

## **“Not a Border Crisis, An Imperialism Crisis, A Climate Crisis - but people don't wanna have that conversation”**

(Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez)

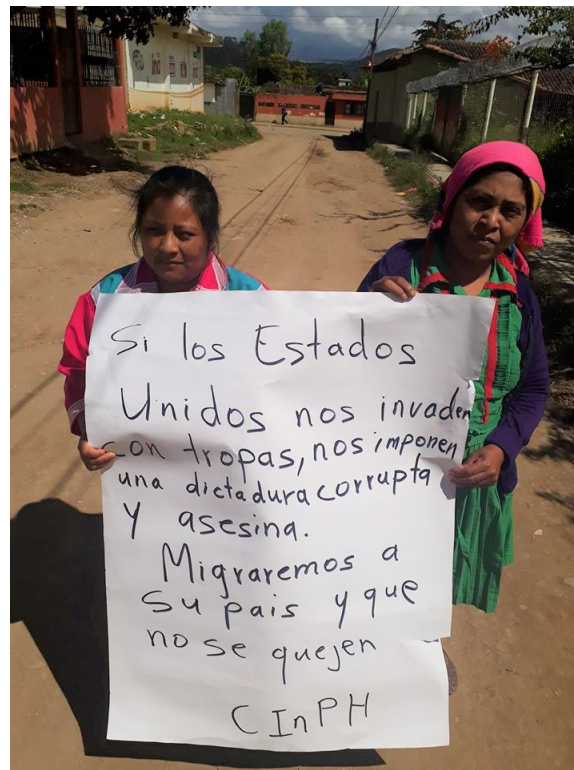
<https://mailchi.mp/rightsaction/not-a-border-crisis-an-imperialism-crisis>

*“Our solutions need to be rooted in foreign policy, because our interventionist history over decades of destabilizing regions drive people to migrate—but people don't wanna have that conversation.”*

Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-N.Y.)

### **Below**

- “The U.S. should acknowledge its complicity in migrant issues”, by Jean Stokan, The Washington Post
- ‘It's Not a Border Crisis,’ says Ocasio-Cortez, ‘It's an Imperialism Crisis, a Climate Crisis, a Trade Crisis’, by Jessica Corbett, Common Dreams



**“If the United States invades our country, and imposes a corrupt and murderous dictatorship, we shall migrate to their country and they should stop complaining about it.”**

**Indigenous Coordinator of Popular Power, Honduras, (CInPH)**

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## **The U.S. should acknowledge its complicity in migrant issues**

By Jean Stokan, The Washington Post, May 9, 2021

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/letters-to-the-editor/the-us-should-acknowledge-its-complicity-in-migrant-issues/2021/05/09/b0f1adf4-add4-11eb-82c1-896aca955bb9\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/letters-to-the-editor/the-us-should-acknowledge-its-complicity-in-migrant-issues/2021/05/09/b0f1adf4-add4-11eb-82c1-896aca955bb9_story.html)

The May 2 news article "[U.S. plan to stem migration faces obstacles](#)" well named the myriad challenges in working with El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras, including corruption and bad governance.

It failed to name, however, U.S. responsibility for continuing to empower corrupt leaders, support repressive security forces, and buttress an economic development model in the region that mostly benefits elites, leading to dramatic levels of inequality and environmental destruction.

For more than 30 years, I have led human rights delegations of faith leaders to the region. It seems clear that the desperate faces at the U.S.-Mexico border are the fruit of decades of such failed policies, made dramatically worse by U.S. support of the 2009 coup in Honduras.

Vice President Harris would do well to acknowledge our country's responsibility for the furnace of violence that Central America has become and adopt a humble posture with social movements there, which are clear on needed policy changes. The administration should also follow the lead of eight U.S. senators who introduced a bill ([S. 388](#)) demanding suspension of U.S. security aid to Honduras until impunity ends and human rights are respected.

Hopes of "would-be migrants" might be stirred if they could experience real change in their political realities, and ours.

