Abstract

Latin America is a multi-ethnic and multicultural region with over 650 indigenous peoples currently recognized by its States. These peoples are highly diverse, but their common denominator is the structural discrimination they suffer in the form of marginalization, exclusion and poverty. In this context, indigenous international migration is becoming more significant, not so much because of its quantitative impacts, but because of the particular traits of indigenous migrants and the policy implications for human rights. Migration is directly linked to land, natural resources, territories and territoriality, which have a dual dimension: as a cultural and ethnic “anchoring” factor; and as a factor in expulsion, owing to impoverishment and growing pressure on indigenous lands and resources. Since this is a multicultural and pluri-ethnic process, new concepts need to be developed in order to: a) distinguish indigenous international migration in the true sense from the indigenous people’s ancestral territorial mobility, and b) incorporate these issues in regional and national agendas about international migration under a human rights perspective.

Keywords

Migration, indigenous migration, migration policy, Latin American.