

# **‘Exodus from poverty’: Thousands join huge migrant caravan heading to U.S. border**

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‘Exodus from poverty’ moves North.

On Christmas Eve, a caravan of close to 10,000 migrants from dozens of nationalities began its journey from Mexico's southern border northward up the American continent. It is possibly the largest this year and comes just days before a high-level U.S. delegation visits Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador to discuss new measures to contain migration in the region.

Latin American and Caribbean nationals who come from more than 20 countries left last week from Tapachula, a city in the state of Chiapas that borders Guatemala. The first stop was Álvaro Obregón, where they spent a complex Christmas between hardships and deprivation. "Our only option is to walk. I rely on the caravan, because it is where we feel safer with other Latino brothers and sisters who are leaving with a new dream," Carlos Rodriguez, of Guatemalan nationality, told local reporters.

According to the media, this new caravan is a group made up, for the most part, of complete families, many of them with children. The images are shocking: thousands of men, women, and children sleeping in tents, with clothes unfit for the low temperatures recorded in the north. But this growing phenomenon is not really a surprise anymore. Unfortunately, the world is used to seeing these mobilizations impassively, as they have become more frequent since the health crisis caused by COVID-19 and the failed anti-immigrant measures imposed by Washington in the last five years.

On Friday, Mexican President AMLO assured he was willing to work again with the US to address concerns about migration, as he prepares to meet the US Secretary of State Antony Blinken this Wednesday. According to experts, the surge in immigration will be a hot political topic during the meeting, while President Joe Biden is heavily questioned about the flow across the US southern border and his lack of any humane plan to alleviate the problem.

In September 2023 alone, US Border Patrol detained over 200,000 migrants

crossing the US-Mexico border illegally, and last week alone, 50,000 people were apprehended, according to US Homeland Security data. It is also noted that the record number of immigrants without papers has exhausted federal and local resources in small cities in the states of California and Arizona as well as in large ones like New York, Chicago, and Denver.

This reality is taking place amid a controversial agenda in the U.S. House of Representatives, which is more focused on the Ukraine-Russia conflict than on addressing domestic conflicts and finding a sustainable and humane solution to the immigration crisis. Instead, immigration is more about political maneuvering than solutions. While some legislators are deadlocked in discussions over a package that includes more than \$61 billion for Ukraine, others are urging more funding to increase security and crackdowns on the southern border with Mexico. In other words punitive policies instead of any comprehensive policy to regulate the flow. Migration has happened throughout humanity, and it is as much of a reality as gravity. The rich in Congress look at it not as a natural outgrowth of exploitation and oppression but as criminal behavior.

Still, those on the march are holding on to hope. “We have been waiting here for three or four months with no response,” Cristian Rivera of Honduras told local news. And he added: “Hopefully with this march there will be a change and we can get the permission we need to head north.”

Migrants advance relentlessly towards the border with its leaders carrying banners that a powerfully honest, “Exodus from poverty”. “Migrants will not become a bargaining chip of the U.S. presidential campaign. Nothing will stop us, we will keep walking,” commented Luis Garcia Villagran, an immigrant rights activist.

Villagrán, who is one of the key organizers of the caravan, told reporters, “We are fleeing our brutal living conditions. The only hope for these people is to go out, to call attention, and to say that we exist. The only thing we want is to work. The only

thing we want are documents to get out of poverty and help our families and children,” he concluded.

Source: [Resumen Latinoamericano – English](#)

