



AMERICA/GUATEMALA - "A transitional document for Central Americans who travel to the north of Mexico," proposes the President of Guatemala

Guatemala City (Agenzia Fides) – The President of Guatemala, Alvaro Colom, wants to propose to the Mexican Government to grant temporary permits to Central Americans who cross Mexico to reach the United States, as a measure to avoid falling into the hands of organised crime. He said this in an interview given to a local newspaper.

The President wants to reach an agreement with Mexico in order to find "a safe and valid way to legalise migrants and, secondly, to strengthen our relationship with social networks (institutions and hotels) that welcome immigrants." The President of Guatemala recognises "the important work" by dozens of homes for migrants which operate in Mexico, and which are managed in many cases by Catholic priests. (See Fides 10/02/2011) "To regulate migrants would resolve many of the issues surrounding kidnappers, fraudsters, the coyote (criminal gangs), and people traffickers," added the Head of State.

Each year between 200,000 and 300,000 undocumented Central American immigrants cross Mexico intending to reach the United States. Many of these people fall into the traps of organised crime gangs that not only rob them but then ask their relatives for a ransom. (See Fides 03/01/2011)

President Colom said the migrants may be offered a "temporary, transitory document", to legalize their status as immigrants in Mexico.

Regarding the massacre of 72 Central Americans at Tamaulipas, Colom said that "it was a terrible thing." (See Fides 27/08/2010). "I received the bodies of the murdered Guatemalans, and we still have to catch those responsible for the kidnapping of 50 migrants in Chahuities, Oaxaca," he said. (CE) (Agenzia Fides, 15/02/2011)