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Migrant Caravans in Mexico

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The research was conducted in collaboration with FM4 Paso Libre, a civil society organization based in Guadalajara, Jalisco that is dedicated to the defense and promotion of migrant and refugees' human rights through comprehensive humanitarian assistance, advocacy, and research.

The project emerged from a shared binational interest and concern for pressing public policy challenges related to migration, and the direct impact that these challenges have on migrants, refugees, and civil society.

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Table of Acronyms

AMEXCID	Mexican Agency for International Development and Cooperatio (<i>Agencia Mexicana de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo</i>)
AMLO	Andrés Manuel López Obrador
CBP	Customs and Border Protection
CEDHJ	Jalisco State Commission for Human Rights (<i>Comisión Estatal de Derechos Humanos de Jalisco</i>)
COMAR	Mexican Commission for Refugee Assistance (<i>Comisión Mexicana de Ayuda a Refugiados</i>)
CONAPRED	National Council for Preventing Discrimination (<i>Consejo Nacional Para Prevenir La Discriminación</i>)
CONOFAM	National Coordination of State Offices for Migrant Assistance (<i>Coordinación Nacional de Oficinas Estatales de Atención a Migrantes</i>)
CURP	Unique Population Registry Code (<i>Clave Única de Registro de Población</i>)
DIF	National System for Integral Family Development (<i>Sistema Nacional para el Desarrollo Integral de la Familia</i>)
DPS	Department of Public Safety, Texas
FGR	Office of the Attorney General (<i>Fiscalía General de la República</i>)
FMLN	Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (<i>Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional</i>)
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HDI	Human Development Index
INS	Immigration and Naturalization Service
IOM	United Nations International Organization for Migration
JOH	Juan Orlando Hernández
MPP	Migrant Protection Protocols
MSF	Doctors Without Borders (<i>Médicos Sin Fronteras</i>)

NTCA	Northern Triangle of Central America
OFAM	Offices for the Attention of Migrants (<i>Oficina de Atención a Migrantes</i>)
REDODEM	Documentation Network of Migrant Defense Organizations (<i>Red de Documentación de las Organizaciones Defensoras de Migrantes</i>)
RENAPO	National Public Register, Mexico (<i>Registro Nacional de Población</i>)
SEGOB	Ministry of the Interior, Mexico (<i>Secretaría de Gobernación</i>)
SEDENA	Ministry of National Defense (<i>Secretaría de la Defensa Nacional</i>)
SEMAR	Ministry of the Navy (<i>Secretaría de Marina</i>)
SRE	Ministry of Foreign Affairs (<i>Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores</i>)
SSPC	Ministry of Security and Citizen Protection (<i>Secretaría de Seguridad y Protección Ciudadana</i>)
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees

Foreword

The Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs has established interdisciplinary research on policy problems as the core of its educational program. A major element of this program is the nine-month policy research project, in the course of which one or more faculty members direct the research of ten to twenty graduate students of diverse disciplines and academic backgrounds on a policy issue of concern to a government or nonprofit agency. This “client orientation” brings the students face to face with administrators, legislators, and other officials active in the policy process and demonstrates that research in a policy environment demands special knowledge and skill sets. It exposes students to challenges they will face in relating academic research, and complex data, to those responsible for the development and implementation of policy and how to overcome those challenges

The curriculum of the LBJ School is intended not only to develop effective public servants, but also to produce research that will enlighten and inform those already engaged in the policy process. The project that resulted in this report has helped to accomplish the first task; it is our hope that the report itself will contribute to the second.

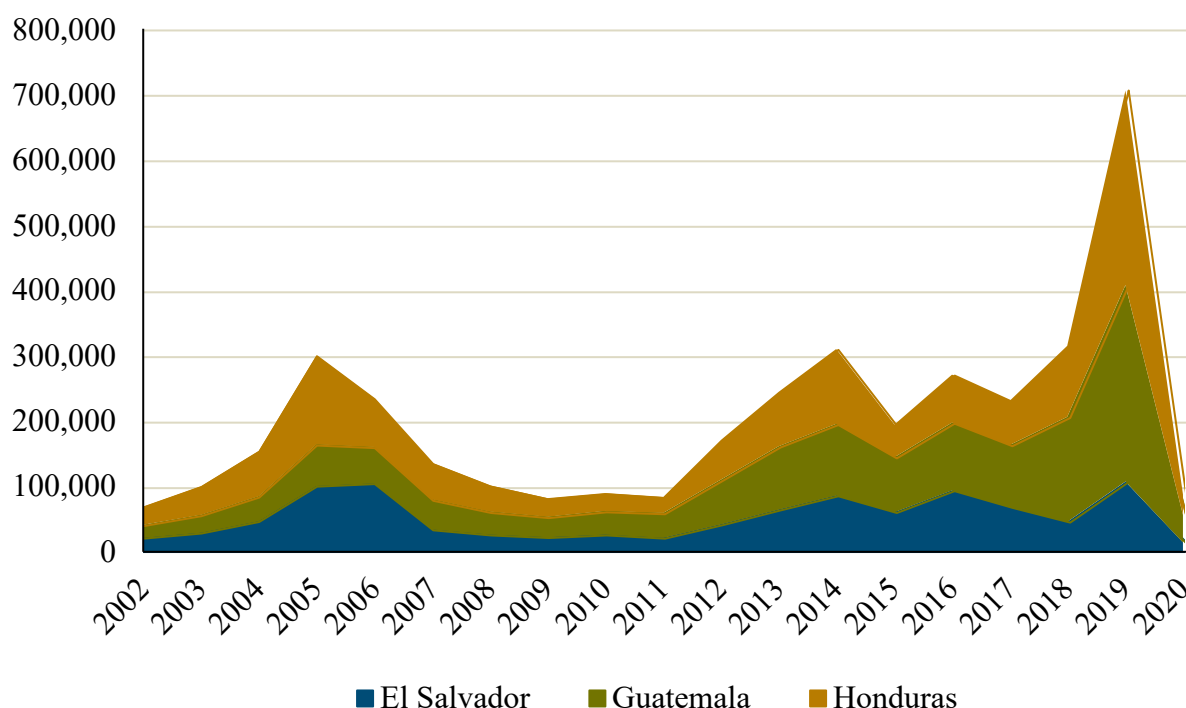
Finally, it should be noted that neither the LBJ School nor The University of Texas at Austin necessarily endorses the views or findings of this report.

Angela Evans
Dean

Chapter 1: Current Migration Situation

For the past four decades, large-scale migration out of the Northern Triangle of Central America (NTCA)—Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador—has brought millions of people to the United States. Originally, this migration was made up of refugees fleeing civil wars and natural disasters. In more recent years, migrants have been driven out of their communities by gang violence, systemic poverty, agricultural setbacks, and climate change. All of these factors are further exacerbated by Central America’s weak governance and deep-rooted social issues, such as violence against women and the LGBTQ+ community. From January 2019 to December 2019 an estimated 700,000 Central Americans left their homes and headed north.¹

Figure 1
Emigration from Northern Triangle Countries (FY2002-FY2020)



Source: Author elaboration²

These Central American migrants and asylum seekers travel to the United States through various modes of transportation. In the past decade, they have increasingly formed migrant caravans as a safe means of transit. The earliest migrant caravans were organized by religious organizations and sought to raise awareness about the violence and insecurity that migrants face along the route. Yet, as caravans grew, migrants began to take on larger roles in caravan organization and the caravans garnered media and U.S. and Mexican government attention. This report will document migrant caravans in the context of Central American migration, outline the caravans that have attempted to reach the United States, and analyze the Mexican government’s responses.

Historic Migration

Guatemala. In the 1980s, Central Americans fled their homes and sought refuge from civil wars, genocide, and oppressive military regimes. Guatemala had the region's longest civil war (1960-1996). In 1954, the CIA helped overthrow a democratically elected Guatemalan government led by Jacobo Árbenz, whose land reform policies aimed to benefit displaced farmers at the expense of private interests, such as the U.S.-based United Fruit Company. Six years later a rebellion to overthrow the military regime officially started the war.

In the 1980s, the Guatemalan military began a scorched earth campaign against the Maya, who it viewed as supportive of the leftist insurgency.³ Its operations destroyed 440 Maya villages in the Western highlands, and Guatemalans fled to refugee camps in southern Mexico or to the United States.⁴ Overall, during the civil war, more than 200,000 people were killed or reported as disappeared, and 83 percent of those killed or displaced were indigenous Maya.

In December 1996, President Álvaro Arzú signed peace accords ending the 36-year civil war. However, the civil war's violence had disrupted Guatemala's commercial patterns, generated massive unemployment, and caused killed hundreds of thousands of people. Violence also continued to be a major issue in Guatemalan political life and organized criminal groups operated with relative impunity. As a result, migration continued to the United States even during peacetime.

El Salvador. El Salvador's civil war began in 1979 as a result of the fighting between the military-led government and leftist guerrilla groups. The years of violence were punctuated by three highly-publicized atrocities: the 1980 assassination of Archbishop Oscar Romero, the rape and murder of four American women, and the 1989 Jesuit Massacre that finally compelled the international community to intervene.⁵ The United States played an important role in the conflict by providing military aid, training, and advisors to the government. Nearly 75,000 people died and another one million were displaced in the conflict. Overall, 25 percent of El Salvador's population migrated or fled during the civil war.⁶

Even after the government and the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) signed peace accords in 1992, state violence continued. El Salvador was left awash weapons and with high levels of psychological trauma.⁷ Since the end of the war, ongoing violence and increasing inequality have fueled migration out of the country.

Honduras. Honduras did not have a civil war but was still involved in some of the nearby conflicts. The United States set up base camps in Honduras for the Contras, a right-wing rebel group fighting Nicaragua's Sandinista government during the 1980s, and Hondurans who spoke out were sent to secret prisons.⁸ The worst episode lasted from the late 1970s to 1988, when a U.S. trained military intelligence unit, Battalion 316, engaged in torture, extrajudicial killing, and state-sponsored terror against 184 Hondurans.⁹

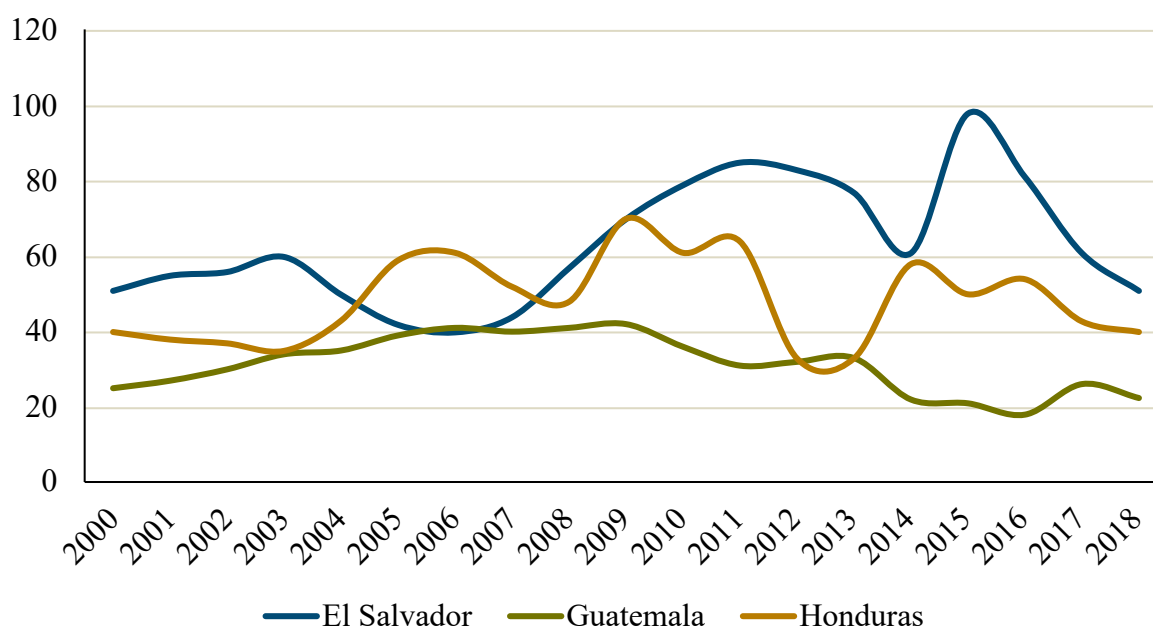
However, it was Honduras' devastating natural disasters that led to its first spike in outward migration. In 1998, Hurricane Mitch decimated the country's agriculture sector, destroyed 90 percent of the banana crop, and left 17,000 workers unemployed.¹⁰ In its aftermath, migration from

Honduras to the United States began to steadily increase, with the number of Hondurans apprehended at the U.S.-Mexico border almost doubling from 10,600 to 18,800 between 1998 and 1999.¹¹

Gang Violence

Central America is one of the world's most violent regions. In 2019, Honduras' homicide rate was 41.2 per 100,000, El Salvador's rate was 36, and Guatemala's rate was 21.5.^a ¹² By comparison, in the United States, the homicide rate was 5 per 100,000 in 2018.¹³ Much of this violence has been concentrated in the region's urban areas. In 2019, San Salvador in El Salvador and Tegucigalpa and San Pedro Sula in Honduras ranked among the world's top ten most dangerous cities.¹⁴ However, there is evidence that rural areas, particularly in El Salvador, are becoming increasingly dangerous. Two transnational criminal groups, the Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13) and the 18th Street Gang (Barrio 18), carry out much of this violence.

