

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** FW: Press Release: Panama and Costa Rica Call for Pragmatic Action to Address Irregular Migration  
**Date:** Friday, October 6, 2023 4:09:27 PM

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[REDACTED],

For FARA filing, please see a press release for UNDP Panama that was distributed to approximately 34 reporters.

Best,

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, October 6, 2023 5:08 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Press Release: Panama and Costa Rica Call for Pragmatic Action to Address Irregular Migration

Good afternoon,

Below please find a press release with quotes from Panama's President and Minister of Foreign Affairs on the meeting held in the Darien today with the President of Costa Rica and the resulting communique. I'm happy to share additional photos and/or b-roll if interested. Please let me know if any questions.

## **Panama and Costa Rica Call for Pragmatic Action to Address Irregular Migration**

**October 6, 2023, Panama City, Panama:** Today, the President of the Republic of Costa Rica, Rodrigo Chaves, joined the President of the Republic of Panama, Laurentino Cortizo Cohen, and Panama's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Janaina Tewaney Mencomo, for a working meeting in the

province of Darién to unite on solutions for addressing irregular migration as the number of migrants crossing Panama's Darién Gap breaks a record high. So far in 2023, 415,104 migrants have passed through Panama, almost double the number of migrants that passed through the country in the entirety of 2022 (248,284). The daily number of people passing through the Darién averages between 2,500 and 3,000.

“Panama is making a titanic effort to care for the thousands of irregular migrants who cross the dangerous Darién jungle, with the purpose of safeguarding their lives; however, this crisis is an unsustainable situation that directly affects Panamanians,” said President Laurentino Cortizo Cohen.

*Pictured above: President of the Republic of Costa Rica, Rodrigo Chaves, and President of the Republic of Panama, Laurentino Cortizo Cohen, meet to agree on solutions to address irregular migration.*

During today's meeting, the two Presidents reviewed a strategy to reduce the flow of migrants between both countries, agreeing that the passage of migrants must be guaranteed in a safe and orderly manner.

A joint communique released following the meeting and signed by both leaders stated, “We make an urgent appeal to the countries of the region, including of origin, passage and destination; to aid workers and international organizations, to address the challenges of this moment in a pragmatic manner without losing sight of the causes of migration. This requires immediate intervention to adjust the capacity of our countries in the attention and management of migratory flows, so that they are orderly and safe, for migrants and for our communities. It is a shared responsibility. We call for an urgent meeting of heads of state from the region to address the issue. We welcome Mexico's initiative to convene it on 22 October. We believe that it is essential for all countries to

participate; those of origin, transit and destination. The actions that emanate from this meeting must have tangible and immediate results. We extend an invitation to the leaders of the region to visit the Darién and witness the enormous gravity of this humanitarian crisis.'

*Pictured above: President of the Republic of Costa Rica, Rodrigo Chaves, President of the Republic of Panama, Laurentino Cortizo Cohen, Panamanian Foreign Minister Janaina Tewaney Mencomo, and Panamanian Public Security Minister Juan Manuel Pino Forero.*

"Migration is the most important challenge today not only for Panama, but for our region," said Panamanian Foreign Minister Janaina Tewaney Mencomo. "Costa Rica and Panama share a very similar vision on migration and as long-term partners, understand the importance of having consistent and constant coordination as the crisis evolves daily. We believe our collective actions will make an impact in controlling the flow of migration," she continued.

As part of the official visit, the delegation flew over the border region with Colombia, specifically points that receive the largest numbers of migrants, and landed at the Migratory Reception Station (ERM) of Lajas Blancas to assess the situation on the ground. From there they traveled to the First Eastern Brigade of the National Border Service (SENAFRONT), where the Meeting of the Binational Cabinet Panama - Costa Rica was held.

*This material is distributed by Edelman on behalf of the government of Panama. Additional information is available at the Department of Justice, Washington, DC.*