

Migrant caravan gathers in southern Mexico on way to United States



Mexico City, October 14 (RHC)-- Several hundred migrants from Africa, the Caribbean and Central America set off from southern Mexico on Saturday in a caravan headed to the United States, according to local media.

The migrants assembled and departed before dawn from Tapachula in the southern state of Chiapas near Guatemala, despite an ongoing crackdown on migration on both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border. They proceeded on foot toward Huixtla about 20 miles (32 km) away.

The scene was reminiscent of a string of caravans that left Central America a year ago, at one point ballooning into a group of 7,000 people in southern Mexico. The en masse migration drew extensive media attention and triggered a crisis with U.S. President Donald Trump, who called the caravans an "invasion" and demanded Mexico do more to halt their progress.

Accompanied by police who warned truck drivers not to let migrants hitch rides, some in Saturday's caravan said they planned to trek the hundreds of miles across Mexico and enter the United States.

Many in the group of as many as two thousand people wore baseball caps and bulky backpacks, Reuters photos showed. Some migrants carried children on their shoulders, and one woman walked while balancing a pink bucket of belongings on her head.

The Mexican government in June struck a deal with the United States vowing to significantly curb U.S.-bound migration in exchange for averting U.S. tariffs on Mexican exports.

Arrests at the U.S.-Mexico border fell in September for the fourth month in a row, after record high crossings this Spring, and the Trump administration credited cooperation from Mexico and Central American countries for the sustained drop.

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