Figure 2
Northern Triangle Homicide Rates (2000-2019)



Source: Author elaboration¹⁵

The Mara Salvatrucha is the Western Hemisphere's most notorious street gang. "Mara" is a Central American term for gang, "salva" refers to El Salvador, and "trucha" is a slang term for clever or sharp.¹⁶ The gang was founded in the 1980s in Los Angeles' poor, marginalized neighborhoods, where refugees from Central America's civil wars had settled. Conflict between MS-13 and their rivals, including the 18th Street Gang, was fierce and many of these gang members eventually

^a In 2015, El Salvador became the world's most violent country not at war, with a homicide rate of 103 per 100,000. Since 2015, homicide rates have fallen every year, but they remain high by global standards.

spent time in Los Angeles' jails. However, the U.S. prison system solidified many of the gang ties and became another base for the groups to operate and recruit new gang members.

In 1996, U.S. President Bill Clinton signed the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act.¹⁷ The law overhauled the U.S. immigration system and increased the number of criminal charges for which immigrants could be deported to their country of origin.¹⁸ The policy was applied aggressively to gangs in Los Angeles, where a large percentage of members were not U.S. citizens. Between 2000 and 2004, an estimated 20,000 gang members were returned to Central America and the two street gangs spread across the region.¹⁹ Today, the gangs have a significant presence in Central America and are estimated to have more than 85,000 members.²⁰ The gang's resilience owes to its strong social bonds, which are strengthened through acts of violence.

Both MS-13 and the 18th Street Gang rely on extortion as their main revenue stream. In Central America, the gangs primarily target public transportation operators, small businesses, and residents of poor neighborhoods.²¹ Extortion is difficult to measure since it is largely based on threats and fear, and the crime is severely underreported. However, a 2015 investigation by the Honduran newspaper *La Prensa* found that Salvadorans, Hondurans, and Guatemalans pay an estimated US\$661 million in annual extortion fees among the three countries.²² The gangs' use of extortion destroys communities, displaces families, and corrodes governance. In response, Central American residents may choose to flee their countries to pursue a safer life in the United States.

Sexual and Gender-Based Violence

Women and girls. Gender-based violence is a significant driving factor in current Central American migration dynamics. In Honduras, the homicide rate for women is the world's highest, at almost 12 times the global average.²³ In El Salvador, it is nearly six times the global average, and in Guatemala, it is more than three times the average.²⁴ This violence is linked to a pervasive culture of hypermasculinity, or *machismo*.²⁵ Most women are killed by their husbands, partners, or family members.

However, gangs also affect Central American women's lives and safety. Women are recruited to be gang members' girlfriends (*novias*), and the gangs use sexual violence as a means to establish dominance, leverage their status, and seek revenge. A 2015 United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) study interviewed women seeking asylum in the United States and found that 85 percent came from neighborhoods controlled by criminal groups and 64 percent cited rape, assault, and extortion as their main reason for migrating to the United States.²⁶

LGBTQ+. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) people are targeted for violence in Central America because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. It is difficult to obtain accurate figures on attacks against LGBTQ+ people in Northern Triangle countries due to underreporting. However, the NGO Cattrachas Lesbian Network—which monitors violent deaths of LGBTQ+ people using media reports—documented 264 murders of LGBTQ+ people in Honduras between 2009 and 2017.²⁷ In 2016, the NGO Transgender Europe reported that 40 trans people were murdered in Guatemala.²⁸ In February 2017, three trans women were killed in El Salvador within a 72-hour period.²⁹ LGBTQ+ people often choose to migrate because their lives

are directly at risk. In March 2017, the Salvadoran NGO COMCAVIS Trans indicated that at least 136 LGBTQ+ people had left the country since 2012.³⁰

Socioeconomic Conditions

Central America includes some of the Western Hemisphere's poorest countries. Within these countries, a small group of elites have historically concentrated land ownership and economic power, creating a powerful legacy of inequality throughout the region. In the 1980s and 1990s, Central America's adoption of market-oriented economic policies produced greater stability and diversified the region's predominantly agricultural economies. However, the economic gains did not translate into improved living conditions for Central American residents.

According to the World Bank, 50 percent of Hondurans, 49 percent of Guatemalans, and 26 percent of Salvadorans live below the poverty line, defined as US\$5.50 per person a day.^b In Guatemala's Western Highlands, an area that has experienced significant outward migration in recent years, the indigenous population's poverty rate is more than 79 percent.³¹ The United Nation Human Development Index (HDI) provides additional insight into socioeconomic conditions by measuring variables such as perceptions of well-being, gross national income per capita, and environmental and socioeconomic sustainability. Out of the HDI's 189 countries, El Salvador ranks 121, Guatemala stands at 127, and Honduras is at 133.³²

Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador each rely heavily on their agricultural sectors, accounting for 14 percent, 13 percent, and 12 percent of each country's GDP, respectively. In Honduras, agricultural activities make up nearly a third of total employment.³³ This means that these countries' economic performance is closely linked to global commodity prices, which have been unsustainably low for years. In August 2018, the international coffee price dropped below US\$1.00 per pound for the first time since 2006. At the same time, small farmers reported a short-term break-even cost of 90 cents per pound.³⁴ As a result, farmers incurred debt, sold land, or chose to migrate.³⁵

Many Central American economies are propped up by remittances from citizens abroad. In 2018, Guatemalans living in the United States sent a record-breaking US\$9.3 billion back to their home country, more than 12 percent of Guatemala's GDP for that year.³⁶ In the same year, Salvadorans sent \$5.4 billion in remittances and Hondurans sent \$4.7 billion, more than 20 percent of each country's GDP.³⁷ Remittance increases are fueled by migration, and as a result, more Central Americans are incentivized to leave their countries.

Climate Change

Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador are particularly at risk for climate change due to their location in a semi-arid region known as the Dry Corridor. The Dry Corridor stretches from southern Mexico to Panama, and is one of the world's most susceptible regions to climate change and precipitation variability.³⁸ El Niño is a weather phenomenon that causes temperature and precipitation fluctuations around the globe.³⁹ When El Niño occurs, precipitation drops by 30 to

^b Data is listed for the most recent year available, which was 2018 for Honduras, 2014 for Guatemala, and 2018 for El Salvador.

40 percent and there are long heatwaves.⁴⁰ These periods have disastrous consequences on basic grain crops, which are part of the region's agricultural economy and many small farmers subsistence crops. Approximately half of Central America's 1.9 million small basic grain farmers live in the Dry Corridor.⁴¹

Climate change also affects agricultural production through plagues and diseases. For example, rising global temperatures allow for the spread of coffee rust (*la roya*) to higher elevations. Since 2012, coffee rust has devastated large swaths of Central America's coffee region. The rust starts by turning the coffee leaves bright yellow then black and reducing the amount of coffee cherries. Coffee trees affected by rust usually die within two years. A 2017 study by The University of California, Berkeley showed that the 2012 coffee rust outbreak infected 80,000 hectares of land in Honduras and was estimated to wipe out half the harvests for 30,000 farmers.⁴² Across Mexico and Central America, more than 4 million people depend directly on coffee production for their livelihood.⁴³ As coffee becomes increasingly difficult to produce, these farmers often look to migration as a way to diversify their incomes.

Chapter 2: Mexican Political Structure

Mexican law dictates the country's migratory policy and its response to caravans. The Mexican Constitution (*Constitución Política de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos*) is the country's most important legal document and sets the foundation for the country's laws. The 2011 Migratory Act (*Ley de Migración*) is the primary federal migration law, outlining the roles of each government agency. Additional federal laws, such as the Law of the National Guard (*Ley de la Guardia Nacional*) detail the National Guard's role in Mexico's migratory affairs. The following section highlights Mexico's federal laws and institutions that enforce migratory policy and will also cover the differences that exist among regions and states.

The Legal Framework of Mexico's Migratory Policies

The Mexican Constitution. The Mexican Constitution is the foundation of Mexico's governing structure and informs all subsequent laws and policies. Most importantly for migratory policy, Article 11 of the Constitution allows for movement throughout the country but also allows government authorities to create policies that limit migration.⁴⁴ Table 1 also outlines constitutional articles that are relevant to migration and establish fundamental rights to healthcare, shelter, non-discrimination, and free movement for citizens and foreigners.

Table 1
Relevant Features of the Mexican Constitution Migration

Article Number	Description	Implication
Art. 1	All individuals in Mexico are entitled to the fundamental human rights established by the Constitution and international treaties.	Mexican officials must respect migrants' rights, even when an individual lacks regular migratory status.
Art. 11	Citizens and foreigners are entitled to free movement into, out of, and around the country, unless they are deemed undesirable by health, safety, or immigration policies.	An individual's right to transit through Mexico is dependent upon the government's policy.
Art. 33	Foreigners are entitled to the Constitution's guarantees, including human rights for all individuals within Mexican territory.	Migrants have access to key rights such as education and free speech.
Art. 73, XVI	Mexico's Congress oversees laws regarding nationality, legal status, citizenship, naturalization, and immigration.	Mexico's Congress creates federal migratory laws.

Source: Author elaboration

2011 Migratory Act. In 2011, Mexico's Congress passed the Migratory Act that overhauled the country's migratory policy. The Migratory Act outlines government authorities' roles for apprehending, detaining, and deporting individuals within the country. The Act also ensures that a migrant will receive all of the protections guaranteed under the Constitution and will have access

to education, healthcare, due process, and information regarding their migratory status.⁴⁵ Special provisions are provided to vulnerable groups such as unaccompanied minors, pregnant women, crime victims, and elderly migrants.⁴⁶

While the Migratory Act does not contain any statutes explicitly related to migrant caravans, its contents provide for policy discretion on how officials can respond to them. This includes offering safe passage, restricting geographic movement, or engaging in enforcement operations. It also offers several key protections that are relevant to migrant caravans.⁴⁷ This includes Article 2, which guarantees a special focus toward protecting the vulnerable groups that typically travel in migrant caravans. It also includes Article 66, which guarantees the safety of individuals transiting through Mexico, regardless of their migratory status. Additionally, Article 77 prohibits INM officials from carrying out operations at migrant shelters that are designed to provide aid and safety.

