

New chapter, new opportunities: Migrant solidarity in 2021



Migrants, especially Black and Indigenous peoples, have long been oppressed by an immigration system made to serve white supremacy and capitalism. After four years under an explicitly white nationalist administration, the U.S.'s immigration bureaucracy is either actively violating human rights or simply not functioning – an act of violence in itself. While the Biden administration does not have the progressive vision we need, it opens space for tangible change in the lives of millions of people. After a year of coordinating with over 40 Central and North American organizations in a campaign against the Asylum Cooperative Agreements (ACAs), deportations during the pandemic, and Title 42 expulsions, **we are well poised for concrete wins in 2021.**

Campaign win! Celebrating the termination of the ACAs



The Asylum Cooperative Agreements (ACAs) allowed the U.S. to transfer asylum-seekers to Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador to supposedly seek asylum there. While active, these inhumane and illegal agreements led to the transfer of almost 1,000 Honduran and Salvadoran asylum-seekers to Guatemala between November 2019-March 2020. According to a recent Senate Foreign Relations Committee report, none of these people were granted asylum in Guatemala. Instead, it's likely that most returned to the country from which they fled.

We're thrilled that after more than a year of collaborative transnational organizing, the U.S. suspended these agreements! As we celebrate, we honor the legacy of the late Rubén Herrera, who was the visionary behind the campaign. ¡Rubén Herrera presente!

To the left, members of the Departmental Assembly of Peoples of Huehuetenango (ADH) march against the ACAs in 2019.

The work continues: Title 42 expulsions

In March 2020, the Trump administration weaponized a Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) order that shut the door to asylum-seekers arriving at the U.S. southern border. **There are currently almost no legal pathways for refugees to apply for asylum at the border.** Instead, the U.S. has been transferring asylum-seekers to Mexico or their countries of origin without a chance of seeking protection. This violates laws protecting due process and non-refoulement (not forcibly returning people to countries where they may face persecution). Through an executive order on February 2, President Biden ordered a "prompt review" of the CDC order and Title 42 rule. He also ordered government agencies to begin taking steps towards reinstating the safe and orderly processing of asylum-seekers. **We demand:**

- An immediate end to all Title 42 expulsions.
- Ending the criminalization of asylum-seekers for their manner of entry into the U.S.
- Including asylum-seekers in all pandemic relief and assistance plans.
- Increasing the refugee resettlement goal to 125,000 within Biden's first full fiscal year.





Deportations during the pandemic

Deportations always violate human rights, and the long-term goal for social movements should be to stop them altogether. However, there is an even more urgent need to stop deportations during the pandemic. **Experts estimate that from March 2020-February 2021, over 80,000 people have been deported to Latin America and the Caribbean.** Our Indigenous and *Campesino* partners are concerned that deported people are forced to return home to largely poor and rural communities. Lack of public health support from the U.S. and Guatemalan governments (including racism and classism in vaccine distribution) means that these deportees may bring COVID to communities that would otherwise be relatively safe due to their isolation.

President Biden declared a partial 100-day moratorium on deportations on his first day in office, which a court later halted. **Organizers are calling for:**

- Immediate release of people in detention centers.
- Ending detention of children, with or without parents.
- Absolutely no deportations that violate public health recommendations.

Panelists:



Juanita Cabrera Lopez
Maya Mam
International
Mayan League



Giovanni Batz
K'iche' Maya
UC Davis



Luis Marcos
Q'anjob'al Maya
Government

Indigenous peoples of Abiayala (the Americas, in colonial terms) continue to face the destructive results of ongoing colonialism: imposed resource extraction, impunity for crimes against humanity, systemic poverty, robbing of ancestral lands, and more. **Because national governments fail to uphold their human rights obligations, Indigenous peoples are forced to migrate in disproportionate numbers to seek those human rights protections.**

Attend the webinar! “Indigenous Peoples’ Human Rights in Migration”

When: March 24 // 4 PM PT // 6 PM CT // 7 PM ET

Registration and sponsoring organizations:
bit.ly/IndigenousHumanRightsWebinar

Take action: bit.ly/IndigenousHumanRightsAction

Interpretation: Mam Maya, Spanish, English

Closed captions: Spanish & English

Moderator: Edna Sandoval, NISGUA

Welcome to the NISGUA team, Edna and Nico!

Former accompanier Nico Estrada (she/her) now coordinates direct communication with our Guatemalan partners as NISGUA's Remote *Internacionalista*. From Guatemala City, Edna Sandoval (she/they) is a transnational and interdisciplinary researcher. She joins the team as the Cross-Border Organizer.



Edna Sandoval



Nico Estrada