(Jean Stokan, Mount Rainier, justice coordinator for immigration for Sisters of Mercy of the Americas)

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## **'It's Not a Border Crisis,' says Ocasio-Cortez. 'It's an Imperialism Crisis, a Climate Crisis, a Trade Crisis'**

By Jessica Corbett, March 31, 2021, Common Dreams

<https://www.commondreams.org/news/2021/03/31/its-not-border-crisis-says-ocasio-cortez-its-imperialism-crisis-climate-crisis-trade>

Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez took to social media Tuesday night with a detailed reminder of the root causes of Central Americans and other migrants seeking asylum at the United States' southern border.

The New York Democrat is known for engaging with constituents and critics alike on social media. One Instagram user asked the congresswoman: "Why are you not addressing the border crisis and the kids in cages like you used to?"

She responded in a series of what are called "stories," which disappear from the platform after 24 hours—though recordings of her comments are now circulating elsewhere online.

"Are you for real?" Ocasio-Cortez said, visibly frustrated by the claim. "So let's talk about this because so much of our national conversation, which is not a conversation, about immigration is driven by people who could not care less about immigrants."

"So often, people wanna say, 'Why aren't you talking about the border crisis?' or 'Why aren't you talking about it in this way?' Well, we're talking about it, they just don't like how we're talking about it," she continued. "Because it's not a border crisis. It's an imperialism crisis. It's a climate crisis. It's a trade crisis."

"And also, it's a carceral crisis," Ocasio-Cortez added, "because as I have already said, even during this term and this president, our immigration system is based and designed on our carceral system."

The congresswoman, an outspoken opponent of former President Donald Trump's immigration policies, put out the videos as the Biden administration is struggling to process asylum-seekers at the southern border—particularly children, who are generally not being deported under a public health law invoked by both administrations to limit access to the United States during the coronavirus pandemic.

President Joe Biden has been criticized this month for restricting journalists from entering facilities for the children. As the Associated Press reports:

"The Biden administration for the first time Tuesday allowed journalists inside its main border detention facility for migrant children, revealing a severely overcrowded tent structure where more than 4,000 people, including children and families, were crammed into a space intended for 250 and the youngest were kept in a large play pen with mats on the floor for sleeping.

"...The children were being housed by the hundreds in eight "pods" formed by plastic dividers, each about 3,200 square feet (297 square meters) in size. Many of the pods had more than 500 children in them."

Ocasio-Cortez is not alone in pushing for a more comprehensive conversation about immigration. In a Sunday appearance on CNN, fellow "Squad" member Rep. Jamaal Bowman (D-N.Y.) not only called for providing better resources, safety, and housing to those currently seeking asylum but also advocated for the U.S. government helping to "rebuild Central America in the same ways that we have destroyed it."

On Instagram Tuesday, Ocasio-Cortez similarly said that "number one, our solutions need to be rooted in foreign policy, because our interventionist history in foreign policy and history over decades of destabilizing regions drive people to migrate—but people don't wanna have that conversation."

"Secondly, let's talk about the climate crisis, because the U.S. has disproportionately contributed to the total amount of emissions that is causing a planetary climate crisis right now," she said, while emphasizing that the Global South is disproportionately bearing the brunt of the consequences, including droughts, floods, and wildfires.

"Then we have the issues of trade, which economically contribute to... some of these conditions that add fuel to the fire," Ocasio-Cortez explained, before challenging the way that some political figures, reporters, and others are discussing the rising number of people—including children—seeking to enter the country.

She asserted that "anyone who's using the term 'surge' around you, consciously, is trying to invoke a militaristic frame and that's a problem, because... this is not a surge. These are children, and they are not insurgents, and we are not being invaded—which, by the way, is a white supremacist idea."

Ocasio-Cortez was among those who responded with alarm last month when the Biden administration announced it was reopening a controversial detention center for unaccompanied children. She tweeted that "this is not okay, never has been okay, never will be okay—no matter the administration or party."

"Our immigration system is built on a carceral framework," she said, calling for boldly "reimagining our relationship to each other and challenging common assumptions we take for granted."

The Department of Homeland Security "shouldn't exist" and Immigration and Customs Enforcement has "gotta go," Ocasio-Cortez said, pushing for a ban on for-profit detention and creating a special status for climate refugees—which experts warn will become increasingly necessary as humanity activity continues to heat the planet.