Mexico's Law of Refugees, Complementary Protection, and Political Asylum. Mexico's Law of Refugees, Complementary Protection, and Political Asylum (*Ley Sobre Refugiados, Protección Complementaria y Asilo Político*) states that migrants claiming refugee status must be treated as refugees until proven otherwise.⁴⁸ Under Mexican and international law, this means that refugees have the right to non-refoulement once their application is submitted and cannot be involuntarily returned to their home country. Individuals who are denied refugee status in Mexico, are automatically considered for complementary protection, which allows recipients to remain in Mexico but does not allow them to bring their family into the country.

General Law for Children and Adolescents. Mexico's General Law for Children and Adolescents (*Ley General De Los Derechos De Niñas, Niños Y Adolescentes*) was enacted in 2014 and outlines the procedures for unaccompanied minors within the country. According to the law, unaccompanied minors must be directed to Integral Family Development (*Desarrollo Integral de la Familia, DIF*) shelters until their paperwork is processed.⁴⁹ These DIF shelters are closed-door and minors must stay in them until they are deported back to their country of origin or until they turn 18 years old, if they receive certain protections. Article 98 of the law notes that Mexican officials should provide minors claiming refugee status with special care and attention.⁵⁰

Structure of Federal Migratory Institutions

Mexico has multiple federal ministries and agencies that design and implement the country's migration policy. These include the Ministries of Foreign Affairs (*Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, SRE*), the Ministry of the Interior (*Secretaría de Gobernación, SEGOB*), the National Migration Institute (*Instituto Nacional de Migración, INM*), the Mexican Commission for Refugee Assistance (*Comisión Mexicana de Ayuda a Refugiados, COMAR*), and the National Guard (*Guardia Nacional*). Together, they compose Mexico's federal framework for migratory procedures and coordinate on its implementation.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs. According to Mexico's 2011 Migratory Act, the country's Ministry of Foreign Affairs oversees the country's diplomatic relations, international policymaking, and political asylum claims. However, under Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador, SRE has taken on a leading role in designing the country's migratory policy. In October 2018, Foreign Affairs Secretary Marcelo Ebrard negotiated MPP with the United States, and in June 2019, he

also negotiated increased migratory enforcement to restrict Central American transit through Mexico.

On September 21, 2019, President López Obrador formalized SRE's new role as the lead agency for Mexico's migratory policy.⁵¹ This decree established the Intersectional Commission of Comprehensive Attention to Migration Matters (*Comisión Interseccional de Atención Integral en Materia Migratoria*), and named Secretary Ebrard as the chair and coordinator. As a result, SRE has taken almost full control over migration-related programs and effectively manages Mexico's migration strategy.

The Mexican Agency for International Development and Cooperation (*Agencia Mexicana de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo, AMEXCID*), a decentralized body within SRE, has also influenced Mexico's migration policy. Through programs such as "Sowing Life" (*Sembrando Vida*) and "Youth Building a Future" (*Jóvenes Construyendo el Futuro*), AMEXCID aims to stimulate growth and reduce economic push factors within Central America. AMEXCID's efforts in Central America seek to create 60,000 new jobs.⁵²

Ministry of the Interior. Mexico's Ministry of the Interior oversees the publication of presidential bills and is charged with creating the country's migratory policy.⁵³ This policy is supposed to be developed in the Migration Policy Unit (*Unidad para Política Migratoria*), which tracks and reports international migration trends through Mexico.⁵⁴ Over the past two years, SEGOB has undertaken some caravan-relevant policy efforts. In 2018, SEGOB conducted a migrant caravan study in conjunction with Mexican private businesses to identify opportunities for employing migrants from the caravans.⁵⁵ While in January 2019, SEGOB unveiled its "Migrant Caravan Care Plan" that aimed to address caravans with an emphasis on humanitarian assistance in coordination with the UNHCR, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the United Nations International Organization for Migration (IOM).⁵⁶

National Migration Institute. The National Migration Institute is a decentralized agency within SEGOB that is in charge of Mexico's migratory enforcement, including apprehensions, detention, and deportations.⁵⁷ INM manages the country's borders and processes individuals as they enter the country. On Mexico's southern border, INM officers are the first point of contact with caravans and interact with caravan members at official crossing points along the border or after caravan members enter the country at non-official crossing points. INM oversees migrants' initial processing and documentation and can provide visas and immigration paperwork. Table 2 contains an overview of the various INM immigration documents that are relevant to caravans.

Table 2
Caravan-Relevant INM Documents

Document	Location Provided	Time Frame	Geographic Limitation	Description
Visitor / Transit Permit (<i>Forma Migratoria Múltiple</i> , FMM)	INM offices and ports of entry	180 days or less	None	This permit is Mexico's most utilized transit document. It is used for tourists, short-term visitors, and humanitarian visits (including for individuals returned to Mexico through MPP).
Exit Permit (<i>Oficio de Salida</i>)	INM offices	20 to 30 days	None	This permit regularizes an individual's migratory status and allots a brief time window to exit the country.
Humanitarian Status Visitor Cards (<i>Tarjeta de Visitante por Razones Humanitarias</i> , TVRH)	INM offices (and at other locations under special circumstances)	1 year	None	This status provides freedom of movement and employment opportunities through access to a Unique Population Registry Code (<i>Clave Única de Registro de Población</i> , CURP)
Regional Visitor Card (<i>Tarjeta de Visitante Regional de México</i>)	INM offices at ports of entry and Mexican consulates in Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, and Belize	Valid for 5 years with unlimited entries of up to 7 days each	Chiapas, Campeche, Tabasco, Quintana Roo	This card is designed for visitors from Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, and Belize who are visiting family members, shopping, and/or vacationing in southern Mexico
Border Worker Visitor Card (<i>Tarjeta de Visitante Trabajador Fronterizo</i>)	INM offices at ports of entry and Mexican consulates in Guatemala and Belize	1 year	Chiapas, Campeche, Tabasco, Quintana Roo	This is available to workers from Guatemala or Belize for temporary employment in southern Mexico

Source: Author elaboration

Humanitarian status visitor cards, colloquially referred to as humanitarian visas, have been the most important legal document for caravan members. Article 52 of the 2011 Migratory Act outlines that humanitarian status visitor cards provide recipients with temporary freedom of movement and employment opportunities across Mexico.⁵⁸ Humanitarian status visitor cards also have a Unique Population Registry Code, which grants access to employment, healthcare, and

other essential government services.⁵⁹ In January and February 2019, INM granted temporary humanitarian status cards to individuals traveling in migrant caravans at the southern border and at various points around the country.

INM is also authorized to apprehend individuals who are found to be in violation of Mexican migratory law.⁶⁰ INM is not a law enforcement agency and its officials do not carry weapons. Therefore, it can only work with law enforcement agencies, including Mexico's recently established National Guard and the Federal Police (*Policia Federal*) under special circumstances.⁶¹ According to Article 36 of the National Guard Law, the National Guard may assist in these enforcement efforts.⁶² Similarly, Article 2 of the 2011 Migratory Act directs the National Guard to assist and collaborate with INM in upholding migratory procedures and securing "border zones."⁶³

If INM apprehends caravan members, they are sent to detention centers. Under the 2011 Migratory Act, INM officials are responsible for providing protection, food, and care to individuals in migratory detention centers.⁶⁴ When detaining large groups of migrants, as is common with caravans, officials in southern Mexico have relied on large detention facilities such as the Siglo XXI detention center. While Siglo XXI was designed to hold 900 people, it often holds many times that number.⁶⁵ However to compensate for this overcrowding, INM has also relied on makeshift holding centers. In July 2019, migrants were redirected to a fairground in Acayucan, Veracruz where housing conditions were reported as failing to meet basic standards.⁶⁶

Grupo Beta. Grupo Beta is an agency within INM that provides humanitarian services to migrants.⁶⁷ The agency's mission is "the protection and defense of the human rights of migrants, specialized in providing them orientation, rescue, and first aid, regardless of their nationality or migrant status."⁶⁸ Currently, Grupo Beta has 22 operations in 9 states: Baja California, Sonora, Chihuahua, Coahuila, Tamaulipas, Veracruz, Tabasco, Chiapas, and Oaxaca.⁶⁹ In November 2018, migrants who arrived in Tijuana as part of a caravan and who wanted to return to their home countries could seek help from Grupo Beta.⁷⁰

COMAR. The Mexican Commission for Refugee Assistance is a decentralized agency within SEGOB that collects and evaluates refugee applications in Mexico.⁷¹ The commission has six offices, located in Tapachula, Chiapas; Tenosique, Tabasco; Mexico City; Monterrey, Nuevo León; and Tijuana, Baja California.⁷² COMAR's three southern locations serve as a first point of contact for arriving refugees. For all gaps in coverage, COMAR relies on INM officials to relay refugee status claims and disseminate information on available refugee services.

Over the past six years, COMAR has faced serious challenges amid an increasing number of refugee applications. From 2013 to 2019, the total number of refugee applications spiked from 1,296 to 70,609.⁷³ Conversely, COMAR's modest budget of US\$1.2 million and its 48-person staff has seen marginal gains over the same span despite the growing number of applications.⁷⁴ COMAR receives support from the UNHCR, which has provided more than 100 contractors to help cover refugee services.⁷⁵ However, these UNHCR contractors cannot fulfill all of the same duties as COMAR staff. For example, UNHCR cannot sign refugee status applications, conduct eligibility interviews with refugee status seekers, or provide psychological, legal, or protective services.^{c 76}

^c This means that there are only 42 COMAR employees who can complete all tasks.

Ministry of Security and Citizen Protection and the National Guard. The Ministry of Security and Citizen Protection (*Secretaría de Seguridad y Protección Ciudadana*, SSPC) is in charge of Mexico's public safety and security operations, including oversight of the National Guard. The National Guard was established on February 28, 2019 and began operations on June 30, 2019.⁷⁷ The security force is a hybrid of Army, Navy, and Federal Police personnel, with a total force of 60,000 units. Its mission is to improve public safety by preventing and combating the spread of crime.⁷⁸ However, the Ministry of National Defense (*Secretaría de la Defensa Nacional*, SEDENA) and the Ministry of the Navy (*Secretaría de Marina*, SEMAR) both play significant roles in managing the National Guard's deployment of personnel, allocating equipment and resources, and providing training to new guardsmen.

As previously mentioned, the National Guard is also mandated with supporting INM through operational and checkpoint assistance.⁷⁹ In June 2019, Mexican authorities deployed 6,000 National Guard members to assist in migratory enforcement efforts.⁸⁰ However, while the National Guard can assist INM, it does not have the legal authority to detain migrants.⁸¹ The National Guard is also authorized to provide public security on federal highways and railroads, where caravans generally travel.

Office of the Attorney General. The Office of the Attorney General (*Fiscalía General de la República*, FGR) is responsible for processing human rights complaints at the federal level.⁸² These complaints generally encompass crimes committed by Mexican federal authorities or organized crime. FGR officials typically play a limited role in caravan response efforts because the most common crimes committed against migrants, such as assault and robbery, do not fall under its federal purview.

National System for Integral Family Development. The System for Integral Family Development oversees family welfare programs pertaining to child protection, nutritional support, and family care. This is the agency that is in charge of housing and feeding unaccompanied minors in Mexico. In July 2019, SRE and AMEXCID announced that they would invest in DIF shelters in Tenosique Tabasco and Tapachula, Chiapas.⁸³ These shelters are tasked with housing and serving unaccompanied migrant children entering southern Mexico.

