM). **Executive Secretariat:** IOM.

Comprehensive Regional Protection and Solutions Framework (MIRPS)

Description and scope

It is a **regional platform**, created as a concrete application of the Global Compact on Refugees, to support member countries in implementing actions to address forced displacement.

Objetivo y pilares

Operationalize the principle of s**hared responsibility** in the region, promoting **cooperation among countries of origin, transit and destination** of persons in need of international protection.

MIRPS is based on **four pillars:**

a) Improving **reception and admission mechanisms** for refugees and asylum-seekers.

b) Responding to **immediate** humanitarian and protection **needs**.

c) Supporting **host** countries and **communities**.

d) Enhancing opportunities for durable **solutions**.

Structure and membership

Leads: one member state holds the ***Pro-Tempore Presidency*** annually, on a rotating basis (Belize in 2024, Costa Rica in 2025). **Participants:** 7 Central American and Caribbean countries (Belice, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico and Panama). **Support platform:** 10 countries or group of donor countries (Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Spain, United States, France, Switzerland, European Union/EU, Uruguay) and four regional and international organizations (Central American Bank for Economic Integration/CIBE, Inter-American Development Bank/IDB, World Bank/WB, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean/ECLAC). **Technical Secretariat (both MIRPS and its Support Platform)**: UNHCR and OAS.

Functions of the *Pro-Tempore Presidency*:

a) **Update and make visible the situation** of displacement in Central America and Mexico within the international agenda.

b) **Mobilize resources** for the advancement of actions, hand in hand with the Support Platform.

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Quito Process - PdQ

Description and scope

The Quito Process is an **intergovernmental technical space** in Latin America and the Caribbean dedicated to developing proposals, exchanging best practices and **articulating a regional response** to the situation of human mobility of refugees and migrants, especially Venezuelans.

Objective and strategic axes

Its objective is the **regional harmonization and coordination of the measures implemented to guarantee safe, orderly and regular migration**, in full respect and protection of human rights and in accordance with national regulations, applicable international legal instruments and best practices in the region, as well as the promotion of public policies aimed at addressing the emerging needs of m**ixed and successive movements** of refugees and migrants.

The **five strategic axes** proposed by Costa Rica (PTP) to work in a structured manner the thematic axes of the Process in 2024 are: **a) Safe Routes and Protection** in the Context of Mixed and Successive Movements in the region; **b) Family Reunification** and Protection of Separated and Unaccompanied Children and Adolescents; **c) Host Communities** and Dialogue with local and central authorities and international financial institutions; **d) Strengthening of National Asylum Systems** and International Protection; and **e) Regimes** of Permanence, Migratory Residence and Temporary Protection. Each strategic axis is subdivided into 10 thematic axes.

Structure and membership

Lead: each member state holds the ***Pro-Tempore Presidency*** annually, on a rotating basis: Costa Rica holds the PTP at 2024. **Member countries: Other members and accompanying countries:** the Troika (Costa Rica and Chile), the Group of Friends (Canada, France, Germany, Netherlands, European Union, Spain, Switzerland, Italy, United Kingdom, United States, Inter-American Development Bank, and World Bank), as well as organizations and representatives of civil society, private sector and academia. **Technical Secretariat:** UNHCR and IOM.

UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Filippo Grandi meets with Costa Rican Vice-Mnister of Foreign Affairs, Alejandro Solano at UNHCR headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland. UNHCR Geneva.

Platform on Disaster Displacement - PDD

Description and scope

The PDD is a **multilateral forum** led by Member States in cooperation with international partners to improve the protection of people at risk of displacement in the context of disasters and climate change, following on from the Nansen Initiative.

Objetivo y ejes de trabajo

This initiative facilitates dialogue, information exchange and the development of policies and standards. It also **implements the recommendations of the Agenda for Protectio**n to respond to situations where people are forced to seek refuge, either within their own country or across borders. It has **five areas of work**, namely: **a)** disaster risk prevention and reduction, **b)** protection of displaced persons, **c)** international cooperation, **d)** knowledge generation, and **e)** awareness-raising.

Estructura y membresía

Lideran: Kenya (*Pro Tempore Presidency* in 2024) and Costa Rica (Vice Presidency in 2024). **Participants:** 19 countries[1]. **UNHCR** is a permanent guest.

1 Alemania, Argentina, Australia, Bangladesh, Brasil, Canadá, Costa Rica, Estados Unidos, Fiji, Filipinas, Francia, Kenia, Madagascar, Maldivas, Marruecos, México, Noruega, Senegal, Suiza.

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Los Angeles Declaration on Migration and Protection - LAD

Description and scope

The Declaration was an outcome of the Summit of the Americas (2023) convened by the Government of the United States to reflect on the challenges of human mobility and forced displacement in the Americas and to **secure concrete commitments at the national and regional levels** to improve the response to people in situations of human mobility.

Objective and pillars

Twenty-two countries of the Hemisphere signed the Los Angeles Declaration on Migration and Protection (LAD) to mobilize the countries of the region to adopt concrete measures to manage migration in the Hemisphere, based on four pillars: **a) stability and assistance** for communities, **b)** expansion of **regular pathways for migration**, **c) humane migration management**, and **d) coordinated emergency response**. Under these pillars, 11 action packages were created, led by countries working in each area.

Structure and membership

Signatories: 21 Latin American and Caribbean countries[2], including Costa Rica, which is a participant in the Canada-led Investing in Asylum action package, which seeks to **streamline asylum determination processes** to ensure fair and effective access to protection.

