



HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL - 47th SESSION

ORAL UPDATE ON THE SITUATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN NICARAGUA – 22 JUNE 2021

Ms Michelle Bachelet – UN High Commissioner for Human Rights

Since the latest report on Nicaragua to this Council on 23 February, the OHCHR has observed a worrying and accelerating **deterioration of the human rights situation**. This makes it unlikely that Nicaraguans will be able to fully exercise their political rights in the **elections on 7 November**.

Since more than three years, almost **none of the recommendations made by the OHCHR to Nicaragua have been implemented**. This crisis has worsened alarmingly.

From 2 to 21 June, the National Police and the Attorney-General's Office **detained several members of the opposition**. Their arrests, under ambiguous criminal offences and without sufficient evidence, were marked by serious **violations of due process**. The authorities also used a recent reform of the criminal procedure code to detain the vast majority of the aforementioned individuals for up to 90 days, instead of the constitutional term of 48 hours. This would prevent them from standing in the general elections, **restricting not only their political rights, but also the rights of citizens to be able to vote for the candidates of their choice**.

On 4 May, an electoral reform law was adopted. It fails to introduce safeguards to guarantee the **impartiality and independence of electoral authorities** and it unduly **limits the rights to freedom of expression, association, peaceful assembly and political participation**. On 18 May, the Supreme Electoral Council annulled the legal status of two political parties without hearing their representatives. These decisions **violate the principles of legality, necessity and proportionality**.

The OHCHR continues to document **arbitrary arrests, attacks and harassment** by the National Police. They indicate systematic **repression** of attempts by victims and civil society organisations to protest in public spaces, **violating their rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly**. According to civil society sources, as of 14 June, **9 women and 115 men** who were detained in the contest of the ongoing human rights crisis **remained in prison**.

A significant number of human rights defenders, social and political leaders, lawyers, students and peasants reported to the OHCHR that they were victims of **persistent harassment by the police** around their homes. On several occasions, the police prevented them from leaving their homes, **violating their right to freedom of movement**. In addition, there were public statements by authorities and some pro-government media **stigmatising people perceived as opponents**.

These actions together create a **climate of fear that inhibits the exercise of the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly, association and expression**, which are essential to ensure a **credible, free and fair electoral process**.

Recommendations:

Given the current situation in Nicaragua, the OHCHR calls on the Government of Nicaragua to urgently change its course of action with regard to the electoral process, and recommends to:

- **Immediately release all those arbitrarily detained.**
- **Cease all acts of persecution against dissident voices.**
- **Re-establish the rights and freedoms that make a free, credible and fair electoral process possible**
- **Repeal restrictive legislation on civic and democratic space.**



Delegation of Nicaragua – Replying as the country concerned:

Nicaragua seeks peace and avoiding **interference from North America and Europe** in its internal affairs.

We see once again the interventionist position that we have seen so many times. The **supremacists position** of so many countries. We remember the **military occupation from the USA** which killed so many of our patriots.

Nicaragua has been seeing the **greed of the USA and Europe** attempting to attack our country and our Sandinist spirit. This **colonial form** of behaviour seeks always to persecute our position. We have resisted courageously to these challenges. We have **peaceful coexistence** within Nicaragua. A culture of conciliation, despite so many aggressions.

We come to this Council to **defend justice and peace**, without **interference from abroad**, to follow the own path chosen by our heroic people without imperial interference.

It is enough, we are hearing once again this type of **imperial interventionism** into this body made to uphold human rights. These external forces seek to impose their agenda in our **domestic affairs**.

We come to this Council to **denounce the USA and European powers**, which are all accomplices in this immoral attempt to use **unilateral coercive measures against international law**.

We come to this Council to demand **justice for Nicaragua**. For our nation, for our people. We will always be free and sovereign **with our own laws**. We are not recognized the right to uphold our own laws.

Individuals presented before Nicaraguan justice have been **judged with due process** and **offended our security and sovereignty**. Anything else that is being said in this Council is part of the same **disinformation strategy** seeking to humiliate our country. We repeat to the USA and Europe: your interventionist policies **violate international law and the Charter of the UN**. We are nobody's colony, and we will follow our own goals.

To watch the full recording of the oral update and the reply by Nicaragua: [CLICK HERE](#)