Structure of State Migratory Institutions

Migration is a federal issue, but Mexican states and cities often end up playing a central role. Twenty of the country's 32 states have specific laws addressing migration, and 29 states have offices pertaining to migratory issues, known as Migrant Attention Offices (*Oficinas de Atención a Migrantes*, OFAMs).⁸⁴ These offices are supported by the Migrant Assistance Fund (*Fondo de Apoyo a Migrantes*), which allocated MX\$300 million (US\$16 million) to OFAMs in 2017.⁸⁵

These migration offices are also organized into the National Coordination of State Offices for Migrant Assistance (*Coordinación Nacional de Oficinas Estatales de Atención a Migrantes*, CONOFAM). CONOFAM is an inter-state organization that seeks to boost coordination and standardize migrant response efforts. A CONOFAM liaison is present for all Senate deliberations on migration related issues and the organization relays updates to civil society groups. However,

despite its proximity to active policy making, CONOFAM mainly occupies a symbolic and auxiliary role. There are 27 CONOFAM member states, but two major border states—Tabasco and Nuevo León—have not yet joined the association.⁸⁶

Overall, state and local governments are in charge of providing security to caravans and some essential humanitarian services such as access to shelter, healthcare, and food. State governors can command state police forces to safeguard migrants' physical integrity and rights within their territory and preserve peace and order.⁸⁷ State police also work in conjunction with state attorney general offices to hold any persecutors' accountable. States and cities may designate areas for large groups of people to stay while in transit and provide targeted services for populations in need of special support.

Southern States. The Mexican states of Chiapas and Tabasco share a border with Guatemala and serve as the primary entry point for migrant caravans into Mexico. In 2019, more than 170,000 migrants were apprehended in Chiapas, representing a 31 percent increase in arrivals from 2018.⁸⁸ Under the Chiapas and Tabasco constitutions, state agencies are mandated to protect the labor, health, security, and judicial rights of all individuals within their territories, including migrants transiting through either state.⁸⁹ In 2017, there are ten DIF shelters for migrant children in Chiapas, Tabasco, and Oaxaca, representing more than 25 percent of the agency's shelters nationwide.⁹⁰

Interior States. Collectively, 20 states form Mexico's interior, and each state could theoretically receive caravans depending on the route.^d If a caravan has arrived to these interior states, it is because the Mexican government has allowed for some form of transit through the country. If INM issues legal documents to caravan members at the southern border that permit travel throughout the country, the caravan will likely disband before reaching these interior states. However, if INM does not issue travel documents, interior states will bear the burden of providing food, shelter, security, and additional humanitarian assistance to large numbers of people in caravans.

Northern Border. There are six Mexican states that make up the U.S.-Mexico border: Baja California, Sonora, Chihuahua, Coahuila, Nuevo León, and Tamaulipas. Mexico's northern border is the final geographic area for caravans traveling to the United States, including both those traveling as a group and those traveling in smaller groups after receiving migratory documents. With the exception of the February 2019 caravan to Piedras Negras, migrant caravans have largely avoided traveling to the northeastern part of the country (Coahuila and Tamaulipas) due to the threat of abduction, violence, and disappearance from the Northeast Cartel (*Cartel del Noreste*) and the Gulf Cartel (*Cartel del Golfo*). Instead they generally travel further west to Tijuana or Mexicali.⁹¹

Once caravan members reach the U.S.-Mexico border, they are subjected to “metering” and have to wait for weeks or months if they plan to seek asylum. Metering is a U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) policy, whereby the agency does not accept asylum seekers when they arrive at a port of entry but rather accepts only a small number of asylum seekers each day. Asylum seekers generally form or join a waitlist to organize themselves as they wait to seek asylum in the United States.

^d Sinaloa, Durango, Zacatecas, San Luis Potosí, Nayarit, Aguascalientes, Guanajuato, Jalisco, Querétaro, Hidalgo, Colima, Michoacán, Morelos, State of Mexico, Tlaxcala, Puebla, Guerrero, Puebla, Veracruz, Oaxaca

Additionally, since January 2019, asylum seekers are now sent back to Mexico during their U.S. asylum cases under the Migrant Protection Protocols (MPP). As of May 2020, Mexico had received more than 64,000 individuals who were returned to Mexican border cities through the program. All of these individuals require shelter and basic necessities while they wait for months.⁹² This means that arriving caravans, with hundreds or thousands of members, would find that basic services at the northern border are already severely strained.

Civil Society and Non-State Actors

Civil society organizations are a critical source of humanitarian services for caravans, providing food aid, legal assistance, shelter, and medical care. These organizations are both locally and internationally managed and have a wide range of resources and capacities. However, civil society organizations face constraints when it comes to providing services to large numbers of migrants. This is especially the case with large caravans, which generally utilize all available housing and resources.

Shelter. Civil society organizations have provided shelter to migrant caravans, especially in major cities.⁹³ Some of these shelters provide resources such as food and clothing that are sourced through private donations. Appendix B provides an overview of 23 migrant shelters within the Documentation Network of Migrant Defense Organizations (*Red de Documentación de las Organizaciones Defensoras de Migrantes*, REDODEM), which provide various types of assistance to people in transit in Mexico.⁹⁴

Health. Civil society organizations also administer medical services to members of migrant caravans. In November 2018, the Mexican Red Cross provided aid to caravan members in Mexico City with a staff of 30 doctors and emergency medical technicians.⁹⁵ At the same time, Missionaries of Risen Christ tended to migrants with HIV/AIDS and the Mexican Institute for Emergency Psychology (*Instituto Mexicano para la Psicología de Emergencia*) provided psychiatric counseling for victims of sexual assault.⁹⁶ Doctors Without Borders (*Médicos Sin Fronteras*, MSF) have ongoing operations in the northern border cities of Reynosa, Matamoros, Nuevo Laredo, Tijuana, and Mexicali and provides basic healthcare and psychosocial services for migrants overcoming trauma.⁹⁷ For many migrants, these services may be the only healthcare that they receive due to the costs of seeking treatments at clinics and hospitals.

Legal Assistance. Civil society organizations also provide legal assistance to caravans. This assistance may include helping caravan members to apply for migratory documents within Mexico or helping them to report crimes. Along the northern border, civil society groups provide legal service support for both the Mexican and U.S. immigration and protection systems. Some Mexican-based legal organizations such as Al Otro Lado and Casa Cornelia work pro bono to support migrants' U.S. legal claims, while others provide support from the United States.

Chapter 3: Migrant Caravans in Mexico

Migrant caravans represent a shift in Central Americans' methods of migration to the United States. Caravans make visible the number of people in transit and generate media and political attention. They have brought U.S. pressure to stop their movement and fostered domestic discontent within Mexico. The situation has also pushed Mexico into a challenging position, with both former Mexican President Enrique Peña Nieto and current President Andrés Manuel López Obrador alternating between passive and repressive responses to caravans in the country.⁹⁸ The following chapter will discuss the history of migrant caravans in Mexico and detail recent major caravans, including their organizers, demographics, transportation routes, and Mexico's policy responses.

The First Caravans

For decades, migrant caravans have moved through Mexico. In the early 2000s, the Caravan of Mothers of Missing Migrants (*Caravana de Madres de Migrantes Desaparecidos*) formed in Nicaragua as a response to migrants who had disappeared during their migration journeys. In these caravans, women of all ages—mothers, grandmothers, sisters, and aunts—began leaving Central America in groups to search for their missing loved ones and to raise awareness about the dangers of traveling through the region. The Caravan of Mothers of Missing Migrants continues the ritual every year, with the 2019 caravan departing from Mexico City.⁹⁹

In 2010, caravans known as Migrants Way of the Cross (*Viacrucis Migrantes*) began to form and travel north under the auspices of local Catholic communities. These caravans were fashioned after Catholic's Stations of the Cross processions, which mark Jesus's final days and were common around Easter.¹⁰⁰ These caravans were organized by individual Catholic parishes, composed of a few hundred people, and were marked by intentional prayer and reflection to call attention to the plight of migrants. During these initial caravans, the Mexican government adopted a limited response.¹⁰¹ Since the Migrants Way of the Cross groups did not form for migratory transit purposes, they received limited political and media attention.

However, since 2017, migrant caravans have increased in size and notoriety and no longer carry the religious connotations of the earlier caravans. Migrants primarily join these caravans for safety, cost effectiveness, and to help bypass authorities who could deport them. Since 2017 there have been one to two major caravans per year that have gained international media attention.

April 2017

The April 2017 caravan set out from Tecún Umán, Guatemala to transit through Mexico. While only a couple hundred members in size, this smaller caravan was the first to embark with the initial intention of reaching the U.S.-Mexico border. It relied heavily on civil society groups, from its initial organization, transit through Mexico, and arrival in northern border states. Given the caravan's small size, it did not attract substantial media attention.

Organizers. Pueblo Sin Fronteras—an immigrant rights group—played a significant organizing role in the April 2017 caravan. Pueblo Sin Fronteras was founded in Chicago, Illinois in 2009 and

promotes accompaniment, humanitarian assistance, leadership development, and the recognition of human rights.¹⁰² The group provided migrants with travel information and fundraised approximately US\$46,000 for caravan transportation, food, and lodging expenses.¹⁰³ Additionally, on April 9, 2017, Pueblo Sin Fronteras created a Facebook event that outlined the journey's details.¹⁰⁴ However, the group's representatives insisted that "migrants have decided for themselves where to travel and when to protest, and that it accompanies those who have already decided to reach the United States."¹⁰⁵

Size and Trajectory. On April 9, 2017, a caravan of 200 people left Tapachula, Chiapas, en route to the U.S.-Mexico border.¹⁰⁶ Coinciding with the Christian Holy Week, this viacrucis caravan carried a religious message: solidarity through faith could lead them away from persecution and structural inequities.¹⁰⁷ On April 16, 2017, Easter Sunday, the group split at Ixtepec, Oaxaca with some migrants electing to ride "The Beast" (*La Bestia*)—the trains running north and south across the country—and other migrants traveling by foot.¹⁰⁸ Both groups reunited in Coatzacoalcos, Veracruz, where they pressed on together to the U.S. port of entry at Tijuana.¹⁰⁹ On May 8, 2017, the group of then 350 people reached the U.S.-Mexico border near Tijuana, and 108 presented themselves to CBP to apply for asylum.¹¹⁰

April 2018

The April 2018 caravan was the first large-scale caravan to capture international attention. President Donald Trump expressed strong disapproval of the caravan and railed against Mexico's caravan response on his Twitter account. Before the caravan had reached Mexico City, INM officials began distributing transit permits to disperse the caravan. This approach shrunk the caravan's size, but its members were allowed to continue traveling onwards to the United States with migratory documents.

Organizers. Similar to the April 2017 caravan, Pueblo Sin Fronteras organized and accompanied the April 2018 caravan.¹¹¹

Size and Trajectory. On March 25, 2018, around 1,200 participants left Tapachula, Chiapas near the Mexico-Guatemala border and headed north.¹¹² On this date, about 80 percent of the caravan members were from Honduras, with 400 women, 300 minors, and 20 youth who identified as LGBTQ+.¹¹³

Before leaving Tapachula, the migrants had organized themselves into groups of 10 to 15 people, with a leader designated for each group. Five groups were then banded into a sector. Organizers from Pueblo Sin Fronteras led the way but it was ultimately up to migrants themselves to reach their destination.¹¹⁴ The migrants traveled by foot, bus, hitchhiking, and atop trains.¹¹⁵ Pueblo Sin Fronteras estimated that two-thirds of the participants planned to cross into the United States to seek asylum or seek legal status in Mexico if they were unable to enter the United States.¹¹⁶

For a week, the caravan made steady progress moving through southern Mexico. Members camped at a sports complex in Matías Romero, Oaxaca, and relied on food and water donated by local residents. They slept on the ground and in the bleachers of a soccer stadium.¹¹⁷ In Matías Romero, Oaxaca, the Mexican government also began distributing transit permits to encourage the caravan

to disband. These transit permits gave migrants 20 days to leave the country or 30 days to formally apply for legal status in Mexico.¹¹⁸ On April 4, 2018, the caravan's numbers started to decline, shrinking from 1,200 members to 900 as some received the transit permits.