Cartagena +40 Process - CTG+40

Description and scope

It is a **strategic regional framework** resulting from a commitment made at the Second Global Refugee Forum (GRF 2023), where Chile, with the support of UNHCR, proposed a roadmap to be implemented in 2024, consisting of regional thematic consultations, a political declaration, a ministerial event and a plan of action. The process is hemispheric in scope, encompassing the entire Latin American and Caribbean region, and seeks to ensure effective responses to people in the current context of displacement and human mobility. Costa Rica, as a PTP of the Quito Process, has formally contributed with inputs to this dialogue.

Objective and thematic axes

The Cartagena+40 Plan of Action (2024-2034), which is a ten-year plan, is a continuation of the Brazil Plan of Action (2014-2024). The process has **three core themes**: a) protection of people on the move and stateless persons, b) comprehensive strategies for solidarity-based solutions, and c) protection in the context of disaster-induced forced displacement.

EStructure and membership

Leadership: Chile. **Participation:** The Cartagena+40 process does not operate on the basis of membership but is open to the participation of all Latin American and Caribbean countries. Costa Rica's participation has a dual role: as a State Party to the Process and as a PTP of the Quito Process.

Global Refugee Forum - GRF

Description and scope

A global **forum for discussion** that takes place every four years to reflect on the context of displacement and to propose actions to improve the lives of refugees and the communities and countries that host them. It is the most important international meeting on the subject and a **landmark event in the history of the international protection of refugees**.

Objective and pillars

As a component of the Global Compact on Refugees, the GRF is intended to support the achievement of the objectives of the Compact: to **enhance refugee self-reliance**, to ease pressure on host countries, to expand **access to third-country solutions**, and to support conditions in countries of origin **for return in safety and dignity.**

Structure and membership

Participants: Countries that assumed obligations under the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR). **Costa Rica** has participated in both GRFs: in **2019 as a co-sponsor**, and in **2023 by submitting 19 commitments** to address the situation of refugees, asylum-seekers and stateless persons.

2 Argentina, Barbados, Belice, Brasil, Canadá, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estados Unidos, Guatemala, Guyana, Haití, Honduras, Jamaica, México, Panamá, Paraguay, Perú y Uruguay.

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Opportunities for articulation and coordination

Costa Rica promotes complementarity among the various regional platforms and mechanisms to address the challenges resulting from forced displacement. The country has reiterated the importance of identifying points of convergence, sharing information and best practices, building consensus, avoiding duplication of efforts and promoting more effective strategies.

Table 1 shows the points of convergence between the work lines or thematic areas of the platforms. UNHCR, as the Technical Secretariat of some of these mechanisms and part of others, has supported efforts to align these platforms by proposing joint actions. Costa Rica, as the current PTP of the Quito Process, has promoted dialogue on cooperation. The three *Pro-Tempore presidencies* that Costa Rica will assume simultaneously in 2025 (MIRPS, CRM and PDD) open a strategic opportunity to advance towards this objective.

Mechanism	Lines of work
Comprehensive Regional Protection and Solutions Framework (MIRPS)	1. Improve mechanisms for reception and admission; 2. Respond to humanitarian and protection needs; 3. Support to host countries and communities. 4. Enhance opportunities for durable solutions.
Quito Process (PdQ)	1. Asylum; 2. Guidance Centers; 3. Health; 4. Education; 5. Gender; 6. Socio-economic insertion; 7. Protection of children and adolescents; 8. Family reunification; 9. Human trafficking; 10. HIV – AIDS.
Cartagena +40 Process (CTG+40)	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.
Los Angeles Migration and Protection (LAD)	1. Promote stability and assistance for communities of destination, origin, transit and return: • Integration and support for host communities: • Temporary protection and regularization; • International funding for migrant-hosting countries; • Fight against xenophobia. 2. Promote regular pathways for migration and international protection: • Labor mobility; • Investments in asylum; • Refugee resettlement and complementary pathways; • Family reunification and alternative migration routes. 3. Promote humane migration management: • Fight against human trafficking and smuggling; • Return and integration; • Visa and travel alignment. 4. Promote a coordinated emergency response.
Regional Conference on Migration (CRM)	1. Migrant Children and Adolescents; 2. Migration and emergencies; 3. Civil Society; 4. Missing Migrants; 5. Migration and Development; 6. Consular Assistance; 7. Migration and Health; 8. Gender; 9. Human Trafficking; 10. Human Rights; 11. Migration and Protection; 12. Human smuggling.
Global Refugee Forum (GRF)	Support the advancement of the objectives of the Global Compact on Refugees: 1. Enhance refugee self-reliance. 2. Ease pressure on host countries. 3. Expand access to third-country solutions. 4. Support conditions in countries of origin for return in safety and dignity.

Identified areas of joint work

Protection:
- Strengthening of the asylum;
- Protection of people in a situation of human mobility;
- Resettlement and complementary pathways;
- Family reunification;
- Documentation and regularization;
- Combating human trafficking and smuggling.

Attention to humanitarian needs:
- Health;
- Gender;
- Child and adolescent protection;
- HIV/AIDS.

Support to host countries/ communities:
- Integration;
- Financing.

Solutions:
- Education;
- Economic insertion;
- Labor mobility.
- Safe return.

Natural Disasters and Emergencies.

UNHCR appreciates the contributions of donor countries that contribute to Costa Rica and global programs with unearmarked funds:
As of 31 July 2024

UNHCR Costa Rica also appreciates the contributions of our private donors globally:
Republic of Korea and Japan

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