Regional Seminar “Social Inclusion of Migrants and Attention during Emergency Situations in Urban Contexts” Held in Chile

On July 20th, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) with the Chilean Ministry of Foreign Affairs, together, inaugurated the Regional Seminar “Social Inclusion of Migrants and Attention during Emergency Situations in Urban Contexts” held in Santiago, Chile.

The presentation of the Regional Seminar is in line with one of the conclusions from the South American Conference on Migration (SACM), whose Pro-Tempore Presidency is exercised through August by the Government of Chile.

The two-day Seminar brought together representatives of national and local governments from South America, international bodies, academia, and civil society organizations.

The inaugural session was presided by Ambassador Alejandro Marisio Cugat from the Chilean Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Javier Palummo, Director of Research and Information Management for MERCOSUR’s Institute for Public Policies on Human Rights (IPPDH); Roberto Lippi, Coordinator of Hub Bogotá Programme Development for UNO Habitat; and Diego Beltrand, IOM Regional Director for South America.

Day One focused on the topic of Migrants and Cities, with emphasis on the social inclusion of migrants within the context of urbanization. The role of local governments was also discussed, particularly the experience of various municipalities in Chile as well as experiences from Brazil, Ecuador, Argentina, and Uruguay.

Day Two focused on emergencies within urban contexts, with discussions regarding assistance to migrants during emergency situations.

This panel shared specific cases from Ecuador, Colombia, Bolivia, and Paraguay.

Also discussed was the topic of protection for migrants in emergency situations from the perspective of both the IOM and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

About the Regional Seminar, read also...
On Friday, July 8th, the IOM Mission in Chile, as part of its territorial work strategy, opened its first Regional Office in the city of Antofagasta in northern Chile. With the establishment of this office, the IOM hopes to attain greater presence and ties with various institutional actors, including the national, regional, and local governments, as well as with civil society organizations, in order to stimulate and strengthen various processes related to migratory management and governance.

During the first week, important meetings were held between Chief of Mission, Norberto Girón and various regional authorities, particularly the meeting with the Regional Director of the Civil Registry and Identification Bureau, in order to discuss topics related to the services the Bureau provides to foreign citizens and the strengths and initiatives of the institution. With the Northern Zone Director for the National Health Fund (FONASA), the IOM signed a Memorandum of Understanding covering joint efforts during 2016 and 2017, in order to facilitate technical assistance and enhance dialogue processes aimed at strengthening migrant health management. Significant coordination meetings were also held with the Regional Ministerial Health Service and the Regional Administration.

The opening of this Regional Office has been closely coordinated with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, with which IOM Chile shares a joint agenda, and with the Ministry of Health, as signators of a Cooperation Agreement signed in 2015.

Liliana Sánchez from IOM Columbia shall serve, during startup of this process, as the Focal Point, from Antofagasta. Her first task will be to support the priorities and initiatives of the regional government and other institutional actors. These efforts will subsequently be expanded to the entire northern part of the country, which includes the regions of Arica, Iquique, Antofagasta, Copiapó, and La Serena.
Comments on the Regional Seminar “Social Inclusion of Migrants and Attention during Emergency Situations in Urban Contexts”

Foremost is the gathering of data on migrations, as we want to have more and better knowledge of the migratory dynamics in cities. Second, the strengthening of efforts and ties with the academic sector, since the contribution of academia is very important with respect to methodological issues and the formation of future professionals.

Another issue that also arose during this encounter was the concept of reciprocal integration, which refers to the need to integrate both the host community and the migrants it receives.

Also mentioned was the citizen role of migrants in the cities, as they are not just actors in the economic and cultural sense. In the case of Chile, migrants are citizens who participate with their votes in the election of institutions and authorities.

The working scope of the municipalities was discussed, specifically with reference to local governments in border zones. Sometimes in Latin America and the Caribbean, and especially in South America, the cross-border relations are highly dynamic, and thus the local municipality plays a very important role with respect to cultural, social, welfare, educational, and sports activities.

These are some of the concepts that we were able to cover in the Regional Seminar on the Social Inclusion of Migrants and Attention during Emergency Situations in Urban Contexts, held last July.