After some migrants received permits, the remaining members continued north. During the first week of April 2018, the remaining caravan members left Oaxaca and traveled north toward Mexico City. Along the way, caravan members slept in town plazas or created makeshift camps for the night. Local townspeople and churches fed them. Organizers expected the caravan to dissolve in Mexico City, but a portion of the original group continued north with stops in Guadalajara and Hermosillo.¹¹⁹ On April 29, 2018, approximately 150 migrants reached the U.S.-Mexico border at Tijuana.¹²⁰

Figure 3
April 2018 Caravan Route



*Source: Author elaboration*¹²¹

Regional Response. On April 1, 2018, the caravan caught Trump's attention, after he heard about it on a Fox News television show.¹²² In response, Trump began tweeting about the approaching caravan, writing, "Getting more dangerous. "Caravans" coming. Republicans must go to Nuclear Option to pass tough laws NOW. NO MORE DACA DEAL!"¹²³ A second tweet said, "Mexico is doing very little, if not NOTHING, at stopping people from flowing into Mexico through their Southern Border, and then into the U.S. They laugh at our dumb immigration laws. They must stop the big drug and people flows, or I will stop their cash cow, NAFTA. NEED WALL!"¹²⁴ The Trump Administration also started metering people at the U.S.- Mexico border in response to the April 2018 caravan.¹²⁵

Mexico had its own response to the April 2018 caravan. On April 4, 2018, the Mexican Senate unanimously passed a nonbinding agreement urging former President Enrique Peña Nieto to suspend cooperation with the United States on immigration and security matters “as long as President Trump does not conduct himself with the civility and respect that the Mexican people deserve.”¹²⁶ Mexico's Foreign Minister Luis Videgaray Caso also responded to President Trump with his own tweet, writing, “Every day Mexico and the U.S. work together on migration throughout the region. Facts clearly reflect this. An inaccurate news report should not serve to question this strong cooperation. Upholding human dignity and rights is not at odds with the rule of law. Happy Easter.”¹²⁷

October 2018

The October 2018 caravan was the highest profile and most controversial caravan to travel through Mexico. It was the first caravan to begin outside of Mexico and the first to occur outside the Christian holy week in April. It brought thousands of migrants to the U.S.-Mexico border and fundamentally shifted U.S. and Mexican public opinion regarding border enforcement and migrant caravans. By the time the caravan ended in Tijuana, Central American migrants were increasingly recognizing caravans as a viable method of migration, while many Mexican and American policymakers viewed them as aggressive and invasive.

Organizers. It is still not clear who organized the October 2018 caravan. Three days into the caravan's journey, Guatemalan officials arrested Bartolo Fuentes—a former Honduran journalist and lawmaker who was traveling with the caravan—and accused him of inciting the movement.¹²⁸ Fuentes, an ardent supporter of migrants' rights, denied organizing the caravan but instead identified himself as a guide and adviser for migrants in need of support.¹²⁹ Since then, no individuals or organizations have been identified as the caravan's organizers, but several theories and allegations have emerged without credible verification. On October 10, 2018, Fuentes asserted that a false Facebook account posing as an established Honduran migrant group had generated initial interest in the caravan.¹³⁰

Size and Trajectory. On October 12, 2018, the caravan left San Pedro Sula, Honduras. The following day, the *Associated Press* reported that the initial group totaled around 160 people—mostly composed of women, children, and families—who were traveling on foot.¹³¹ As the caravan progressed, the movement attracted more migrants. Upon reaching the Honduras-Guatemala border, just three days into the journey, the caravan had grown tenfold to an estimated 1,600 people.¹³²

After crossing into Guatemala, the caravan stayed overnight in the town of Esquipulas before continuing by foot to Guatemala City.¹³³ Local officials then escorted the caravan for 30 miles from the capital to Chiquimula.¹³⁴ On October 20, 2018, when the caravan reached the Guatemala-Mexico border, UN Deputy Spokesperson Farhan Haq estimated that it included around 7,233 migrants.¹³⁵ Yet while Guatemala's authorities allowed the larger caravan to pass through its territory, it blocked the movement of smaller migrant groups. On October 28, 2018, Guatemalan police stopped a group of 300 Salvadoran migrants that entered the country.¹³⁶

Once the caravan reached the Mexico-Guatemala border, Guatemalan officials installed fences and barricades in order to obstruct mass entry onto the international bridge. While on the Mexican side, former President Enrique Peña Nieto mobilized INM and Federal Police personnel along the border and set up barricades on the Mexican side of the international bridge. On October 18, 2018, SEGOB and SRE formally requested UNHCR assistance with refugee relief, as the caravan approached the Mexican border.¹³⁷

The arriving caravan filled the streets of Tecún Uman around the Guatemala-Mexico international bridge. After a standoff with Guatemalan officials, the caravan members tore down the barricades that had blocked the bridge or climbed over them. Mexican Federal Police quickly sealed the international bridge with additional fencing and formed a human wall with riot shields and tear gas. Some migrants attempted to break the Federal Police's line by pushing through and throwing rocks but were unable to pass. A Honduran man was killed and multiple other migrants, police officers, and journalists were hurt as the two groups clashed.¹³⁸

After several hours, the migrant caravan's members bypassed the barriers by swimming or ferrying across the river, and Mexican Federal Police and INM agents did not attempt to stop them. After entering Mexico, the caravan regrouped and began walking north toward Tapachula. The caravan members traveled primarily by foot and carried their belongings. Access to food, drinking water, and medical services remained limited and migrants slept along the side of the road or, when available, in state or community-sponsored shelters.

As the caravan moved further into Mexico, some communities provided a warm welcome to the caravan, handing out bottled water, tortillas, tarps, and medication.¹³⁹ In the town of Pijijiapan, Chiapas, located a little more than 70 miles from the Mexico-Guatemala border, community members donated around 14,000 sandwiches and raised US\$8,000 through private donations in order to provide a single day's food for the caravan.¹⁴⁰ However, other areas of the country were not as welcoming toward migrants.

As the caravan reached Mexico's interior, Mexican federal officials shifted their policy response. On October 27, 2018, while the caravan was in Arriaga, Chiapas, President Peña Nieto changed course and unveiled his "You Are At Home" (*Estás en Tu Casa*) plan. In it, the president suggested that migrants could now access shelters, medical care, education, and work visas in the state of Chiapas.¹⁴¹ Such claims were misleading, however, as the "You Are At Home" plan only restated existing laws and did not offer any new accommodations. This approach sought to contain the caravan in the states of Oaxaca and Chiapas. Around 1,700 caravan members decided to remain in these states, while the rest of the caravan pressed on northward toward the United States.¹⁴²

During the caravan's journey through Mexico, its size helped deter criminal actors from targeting its members, but kidnappings and exploitation still occurred, especially in high-risk zones such as Puebla and Veracruz.¹⁴³ In early November, two trucks carrying about 65 migrants from the caravan reportedly disappeared in the state of Veracruz.¹⁴⁴ Mexican officials investigated the case but were unable to locate the missing migrants. There were also migrant injuries from car crashes, hit and runs, and migrants falling from overcrowded trucks and train cars.¹⁴⁵ Mexican federal officials offered protections, including bus rides and police escorts, for some migrants between Veracruz and Mexico City.¹⁴⁶

On November 5, 2018, the caravan reached Mexico City and city leaders received the members in the converted Jesús Martínez "Palillo" Stadium. In early November 2018, the Estadio Jesús Martínez "Palillo" Stadium, located in Mexico City, sheltered up to an estimated 5,000 migrants.¹⁴⁷ The stadium had three large tents arranged for families with small children and the elderly.¹⁴⁸ The stadium served as a shelter and international and local civil society groups distributed food, clothing, and travel information to the migrants.¹⁴⁹ Local doctors and dentists also provided free checkups and medical procedures and community members provided food and clothing.

There was a similar response in the caravan's following stops. In Querétaro—located 135 miles north of Mexico City—city officials converted another stadium into housing.¹⁵⁰ While in Guadalajara, the Jalisco State Commission for Human Rights (*Comisión Estatal de Derechos Humanos de Jalisco*, CEDHJ) housed caravan members in the Benito Juárez Auditorium. With the assistance of the UNHCR and local civil society organizations, CEDHJ provided food, clothing, medical services, internet access, and help finding loved ones who were separated in transit.¹⁵¹

After departing Mexico City, a group of 400 migrants including 80 LGBTQ+ members split off from the caravan. The group's split was on account of discriminatory treatment by local residents and their fellow travelers.¹⁵² Fearing for their safety, most of the LGBTQ+ members coalesced to form their own caravan and used this platform to highlight the added dangers in transiting as a member of their community. A group of U.S. and Mexican LGBTQ+ advocates covered the group's bus fares and they were the first caravan members to reach Tijuana.¹⁵³

On November 15, 2018, after more than a month of travel, the caravan reached Tijuana. An estimated 6,000 migrants, the majority of the caravan, were housed in the Unidad Deportiva Benito Juárez Sports Complex that was repurposed as a shelter.¹⁵⁴ The municipal government opened the complex and within a few days, rain turned the campgrounds into mud, which forced migrants to move from the shelter onto the street because concrete made for better sleeping.¹⁵⁵ Overflowed portable toilets, mounds of garbage, and limited options for bathing and other hygienic needs also posed challenges to migrants.¹⁵⁶ According to Tijuana's Government Secretary, Leopoldo Guerrero, the municipal government spent \$27,119 each day on food, water, clothes, and services for migrants and refugees.¹⁵⁷ The federal government's role was more limited, with Mexican soldiers cooking two meals a day with provisions provided by the city.¹⁵⁸ A health assessment of the caravan indicated that 2,267 migrants in Tijuana were suffering from diseases, including respiratory infection, tuberculosis, chickenpox, skin infections, and HIV/AIDS.¹⁵⁹

The Tijuana reception to the caravan, however, was not completely positive. On November 18, 2018, 300 people gathered in Tijuana for an anti-caravan protest with a "Tijuana First" slogan. The protestors demanded that the Mexican government take action against the caravan's arrival in the city.¹⁶⁰

Figure 4
October 2018 Caravan Route



Source: Author elaboration

Individuals seeking to claim asylum in the United States had to put their names onto the asylum waitlist, which already had 2,800 people waiting before the caravan's arrival.¹⁶¹ On November 26, 2018, after 11 days of waiting in Tijuana, some migrants grew restless and attempted to bypass the official port of entry. What started as a protest against U.S. migratory policy led to a group of 500 migrants rushing the border.¹⁶² After rocks were thrown at some CBP agents, migrants were met with teargas and other non-lethal deterrents.¹⁶³ INM officials responded by deporting 98 migrants.¹⁶⁴ Furthermore, U.S. Customs and Border Protection arrested 69 migrants who crossed into U.S. territory and closed the Tijuana-San Diego border for several hours.¹⁶⁵

Regional Response. The October 2018 caravan received significant attention in the United States. As soon as the caravan began mobilizing in San Pedro Sula, U.S. media outlets began covering its advances. President Donald Trump also began following the caravan and on October 10, 2018, he declared the migrants to be an "invasion of our country," stoking public and political scrutiny of the caravan.¹⁶⁶ On October 16, 2018, Trump escalated his rhetoric by threatening to cut U.S. assistance to Guatemala and El Salvador if they did not do more to block its movement.¹⁶⁷ There were accusations that this heightened coverage and scrutiny was in part due to the caravan's close timing with the U.S. congressional midterm elections on November 6, 2018.

