

Mexico's AMLO vows to “strengthen measures” against migrants as mass caravan faces repression

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At a high-level summit Wednesday, the Biden administration requested that the government of Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador (AMLO) escalate repressive measures to stop migrants and refugees from reaching the US-Mexico border.

At the meeting, which took place in Mexico City and was convoked by AMLO, Secretary of State Antony Blinken, Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas and National Security advisor Liz Sherwood-Randall reportedly asked the Mexican government to place more checkpoints along the main routes and railways, to forcibly move migrants to southern Mexico and offer more visas to stay in Mexico.

The Mexican president said he was eager to “assist” Washington and had already agreed in a call with Biden to “strengthen containment measures in the southern part of the country.” Details will emerge in the coming days of what was agreed to on Wednesday.

AMLO, his Foreign Secretary Alicia Barcena and other officials embraced and joked with Blinken, who has spent weeks leading US efforts to secure economic and political support for the fascistic Israeli regime of Benjamin Netanyahu in its massacre and starving to death of Palestinians in Gaza.

In fact, the summit was an offshoot of talks to secure Congressional approval of a \$110 billion package that offers Republicans a greater crackdown on migrants in exchange for the bulk of the money going to escalate the war against Russia in Ukraine and the US-Israeli genocide in Gaza.

Similarly to how the Biden administration insists that it has no “red lines” for Netanyahu, it is not committed to any set of principles regarding its own treatment of migrants and refugees. The only real and major obstacle to employing open, mass violence as a “solution” to

unrelenting migration is the American working class. AMLO’s hypocritical lamentations reflect similar fears about the Mexican working class.

The Biden administration also reportedly plans to raise the credible fear standard for asylum seekers to even be able to present their case to a judge and to allow the shutting down of the border to all asylum claims and fast-tracking removals once an arbitrary level of crossings is reached. Such policies would further worsen the numbers and plight of those stuck in Mexico.

As the summit was taking place, nearly 10,000 migrants of over 20 nationalities from all over the world were marching behind a large banner emblazoned with the words “Exodus of Poverty.”

They are among the hundreds of thousands stuck for months in southern Mexico, unable to get travel visas to take buses or other means of transportation or a formal work permit to pay for the journey. Meanwhile, the administration is demanding ways to make it even harder for them to move north.

On Wednesday, marchers carried out a protest, kneeling and praying in front of the migration offices of Huixtla, Chiapas, when the National Guard soldiers temporarily blocked their path.

One migrant then gave a speech: “The doors have been closed to us. This movement is a peaceful movement, and we are not going to fall into provocation. We are poor and that is why we do not have the documents because the documents are given to those who have money, corruption is the mother of the National Institute of Migration.”

After walking about 45 miles since Sunday morning, the caravan was arriving at Escuintla, Chiapas, in southern Mexico, with reports already of dehydration and sores.

The “Exodus of Poverty” caravan demonstrates that the so-called “legal pathways” set up by the Biden

administration, including forcing migrants to apply from third countries and meet economic requirements, were merely a cover for illegally dismantling the right to asylum.

Meanwhile, the Mexican authorities could process asylum and work permits by sending migrants to offices in other regions but they are deliberately saturating the offices in Chiapas, forcing migrants to remain in the south without food, shelter, money or access to healthcare.

Horror stories about migrants, which are the deliberate consequences of these policies, often dominate news coverage in Mexico. On Saturday, a day before Christmas Eve, two young men drowned in mud thick with garbage in the Rio Grande as they attempted to cross from Matamoros to Brownsville, Texas. The incident was recorded on video, and their relatives can be heard crying and yelling in horror from the shore.

Such official cruelty has not stopped record numbers of migrants from reaching the Rio Grande, however. Apprehensions by the US Border Patrol averaged 10,000 migrants per day during the first week of December. This year is expected to see 2.5 million migrants processed by the Border Patrol—the third consecutive yearly record.

Shortly before meeting Blinken, López Obrador recited his usual sanctimonious concerns about the “poor countries” in the region.

“We have to avoid putting people at risk, because these are very dangerous journeys,” he added, as tens of thousands of heavily armed soldiers he has ordered to “contain” migrants have a record of shooting at, robbing and extorting migrants, as well as connections to gangs and cartels.

The dangers faced by migrants cannot be overstated. Biden and AMLO are emboldening—and the Democratic Party, Morena and their pseudo-left apologists bear the chief political responsibility—the fascists in the US who are preparing an even more brutal onslaught.

Leading Republican candidate Donald Trump, who led the January 6 fascist insurrection to establish a dictatorship, is vowing to carry out an unprecedented assault since “day one” to deport millions of migrants yearly.

Having threatened to act like a “dictator” during his first day in office and used Hitlerian rhetoric claiming migrants are “poisoning the blood of our country,” Trump has reportedly drawn up plans to deploy hundreds of thousands of troops to the US-Mexico border, ostensibly to build massive detention camps, according to *Rolling Stone*.

A source told the magazine “I have heard anywhere between 100,000 to 300,000 from President Trump, Stephen Miller, and others.”

The agenda of imperialist war is intertwined by countless threads with attacks on refugees and migrants and the struggles of the working class. The onslaught against the democratic rights of migrants and the associated buildup of the repressive state apparatus serve as preparations to crack down on mass working class opposition to the genocide, war and the attacks on social spending, jobs and living standards used to pay for them.

Billions of dollars more are being discussed for the repressive US border and deportation apparatus, while the Biden administration and Republican and Democratic governors have invoked “border security” to deploy thousands of troops along the border. Both parties are already running roughshod over the Posse Comitatus Act that prohibits active-duty troops from carrying out law enforcement activities domestically.

For his part, AMLO is demanding funds within Mexico and from his patrons in Washington for his own military build-up, with migrant “containment” operations used to maintain a permanent presence of troops across Mexico’s borders and in the interior. The Mexican president betrayed his longtime promise of sending the military to the barracks by instead enshrining its domestic deployment in the constitution.

Millions of people are being swept up by the whirlwind of the objective breakdown of capitalism and its nation-state system. The marching feet in Chiapas and across the Rio Grande are rattling the chains from over a century of imperialist oppression. This is the same struggle of all workers within the United States and across the Americas against capitalist reaction, exploitation, war and fascism.



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