

Opinion

# UNITED STATES - For Us, the Undocumented, Time has Come (1)

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The migrations of Central Americans to the United States began in the 1980s, when the US intervened in Central American territory with the implementation of the Plan Condor and the dictatorships regional agendas which were referred as Internal Armed Conflict, which in Guatemala resulted in genocide and scorched earth.

At that time thousands were forced to leave Central America to save their lives and sought refuge in Mexico, and paradoxically in the United States. It was not enough with the Plan Condor of those years, it was updated in 2004 as the Free Trade Agreement between the United States, Central America and the Dominican Republic. Something that legalized ecocide, mining, exploitation of natural resources and the onslaught of transnational corporations in the region. In short, neoliberalism was established in the region. With this the rich became richer and the poor poorer. And the ruthless persecution of journalists, human rights defenders and the environment began. The murder of Berta Cáceres in Honduras makes it clear, as well as the forced disappearance of the 43 students of Ayotzinapa in Mexico.

In Mexico it happened much earlier, it was in 1992 when the North American Free Trade Agreement between Mexico, the United States and Canada was signed. It was started in 1994, the same year that Bill Clinton started the construction of the wall between the United States and Mexico. It was in Nogales and at that time they made it from landing pads used in the Vietnam and Gulf wars. Since then, there has been talk of combating drug trafficking. The wall was to persuade the migrants to abstain from crossing the border because the only option they had was the desert and the thousands of kilometers without water where for sure they would die.

Thousands of Mexicans were forced to migrate as the only choice to subsist. According to official Border Patrol figures (but we know that there are actually many more), about 6,330 people died in their attempt to cross the desert between Mexico and the United States between 1984 and 2014. According to Colobrí Center for Human Rights, in Tucson, Arizona, around 2,500 have disappeared in the desert.

Democrats and Republicans are the same thing when it comes to foreign policy and undocumented immigrants. In 2006 was approved the renovation of the border wall and was by an initiative signed by Hillary Clinton and several Democratic senators, it was called Secure Fence Act.

And with this also came Operation Streamline, which is the massive imprisonment of undocumented immigrants caught by the Border Patrol and who serve sentences of up to 180 days in prisons before being deported to their countries of origin. This after the poor treatment they suffer at the hands of the Border Patrol agents, who steal the little money they carry, and their belongings. Widespread sexual abuse of children, adolescents and women which remain unpunished. These national security policies have dehumanized migrations and allowed anti-immigrant groups to head into the desert with automatic rifles and killing undocumented people in hunting trips that extremist xenophobes celebrate.

Nevertheless the Plan Condor is updated every decade, and in 2008 the Plan Mérida which is a security treaty established between the United States, Mexico and Central America is created. This was followed in 2014 by the Southern Border Plan that militarized the US's southern border down to the border between

Mexico and Guatemala, followed by the Maya-Chortí Plan covering Guatemala and Honduras. To reinforce it, the Alliance for Prosperity Plan was created in the Northern Triangle of Central America.

At that time they launched the media bombshell about the crisis of Central American children traveling unaccompanied, with the help of media such as Telemundo, Univision and CNN en Español. None of these dared to show that there was no such a crisis and that migrations of children, girls and teenagers traveling without an adult's company have been taking place for decades. Hillary Clinton declared that those children had to return to their countries of origin because there was no place for them here. How does one believe in her desire for an Immigration Reform in her proposal as a presidential candidate?

With these treaties the criminalization of forced migrations is concealed and the governments of the countries involved are allowed to profit from the lives of immigrants in transit, this is where the big mafias have been operating and from where anti-immigrant operatives are conducted. As a result, there has been an increase in violence in which trafficking in persons for the purposes of sexual exploitation, forced labor and organ trafficking is palpable. Also forced disappearances and clandestine graves -a form of genocide in Mexico.

In South America the most affected has been Colombia with Plan Colombia, which is a design like those applied in Mexico and Central America, and it is for that reason that since its implementation in 1999, the Colombian government is licensed to "fight" drug traffickers, that is to say, the Revolutionaries Armed Forces of Colombia. Because to be honest, the DEA is negotiating with the drug traffickers. It also allows mining, paramilitarism, false positives, clandestine graves and ecocide. In all these treaties the administrations of Bill Clinton and George W. Bush have been involved. Do you see how Republican and Democrats are not so different?

What did happen to the other countries of South America? Peru signed the Peru-United States Free Trade Agreement in 2006 and implemented it in 2009. We can see that this also forced thousands of Peruvians to migrate to the United States and Europe. The same happened in Chile with the Chile-United States Free Trade Agreement signed in 2003. In a general sense the free trade agreements between the United States and Latin American countries signify the updated application of the neoliberal policies that began with the overthrow Of Salvador Allende in Chile and devastated Latin America 40 years ago.

But, wait! In 2005 Latin American dignity was defended with consciousness and love, and it was Hugo Chavez, Néstor Kirchner and Lula da Silva, presidents of Venezuela, Argentina and Brazil, who at the Fourth Summit of the Americas in Mar de Plata, Argentina, said no to the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). We can see how these countries remained stable with the progressive governments that began with the Chavista Revolution and how this, as a result of the anger and the impotence of the United States for not being able to buy these presidents, prompted Obama to sign, for a second consecutive year, an Executive Law Against Venezuela which sets the stage for a military invasion at any moment. And that too induced him to promote the coup d'état against Dilma, in Brazil, and to seek now a close relationship with Macri in order to sign treaties with his government in Argentina.

Generally speaking, this is how we can see the clear reasons for the forced migration of Latin Americans to the United States and why it is larger in some countries than in others. It is due to the neoliberal agenda of some, and the progressive one of others.

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