The U.S. government also took other steps to address the caravan. On November 19, 2018, President Trump ordered the deployment of 7,000 National Guard troops to "harden" the stretch of border between Tijuana and Mexicali.¹⁶⁸ A week later, on November 26, 2018, the presence of troops was used to deter migrants at the Tijuana-San Diego border. The October 2018 caravan also

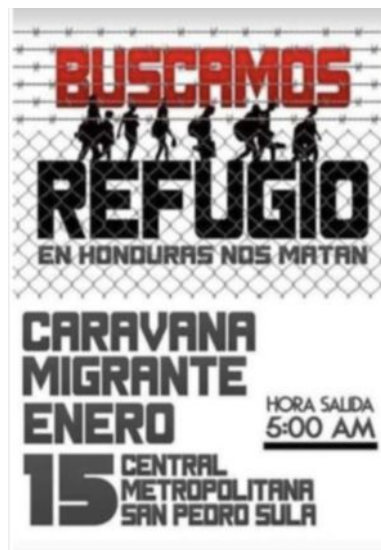
further polarized Americans' public opinion on caravans and immigration. On November 19, 2018, a Monmouth University survey showed that 54 percent of Americans viewed the migrant caravan as a threat.¹⁶⁹

January 2019

The January 2019 caravan was less organized and cohesive than previous migrant caravans. Caravan members followed the same initial portion of the route, traveling from San Pedro Sula, Honduras to Tapachula, Mexico. However, at that point, Mexican officials under the new Andrés Manuel López Obrador administration began to provide humanitarian visas to caravan members. The caravan quickly disbanded into smaller groups that traveled to Tijuana and Piedras Negras.

Organizers. It is unclear who organized the January 2019 caravan. The caravan's initial information was listed on a flyer that was shared through Facebook and WhatsApp. The flyer noted the caravan's start date as January 15, 2019, and the time of departure as 5:00am. It said, "We seek refuge, in Honduras they kill us" ("*Buscamos refugio, en honduras nos matan*").¹⁷⁰ This phrase became the caravan's motto and was repeated throughout the duration of the journey.

Figure 5
January 2019 Caravan Flyer



Source: Univision

Size and Trajectory. The January 2019 caravan left in staggered groups. On Monday, January 14, 2019, at 8:30pm, the first group of approximately 2,000 people departed from the San Pedro Sula bus station.¹⁷¹ Shortly after departing, the rain forced caravan members to break into groups, with some people having only traveled 15 miles from their starting point. Some migrants hitched rides and others camped on the highway as they waited for night to pass.¹⁷² The following day, on Tuesday, January 15, 2019, a second group departed from San Pedro Sula at 5:00am, with an estimated several hundred to a thousand people. This second group predominantly took buses,

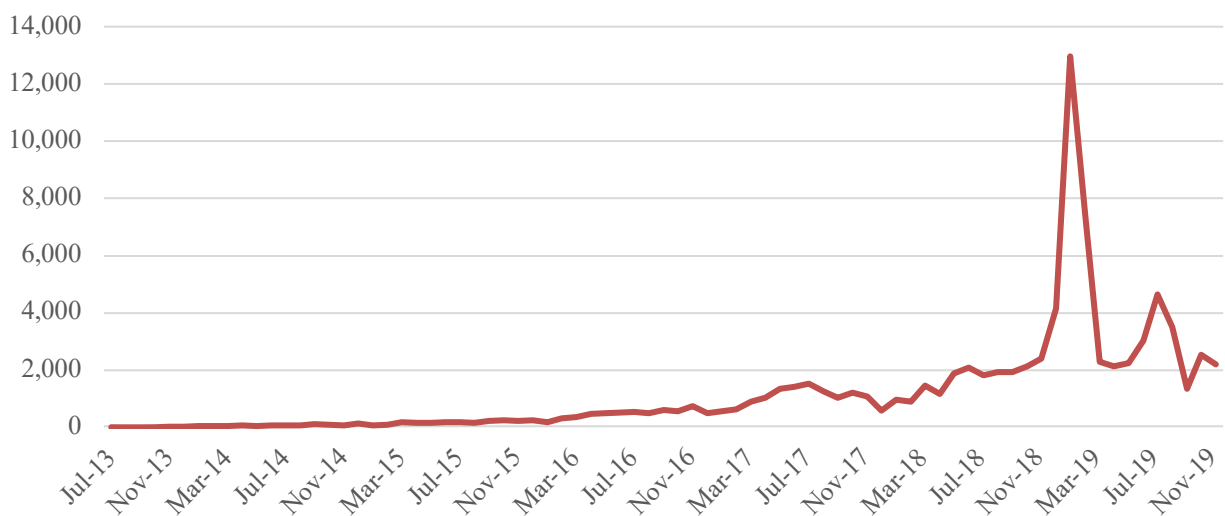
trucks, or walked to the Agua Caliente border crossing with Guatemala.¹⁷³ On Wednesday, January 16, 2019, a third group of 100 people left San Salvador, El Salvador to join this caravan.¹⁷⁴

On Tuesday, January 15, 2019 and Wednesday, January 16, 2019, the Honduran parts of the caravan began arriving at the Honduras-Guatemala Agua Caliente border crossing.¹⁷⁵ By this time, estimates of the caravan size ranged from 800 to 3,000 people.¹⁷⁶ At the border crossing, 150 Honduran police officers confronted migrants and attempted to block their entry into Guatemala.¹⁷⁷ The caravan prevailed, with many chanting “out with JOH” (*fuera JOH*), referring to Honduran President Juan Orlando Hernández.¹⁷⁸

Once Honduran police eventually stepped aside, another 200 Guatemalan police and soldiers blocked the border crossing.¹⁷⁹ On January 15, 2019, caravan members were stopped for several hours before being allowed to enter Guatemala.¹⁸⁰ Eventually, around 150 Honduran migrants were denied entry to Guatemala for not having proper documentation, another 350 Hondurans were detained, and only 360 migrants could continue their journey.¹⁸¹ At least 60 unaccompanied minors were stopped at the border, with some sent back to Honduras and others placed in the custody of Guatemalan welfare agencies.¹⁸²

In a shift from previous caravans, Mexico’s federal government began processing humanitarian visas for the first 500 caravan members who arrived at the border on January 17, 2019.¹⁸³ News of fast-tracked humanitarian visas spread and by January 23, 2019, more than 10,000 people—primarily from Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador—had requested them.¹⁸⁴ On January 28, 2019, Mexican officials declared they would no longer fast-track humanitarian visas because it was “too successful” and the influx of migrants strained the system.¹⁸⁵ By this point, INM had issued approximately 12,961 humanitarian visas at Mexico's southern border near Tapachula mostly to Honduran migrants.¹⁸⁶

Figure 6
Humanitarian Visas Issued by Month (July 2013–November 2019)



Source: INM data¹⁸⁷

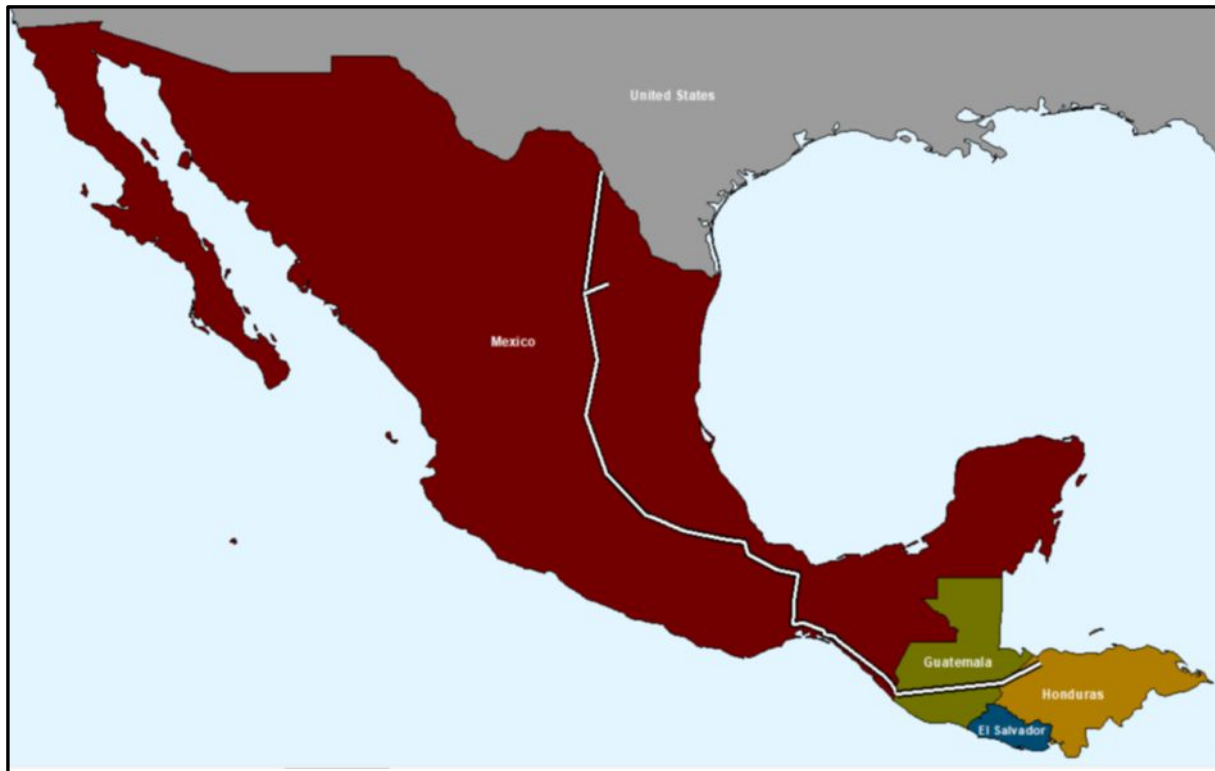
After some members of the migrant caravan members received humanitarian visas, approximately 1,700 traveled to Tijuana. However, another group splintered off before receiving humanitarian visas and journeyed instead to Piedras Negras, Coahuila.¹⁸⁸ This was the first caravan to travel to the Texas-Mexico border. On February 4, 2019, 1,600 individuals, mostly from Honduras, reached Piedras Negras in 46 chartered buses from the Coahuilan cities of Saltillo and Artega.¹⁸⁹ DIF Coahuila counted 46 unaccompanied minors, aged 15 to 17 years old.¹⁹⁰

In preparation for the caravan, Piedras Negras municipal authorities converted an abandoned factory into a shelter. The authorities also provided meals, sleeping mats, blankets, and internet access. In total, the shelter cost the city government US\$260,000 per month to operate.¹⁹¹ Coahuila Governor Miguel Angel Riquelme noted that authorities were doing everything to ensure migrants' basic needs without affecting the 150,000 Piedras Negras residents.¹⁹²

However, tensions within the facility rose after one week. Migrants could not leave the shelter unless INM provided them with a humanitarian visa, and INM was only providing a handful of visas each day. Some migrants within the caravan began rioting in an attempt to leave the makeshift shelter, leading to a swift response from Coahuila authorities to disband the caravan.¹⁹³ The government relocated migrants to larger cities throughout the country, sending 140 migrants to Saltillo and another 150 to Reynosa. Other caravan members were bussed to Ciudad Juárez, Monterrey, and Hermosillo.¹⁹⁴

Regional Response. When the caravan approached Piedras Negras, the U.S. Department of Defense sent 250 active duty troops across the border to Eagle Pass, Texas. These troops were part of the larger Crisis Reactionary Force, which included military police, medical personnel, and engineers from Arizona.¹⁹⁵ At the state level, the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) joined U.S. Border Patrol agents in Eagle Pass to deter migrants from crossing the Rio Grande. Texas Governor Greg Abbott tweeted that DPS's presence—which included boats and planes—was part of the overarching border strategy to enforce the law.¹⁹⁶ Yet at the same time, U.S. Customs and Border Protection allowed less than 15 people a day to cross the international bridge and seek asylum, and did not assign additional personnel to expedite the processing of asylum claims.

Figure 7
January 2019 Caravan Route



Source: Author elaboration¹⁹⁷

October 2019

In October 2019, African migrants from Liberia, Togo, Republic of Congo, Mali, and Ghana launched the first caravan composed mostly of people from outside the Western Hemisphere. For nearly two months, African migrants had pitched tents and camped in front of the Siglo XXI facility in Tapachula, requesting transit visas to cross through Mexico. When they were denied the visas, these individuals began to organize and move north as a caravan. This time around, the López Obrador administration met the caravan with sustained INM and National Guard resistance, blocking its ability to advance.