Perspective from the Pro-Tempore Presidency

We organized the Regional Seminar entitled “Social Inclusion of Migrants and Attention during Emergency Situations in Urban Contexts” together with the Pro-Tempore Presidency of the South American Regional Conference on Migration and the Technical Secretariat thereof, which is managed by the IOM.

This interesting exchange of experiences allowed us to identify some issues and concepts that will help orient future efforts.

International Standards for the Protection of Migrants during Emergencies, as Discussed during the Regional Seminar

This Seminar was extremely interesting. I was able to attend most of the presentations related to the MICIC Programme, all of which focused on the national level.

The people who work with the issue of MICIC every day seek to improve the inclusion of migrants in public policies and the provision of services at the local level.

I feel that this perspective is complementary and thoroughly fits into the work we are carrying out, even to the point of pushing us to focus even more on the inclusion of migrants in emergency preparedness work and humanitarian assistance efforts during emergency situations.

Pedro Hernández
Assistant Director for International Migration, Chilean Ministry of Foreign Affairs
(which currently holds the Pro-Tempore Presidency of the South American Conference on Migration)

Lorenzo Guadagno
Manager, Migrants in Countries in Crisis
IOM – Geneva, Switzerland
Speaker

More information at: oimchile.cl
IOM Chile Participates in the Seminar “Dealing with the Crime of Trafficking in Persons: Progress and Challenges in Chile” in the Antofagasta Region

Sergio Muñoz, Chief Inspector from the Antofagasta Regional Police, stated that “We believe that this activity is highly relevant and necessary for this region, as cases involving trafficking in persons have been detected. The idea is to articulate with more institutions and sectors that deal directly and indirectly with this issue, in order to contain and prevent such crimes in the region.”

Trafficking in persons is a social phenomenon and a highly complex crime that currently constitutes the third most lucrative form of criminal activity at the global level. The rapid changes we have seen in the global economy and its structure lead to the opening of markets and highly fluid movements of capital that generate profound differences in development levels between countries. Among other phenomena, these changes force some sectors of the population to consider the possibility of emigrating as a strategy for survival.

In the Antofagasta Region, the Antofagasta Provincial Government heads up the Inter-Sectoral Forum on Human Trafficking, which carries out actions focused on prevention, control, and victim assistance, with the participation of public institutions, international agencies, and civil society organizations.

Source: Press release from the Antofagasta SEREMI for Justice and Human Rights

In observance of the World Day against Trafficking in Persons (July 30th), the Regional Ministerial Secretariat (SEREMI) for Justice and Human Rights in Antofagasta and the Centre for Assisting Victims of Sexual Assault (CAVAS–Antofagasta) of the Investigative Police (PDI) held a seminar entitled “Dealing with the Crime of Trafficking in Persons: Progress and Challenges in Chile.” The objective of the seminar was to transfer knowledge and share experiences with psychological, social, and legal professionals from Antofagasta regarding this crime, in order to address potential cases in the region.

During the seminar, which was attended by 140 participants, the Iquique PDI Human Trafficking Investigation Brigade spoke on “Trafficking and Smuggling of Persons: Modus Operandi of this Crime in Northern Chile,” and CAVAS–Antofagasta spoke on “Characterization of Victims of Trafficking in Persons for Purposes of Sexual Exploitation and Forensic Insight from CAVAS Experts.” The activity closed with an presentation by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) on “Directives for Assisting Victims of Trafficking.”

As explained by the SEREMI for Justice and Human Rights representative, Marcelo Encina, “This Seminar was directed primarily at public professionals, officials, and prosecutors who may eventually detect signs of criminal conduct related to trafficking in persons. This activity was strategically carried out with the PDI in order to provide the seminar participants with more comprehensive tools for identifying this type of crime, which represents one of the worst violations of human rights.”

Encina also described the situation discovered a few months ago in the Antofagasta Region regarding trafficking for labour exploitation, indicating that “The Ministry of Justice and Human Rights is deeply concerned about this issue, since all citizens should have their rights guaranteed. The detection and prosecution of this crime is important, as the Penal Code establishes prison terms of five to fifteen years for those responsible.”

The IOM and Efforts to Combat the Crime of Trafficking in Persons

Almost 7000 victims of human trafficking assisted in 2015.

One of every five trafficking victims assisted by the IOM in 2015 was a victim of sexual exploitation.