



Declaration

World Humanitarian Summit 2016

Foundation Cristosal

I represent a human rights organization based in the country of El Salvador. El Salvador along with Guatemala and Honduras forms a sub-region known as the Northern Triangle. In 2015, this region of 30 million people suffered 17,500 violent deaths, a number exceeded only by Iraq, Afghanistan and Syria. Despite being classified as a situation of non-traditional violence, the situation in Central America generates humanitarian consequences similar to a traditional armed conflict. Among these are forced displacement, a phenomenon characterized in the region by its invisibility. Invisible due to the lack of official recognition, documentation, and responses by governments. Invisible because the displaced are not displaced en masse nor concentrated in large camps, but rather, due to fear they hide and flee their homes by drips and drabs. The Norwegian Refugee Council estimates that in 2015 –drop-by-drop– those internally displaced in Mexico and the Northern Triangle totaled over one million people, not including the multitudes that were obligated to abandon their countries completely.

In accordance with international norms, in cases of forced displacement state authorities have the obligation and primary responsibility to provide protection and humanitarian assistance to victims. In the absence of resources or adequate responses on the part of governments, there emerges a role for national NGOs to serve as catalysts in activating national governments and organizations from civil society and the international community for the fulfillment of their obligations and mandates to provide protection and assistance to victims.

Before this roundtable and those present here, we commit to assuming our role as catalyst, advocating for the incorporation of a preferential option for victims in region security and regional development. We commit to advocating for the construction of national protection systems, strengthening quality asylum processes and the generation of durable solutions for affected families. Concretely, we commit to collaborating with the various governmental and non-governmental sectors to strengthen capacities and for the articulation of assistance networks. We commit to develop and implement instruments for the investigation and documentation of cases. We commit to providing legal counsel to victims and strengthen jurisprudence on the rights of the displaced through strategic litigation. We commit to demonstrating protection and specialized assistance models through pilot programs

developed with the participation of victims and affected communities.

In conclusion, we commit to defending humanitarian principles, to advocating for non-discrimination of populations from territories controlled by criminal groups, especially, women and children who are forcibly recruited or subjected to sexual abuse and other forms of exploitation.