Organizers. African migrants organized into a caravan in Tapachula, Chiapas with the help of the Center for Human Rights Fray Matías de Cordova (*Centro de Derechos Humanos Fray Matías de Córdova*), a Tapachula-based organization.

Motivation. Over the past years, African migrants arriving in Tapachula could receive a transit permit, which would provide them 20 days to leave the country.^{c 198} INM would provide these

^c Similar to Latin American migrants, African migrants use a network of smugglers to reach the United States. There are two popular routes for African migrants to reach Mexico. The first route begins with flying into Ecuador and then traveling by bus and foot through Colombia, Panama, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Honduras, and Guatemala. The

permits to African migrants arriving in the country instead of deporting them, since it was prohibitively costly to deport them or Mexico did not often have a consular presence in their countries. From January to July 2019, Mexican authorities apprehended 4,779 African migrants but deported only two.¹⁹⁹ Most migrants would use the transit permit to travel to the U.S. border to seek asylum. However, in June 2019, INM stopped providing these transit visas, after U.S. pressure to stop migration.^{f 200} When INM did offer transit visas, INM said that the African migrants could only leave Mexico through its southern border.

As the migrants waited, they began to run out of resources. Some slept in the street, others went hungry. Eventually they organized to form the Assembly of African Migrants in Tapachula.²⁰¹ The Assembly of African Migrants in Tapachula drafted and published an official press release that outlined the humanitarian situation, the group's demands, and migrants' struggles. If their demands were not met, they threatened to leave en masse to the U.S. border.²⁰² The official press release was delivered to INM offices but after weeks of waiting, the caravan received a response stating that their demands would not be met.

Size and Trajectory. On October 12, 2019, nearly 3,000 migrants left Tapachula.²⁰³ However, they did not get very far. After 20 miles, INM and the National Guard surrounded the caravan, boarding migrants into vans, and sending them back to Tapachula. That same day, INM released a statement that said "each member of the caravan will be treated in a personalized manner" and that some will be returned to their countries of origin.²⁰⁴ This marked the first time that the López Obrador administration responded publicly to the African Caravan.

January 2020

The January 2020 caravan was the first Central American caravan to form since MPP was extended across the entire U.S.-Mexico border. After leaving Honduras, the caravan quickly fractured into two large groups, with each traveling via distinct routes. Along the way, Guatemalan officials attempted to stop the caravans' progression and Mexican authorities refused to allow the caravan to enter or stay in Mexico. The López Obrador administration's response to the January 2020 caravan solidifies its shift from humanitarian responses to punitive actions against migrant caravans.

Organizers. It is unclear who organized the January 2020 caravan. However, in early January 2020, the January 2019 caravan flyer (see Figure 5) began circulating again in WhatsApp groups and on Facebook.²⁰⁵ Migrants who had previously traveled on caravans or made the trip to the U.S.-Mexico border took on organizing roles.^{g 206}

second route begins with sailing from the coast of Africa to Brazil and then beginning a similar journey through Venezuela, Colombia, and Central America.

^f Mexico's response to the caravan came amid a context of heightened U.S. pressure to tighten its borders. In June 2019, President Trump threatened Mexico with tariffs at an incremental rate of 5 percent each month until it reached 25 percent in October unless the country did more to halt migration. The tariffs were then called off when the two nations reached a series of agreements, including deploying the National Guard to the southern border.

^g On December 31, 2019, Mexico's Secretary of the Interior Olga Sánchez Cordero confirmed that the Mexican government was preparing for the arrival of a new caravan.

Size and Trajectory. On January 15th, January 16th, and January 31st, three small caravans departed from San Pedro Sula, Honduras. While on January 20th, another caravan departed from San Salvador, El Salvador.²⁰⁷ These groups faced immediate challenges entering and passing through Guatemala. Guatemalan police, assisted by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement officials, stopped a group of approximately 300 migrants walking along the road, put them on buses, and took them back to the Honduras border.²⁰⁸ Guatemalan police also stopped other migrants traveling through the country and told them that they had to register and receive proper documentation.^{h 209}

Some caravan members were able to avoid detection in Guatemala and continue onward toward Mexico. However, the caravan split into two groups in Guatemala headed to separate Mexico-Guatemala border crossings: El Ceibo on the northern side and Tecún Umán on the southern side. On January 18 around 600 people arrived in El Ceibo and around 4,000 people arrived in Tecún Umán. On the Mexican side of both border crossings, INM agents, the National Guard, and members of the Army were stationed to block the caravan's passage.²¹⁰

Figure 8
January 2020 Caravan Route



Source: Author elaboration

^h In Morales, Guatemala, police stopped a group of 300 migrants and told them that they would have to go to the border station and properly register. In Esquipulas, Guatemala, police reached an agreement with a group of 600 migrants to transport them back to the border and then return them to the shelter once they had proper documentation.

In Tecún Uman, on January 18, 2020 at 8:00am, the National Guard was stationed on the international bridge.²¹¹ The caravan began arriving just after 8:30am and by 9:15am, the National Guard closed the bridge's gate after a clash with migrants.²¹² At around 10:00am, Mexican officials began to allow groups of 20 people into the country, telling them that they would get work visas and possibly asylum.²¹³ By January 19, 2020, Mexican authorities reported that 1,087 migrants had entered Mexico through this manner, with the majority ending up in deportation proceedings.²¹⁴

However, most of the caravan's migrants opted to wait in Guatemala.²¹⁵ On January 20, 2020, at around 5:00am the migrant caravan again marched to the bridge.²¹⁶ Representatives from the caravan presented a petition for President López Obrador to allow for the caravan's travel through Mexico, giving him three hours to respond.²¹⁷ INM read and rejected the letter, saying that entry into Mexico must be through regular migration channels.²¹⁸ Instead INM offered to allow the migrants into Mexico in small groups but migrants rejected this proposal since they feared that they would be deported.²¹⁹

On January 20, 2020, in the afternoon, thousands of people attempted to cross the river Suchiate as a wall of National Guard members stood on the banks.²²⁰ As the migrants reached Mexico, they began to clash with the National Guard, with both sides pushing, shoving, and throwing rocks.²²¹ Some migrants bypassed the National Guard, and journalists published videos on Twitter of INM officers chasing them down Mexican highways.²²² By January 22, 2020, many migrants traveled by bus back to their homes, while others attempted to cross through other parts of the border.²²³ On that same day, López Obrador defended the National Guard, saying that they had not been using force against the migrants.²²⁴

Meanwhile in El Ceibo, the other part of the caravan had a similar but less violent experience. On January 18, 2020, the migrant shelter in Tenosique, La 72, reported that they had received more than 300 migrants.²²⁵ On January 19, 2020, around 600 migrants in El Ceibo turned themselves in to Mexican authorities, with assurances that they would be allowed to file forms to get legal status in Mexico.²²⁶ However, that night, INM loaded the women and children onto busses and transferred them to the migratory detention center in Villahermosa, Tabasco.²²⁷ On January 21, 2020, INM began deporting these migrants back to their countries of origin.²²⁸ Around 300 migrants refused to turn themselves in and stayed behind in El Ceibo.²²⁹

Chapter 4: Recommendations

When migrant caravans have arrived at Mexico's southern border, Mexican authorities have responded in various ways. At times, Mexico's authorities have taken measures to protect caravan members, such as issuing humanitarian visas. While at other times, Mexico's authorities have utilized security forces to limit caravan movement within the country or blocked caravan transit altogether.

This chapter recommends that the Mexican government continue to pursue the first approach of providing orderly transit into Mexico. It outlines five recommendations to improve migrant protection, increase coordination among relevant actors, mitigate consequences for Mexican residents, and more efficiently allocate Mexico's resources. The recommendations have been categorized by their applicable timeframe: short-, medium-, and long-term.

Short-Term

1. Define "Caravan" and Outline Legal Responsibilities

Currently, Mexico has no legal definition for what constitutes a caravan nor any defined steps for a caravan response. This lack of legal guidance means that any Mexican administration can create its own definition and dramatically shift caravan policy. Mexico should amend the Migratory Act of 2011 to add a caravan definition and outline INM and other federal authorities' responsibilities for addressing migrant caravans.

- **Mexico's Congress should legally define caravans.** Mexico's Congress should amend the 2011 Migratory Act to define a "migrant caravan." This would provide the legal basis for the term to be used throughout migratory law. Migrant caravans should also be categorized by size (e.g. small, medium, large). This tiered system could help government officials and civil society organizations to form strategic plans that fluctuate with a caravan's size.
- **The Migratory Act should include institutional responsibilities.** Within the Migratory Act's new section on caravans, there should be a clear delineation of INM, the National Guard, and other federal actors' responsibilities toward caravans. This would also help to clarify the federal government's role on providing caravans with shelter and food, especially vis-à-vis state and local authorities. By codifying institutional protocol, Mexico's policy toward caravans would be far more transparent and streamlined.

2. Expand Humanitarian Visas for High-Risk Groups

In January 2019, Mexico provided humanitarian visas to an arriving caravan, but abandoned this approach after it attracted individuals from outside of the original group. Yet, the Mexican government should not abandon its humanitarian visa program, but rather readjust it for future caravans. The following measures would help improve existing systems of humanitarian visa distribution.

- **Prioritize the most high-risk groups of migrants.** Humanitarian visas should be intentionally distributed and should prioritize vulnerable groups. These groups include women, children, disabled individuals, members of indigenous communities, and members of the LGBTQ+ community. By providing humanitarian visas to these groups, INM can facilitate their safe transit through Mexico and make humanitarian visa application numbers more manageable for INM officials.
- **Distribute humanitarian visas at Mexican consulates.** To further reduce pressure on INM and border officials, migrants should be able to apply for and receive humanitarian visas at Mexican consulates across Central America. These would be different from humanitarian entry permits, which do not include CURPs. By providing these visas at Mexican consulates, high-risk migrants could obtain the visa long before they reach the Mexico-Guatemala border.

Medium-Term

3. Restructure CONOFAM

Currently, there is little migration coordination across Mexican states. To address this issue, Mexico should expand the CONOFAM coordination network.²³⁰ CONOFAM is already well placed to play a coordinating role among Mexico's states, but it lacks the authority, recognition, and resources to lead such a complex effort. To take the lead on these migration coordination efforts, CONOFAM needs to be restructured.

- **Institutionalize CONOFAM.** CONOFAM is a non-profit organization that does not exist within Mexico's laws. By institutionalizing CONOFAM, the organization would receive the mandate and legitimacy required to effectively coordinate caravan response efforts. It would also mean the federal government would be required to provide financial and other necessary support.
- **CONOFAM should be expanded to include all states.** Currently, not all Mexican states participate in CONOFAM, and the organization lacks a central mandate. This lack of centralization creates legal loopholes that allow states to act autonomously.²³¹ SEGOB should strongly encourage state governments to host CONOFAM representatives in the remaining states and could offer funding and grants to support these offices.
- **CONOFAM should have a central, functional website and office.** As of May 1, 2020, CONOFAM's website is not up to date and does not provide information regarding the network's activities. A CONOFAM website could be a space to educate state populations on their states' migration policy, share news and resources on inter-state initiatives, and open dialogue among officials and nonstate actors. CONOFAM also lacks a central office with staff and appropriate resources. This basic structure is needed for CONOFAM to complete its objectives and carry out administrative and other duties related to coordinating migration policy.

- **CONOFAM should have a task force dedicated to caravans.** CONOFAM should create task forces on issues of shared concern for Mexico's state governments, including a task force on caravans. This task force should be focused on identifying inefficiencies and inconsistencies across state governments' response network and establishing standardized procedures for common scenarios. It should also have open channels of communication with federal agencies and consult regularly with relevant agencies and civil society organizations that interact with caravans. The task force would complete annual reports on Mexico's migratory situation to create buy-in and establish a solidified working relationship. Representatives would relay information from the task force back to their agencies and state governments.