(Jessica Corbett, staff writer for Common Dreams. Twitter: @corbett\_jessica.)

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### **Why do thousands of Hondurans & Guatemalans flee into exile year after year?**

The US and Canadian governments, Spain and the EU, the World Bank and global businesses and investors (in the sectors of mining, dams, African palm, sugarcane, bananas, garment "sweatshop" factors, tourism, etc.) maintain enriching and empowering relations with anti-democratic, corrupt, repressive governments in Honduras and Guatemala, contributing to and benefitting from exploitation and poverty, environmental harms, repression and human rights violations, corruption and impunity.

### **"Forced Migrancy" archives**

Go to <https://rightsaction.org/forced-migrancy-archives> for media coverage and reports. Note the contrast between mainstream media reports that generally refuses to address underlying causes, and other reporting that analyzes how the policies and programs of the US (and also Canada, multi-national companies, etc.) contribute to the underlying causes of forced migrancy and refugee flight.

### **Act / Stir up the pot / Chip away**

Keep sending copies of Rights Action information (and that of other solidarity groups/ NGOs) to family, friends, your networks, politicians and media, asking *'Why do our governments, companies and investment firms benefit from and turn a blind eye to poverty, repression and violence, environmental and health harms that caused the forced migrancy / refugee crisis in Guatemala and Honduras?'*

- U.S. Senate: <https://www.senate.gov/senators/contact>
- U.S. House: <https://www.house.gov/representatives/find-your-representative>
- Canadian Parliament: <https://www.ourcommons.ca/Parliamentarians/en/members>

### **Rights Action (US & Canada)**

Since 1995, Rights Action: funds human rights, environment and territory defense struggles in Guatemala and Honduras; funds victims of repression and human rights violations, health harms and natural disasters (Covid19, hurricanes, etc.); and works to hold accountable the U.S. and Canadian governments, multi-national companies, investors and banks (World Bank, etc.) that help cause and profit from exploitation and poverty, repression and human rights violations, environmental harms, corruption and impunity in Honduras and Guatemala.

### **Follow work of and get involved with other solidarity/NGO groups**

- CISPES (Committee in Solidarity with People of El Salvador): [www.cispes.org](http://www.cispes.org)
- Honduras Solidarity Network: [www.hondurassolidarity.org](http://www.hondurassolidarity.org)
- Witness for Peace Solidarity Collective: [www.solidaritycollective.org](http://www.solidaritycollective.org)
- Friendship Office of the Americas: <https://friendshipamericas.org>
- NISGUA (Network in Solidarity with People of Guatemala): [www.nisgua.org](http://www.nisgua.org)
- GHRC (Guatemalan Human Rights Commission): [www.ghrc-usa.org](http://www.ghrc-usa.org)
- Breaking the Silence: [www.breakingthesilenceblog.com](http://www.breakingthesilenceblog.com)
- Peace Brigades International: <https://www.peacebrigades.org>
- Alliance for Global Justice: [www.afgj.org](http://www.afgj.org)
- CODEPINK: [www.codepink.org](http://www.codepink.org)
- School of Americas Watch: [www.soaw.org](http://www.soaw.org)
- Mining Watch Canada: [www.miningwatch.ca](http://www.miningwatch.ca)
- Mining Injustice Solidarity Network: <https://mininginjustice.org>
- Mining Justice Alliance: <https://miningjusticealliance.wordpress.com>
- Common Frontiers Canada: [www.commonfrontiers.ca](http://www.commonfrontiers.ca)

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### **Tax-Deductible Donations (Canada & U.S.)**

To support land, human rights and environmental defender groups in Honduras and Guatemala, and COVID and hurricane relief work, make check to "Rights Action" and mail to:

- U.S.: Box 50887, Washington DC, 20091-0887
- Canada: (Box 552) 351 Queen St. E, Toronto ON, M5A-1T8

Credit-Card Donations: <http://rightsaction.org/donate/>

Donations of securities in Canada and the U.S.? Write to: [info@rightsaction.org](mailto:info@rightsaction.org)

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<https://www.youtube.com/user/rightsaction>

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