Long-Term

4. Improve Perception of Caravans

Surveys conducted across Mexico show a growing anti-migrant, anti-caravan sentiment. In October 2018, 48.9 percent of the Mexican population agreed that the Mexican government should prevent migrants from entering the country without documentation.²³² However, follow up surveys in April 2019 and June 2019 showed that percentage had increased to 58.5 percent and 61.5 percent, respectively.²³³ During this time period, there was also an increase in the number of Mexicans who believed that crime would increase if Central Americans reached their community.²³⁴

- **Include caravans in anti-xenophobia campaigns.** Caravans attract substantial social stigma due to their size and visibility. Within Mexico's federal government, the National Council for Preventing Discrimination (*Consejo Nacional Para Prevenir La Discriminación*, CONAPRED) should include information on caravans in anti-xenophobia campaigns with the aim of improving public opinion toward caravans. To date, CONAPRED's efforts have focused more on Central Americans in caravans and have included less on why people may choose to travel in a caravan. Anti-xenophobia campaigns should use multi-media efforts when possible to capture the experiences within caravans.

5. Ease Constraints for Central American Entry into Mexico

As circumstances continue to deteriorate in the Northern Triangle, families and individuals are likely to continue to migrate alone or collectively through caravans. To create safe conditions, Mexico needs to create regular legal paths for Central Americans in its territory. Caravans exist because Central Americans need a visa to travel through Mexico. In the long-term, Mexico should allow regional transit without a visa.

- **Visa-free travel to Mexico for all Central Americans.** Mexico currently allows visa exemptions to foreigners from 69 preauthorized countries but makes no such accommodations for Central Americans.²³⁵ Mexico's Congress should draft and pass new visa guidelines for INM officials to implement. Similar to other visa exempt nations, this policy would allow Central Americans to regularly enter the country for up to 180 days and exit through all official ports of entry.

Central Americans would no longer need to hire a smuggler, pursue dangerous routes, or seek safety through caravans. A regular migration status would allow Central Americans to purchase bus, train, and plane tickets and seek regular lodging at hotels and hostels. Such a step would ease pressure on INM officials, the National Guard, and civil society organizations. Furthermore, it would improve public perceptions of migrants and reduce the disruptions caused by caravans.

Appendices

Appendix A

Table 3
Standard State Migration Framework

No.	State	CONOFAM	State Law	Name of Law
1	Aguascalientes	Yes	Yes	Ley de Protección al Migrante para el Estado de Aguascalientes
2	Ciudad de México	Yes	Yes	Ley de Interculturalidad, Atención a Migrantes y Movilidad Humana
3	Colima	Yes	No	---
4	Durango	Yes	Yes	Ley de Protección a Migrantes del Estado de Durango
5	Estado de México	Yes	Yes	Ley de Apoyo a Migrantes del Estado de México
6	Guanajuato	Yes	Yes	Ley para la Protección y Atención al Migrante y sus Familias del Estado de Guanajuato
7	Guerrero	Yes	Yes	---
8	Hidalgo	Yes	Yes	Ley de Protección a Migrantes del Estado de Hidalgo
9	Jalisco	Yes	Yes	Ley de Protección y Atención de los Migrantes en el estado de Jalisco
10	Michoacán	Yes	Yes	Ley para la Atención y Protección de los Migrantes y sus Familias del Estado de Michoacán de Ocampo
11	Morelos	Yes	No	---
12	Nayarit	Yes	No	---

13	Oaxaca	Yes	Yes	Ley para el Reconocimiento y Atención de los Derechos de los Migrantes y sus Familias para el Estado de Oaxaca
14	Puebla	Yes	Yes	---
15	Querétaro	Yes	No	---
16	San Luis Potosí	Yes	Yes	Ley de Migración para el Estado de San Luis Potosí
17	Sinaloa	No	No	---
18	Tlaxcala	Yes	Yes	Ley de Protección y Atención a los Migrantes y sus Familias del Estado de Tlaxcala
19	Veracruz	Yes	No	Ley de Atención a Personas Migrantes y Sus Familias para el Estado de Veracruz de Ignacio de la Llave
20	Zacatecas	Yes	Yes	---

Source: Jalisco Institute for Migrants (Instituto Jalisco para Migrantes)

Appendix B

Table 4
Shelters Listed Within the REDODEM Network²³⁶

Shelter Name	Location
Southern States	
Decanal Guadalupano Hostel (<i>Albergue Decanal Guadalupano</i>)	Tierra Blanca, Veracruz
House of the Migrant Monsignor Guillermo Ranzahuer González (<i>Casa del Migrante Monseñor Guillermo Ranzahuer González</i>)	Oluta, Veracruz
Oaxaca Migrant Orientation Center (<i>Centro de Orientación del Migrante de Oaxaca, COMI</i>)	Oaxaca, Oaxaca
Brothers Hostel on the Camino (<i>Albergue Hermanos en el Camino</i>)	Ixtepec, Oaxaca
Jtatic Walker House Samuel Ruiz García (<i>Casa del Caminante Jtatic Samuel Ruiz García</i>)	Palenque, Chiapas
House of the Migrant Home of the Misericordia (<i>Casa del Migrante Hogar de la Misericordia</i>)	Arriaga, Chiapas
Hostel and Bedroom San José (<i>Albergue y Dormitorio San José</i>)	Frontera Comalapa, Chiapas
Transit States	
House of Hope San José (<i>Casa de la Esperanza San José</i>)	Tepic, Nayarit
Migrant House of San Juan de Dios (<i>Casa del Migrante de San Juan de Dios</i>)	Irapuato, Guanajuato
Migrant House San Carlos Borromeo (<i>Casa del Migrante San Carlos Borromeo</i>)	Salamanca, Guanajuato
FM4 Paso Libre (<i>FM4 Paso Libre</i>)	Guadalajara, Jalisco
Abba A.C. CCIAPM (<i>Abba A.C. CCIAPM</i>)	Celaya, Guanajuato
Marist Migrant Support Center (<i>Centro de Apoyo Marista al Migrante, CAMMI</i>)	Querétaro, Querétaro
Migrant Pilgrim's House (<i>Casa del Peregrino Migrante</i>)	Huichapan, Hidalgo
Migrant House El Samaritano (<i>Casa del Migrante El Samaritano</i>)	Atitalaquía, Hidalgo
Tochan House (<i>Casa Tochan</i>)	Mexico City
Reception, Training and Empowerment House for Migrant and	Mexico City

Refugee Women (<i>Casa de Acogida, Formación y Empoderamiento de la Mujer Migrante y Refugiada, CAFEMIN</i>)	
Refugee House Program A.C. (<i>Programa Casa Refugiados A. C.</i>)	Mexico City
Jesuit Service to Migrants Mexico (<i>Servicio Jesuita a Migrantes México</i>)	Mexico City
Northern States	
One of Seven Migrating A.C. (<i>Uno de Siete Migrando A. C.</i>)	Chihuahua, Chihuahua
Migrant House Casa Nicolás (<i>Casa del Migrante Casa Nicolás</i>)	Guadalupe, Nuevo León
Juan Gerardi Human Rights Center A.C. (<i>Centro de Derechos Humanos Juan Gerardi A.C.</i>)	Torreón, Coahuila
Jesús Torres Migrant Day Center (<i>Centro de Día para Migrantes Jesús Torres</i>)	Torreón, Coahuila
House of Charity Home of the Migrant (<i>Casa de la Caridad Hogar del Migrante</i>)	San Luis Potosí, San Luis Potosí

Source: REDODEM

Appendix C

Table 5
October 2018 Caravan: Size and Route

Date (2018)	Location	Size
October 12	San Pedro Sula, Honduras	160 ²³⁷
October 17	Guatemala City, Guatemala	1,600 ²³⁸
October 20	Tapachula, Chiapas, Mexico	7,200 ²³⁹
October 26	Arriaga, Chiapas, Mexico	4,000 - 6,000 ²⁴⁰
November 3	Isla, Veracruz, Mexico	4,000 ²⁴¹
November 5	Mexico City, Mexico	5,000 ²⁴²
November 12	Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico	6,000 ²⁴³
November 14	Navojoa, Sonora, Mexico	4,000 ²⁴⁴
November 15	Tijuana, Baja California, Mexico	6,200 ²⁴⁵

Source: Author elaboration

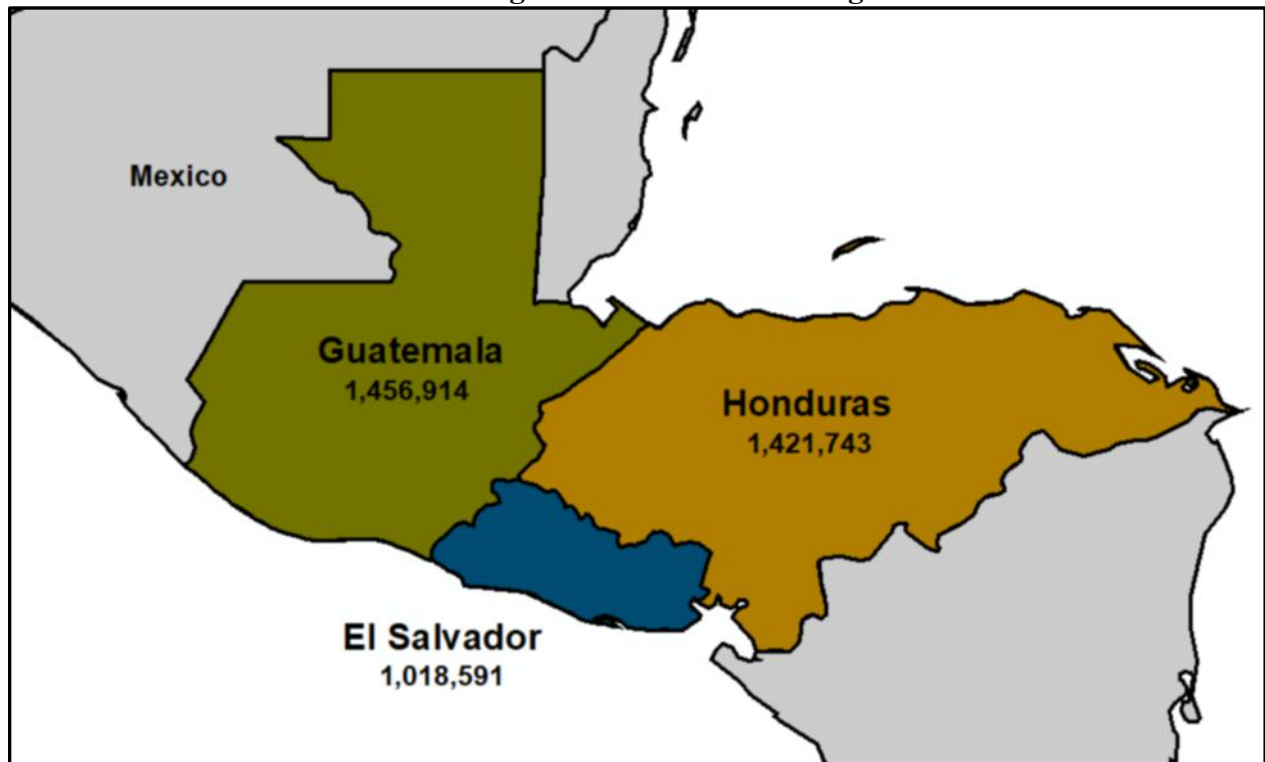
Table 6
January 2019 Caravan: Size and Route

Date (2019)	Location of Depart	Size
January 14	San Pedro Sula, Honduras	2,000 ²⁴⁶
January 15	San Pedro Sula, Honduras	800 - 3000 ²⁴⁷
January 16	San Salvador, El Salvador	100 ²⁴⁸
January 17	Técun Umán, Guatemala	500 ²⁴⁹
February 4	Piedras Negras, Coahuila	1,600 ²⁵⁰

Source: Author elaboration

Appendix D

Figure 9
Norther Triangle Countries: Total Emigration



Source: Author elaboration

Endnotes

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