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Oral Update by the Group of Human Rights Experts on Nicaragua

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ORAL UPDATE (PRESENTATION ONLY)

Mr. Jan-Michael SIMON, Chair, Group of Human Rights Experts (GHRE) on Nicaragua

In accordance with UNHRC resolution 58/18, the Chair of the Group of Experts presents this oral update on the situation of human rights in Nicaragua, by reiterating what had already been expressed on previous occasions. The Group of Experts regrets not having access to Nicaraguan territory or the cooperation of the government, which has failed to respond to multiple requests for information.

Even **outside Nicaragua's borders**, exiles are not safe from persecution by the government of Daniel Ortega and Rosario Murillo. Since the beginning of their mandate, the Group of Experts have pointed out that the violations perpetrated by the Nicaraguan government have transcended its territory. The Group of Experts has just published a supplementary report titled '[Nicaragua: Persecution Beyond Borders - Exile and Transnational Human Rights Violations](#).'

The report focuses on the victims of transnational violations and the methods used by the Nicaraguan state to deter, punish and silence Nicaraguans in exile. Transnational violations deepen a widespread climate of fear, vulnerability, isolation, and self-censorship among victims



and are part of a state policy designed to **suppress any dissent**. This policy is based on a scalable governance model that employs a strategy of long-arm violations and weakens safe havens. The process begins with uprooting and erosion of legal identity and extends to economic collapse, social isolation, and omnipresent surveillance.

The government resorts to the large-scale use of **arbitrary deprivation of nationality** as a tool of political persecution. Most of these victims became stateless in clear violation of Nicaragua's international obligations under the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, to which Nicaragua has been a party since 2013.

Other recurring practices of transnational violations against Nicaraguans have been the **prohibition of entry** into their own country and the denigration or suppression of official documents such as passports and birth certificates, including those of children. If these victims have no other nationality, they find themselves in a situation of de facto statelessness without effective protection from their country of origin. In many cases, these practices seriously compromise the regularisation of their immigration status, as they lack the official documentation to prove their situation.

The authorities have also frequently resorted to **punishing family members** of Nicaraguans in exile who live in the country, including children. Punishment by association has caused fear among those in exile and their relatives. It has also caused profound suffering and feelings of guilt and has had serious effects on the mental and emotional health of children. The attack on the most vulnerable loved ones of opponents has highlighted the government's willingness to use any means to suppress dissent.

The Group of Experts has identified and documented the existence of a **complex surveillance and intelligence network** that is crucial for the state to identify, locate and monitor Nicaraguans in exile. The Directorate of Information for Defence, i.e. the military intelligence agency, plays a central role in this transnational surveillance. The Group of Experts has received multiple testimonies from people who report having been photographed, followed, harassed, approached by strangers and threatened during their stay abroad.

The Experts have also identified **digital espionage against exiled** and their families, which constitutes a sustained pattern of transnational violations. Particularly serious and worrying are the reports of murders and attempted murders of Nicaraguans in exile, which are under investigation by the competent authorities. A particularly visible case is the **murder of retired army major Roberto Samcam**, exiled in Costa Rica, on June 19 2025. A few days ago, Costa Rica's judicial investigation body arrested four people. Three of them are in pretrial detention. The Attorney-General also confirmed that they were continuing to pursue several lines of investigation, including the possible masterminds behind the murder.

The situation inside Nicaragua also continues to worsen daily. The documented facts reveal the **continuity of the state policy** previously described to the Human Rights Council. This policy combines physical and psychological violence, political persecution, and the legal reconfiguration of the state to quell all dissent and maintain total control over the population.



The Group of Experts has documented a significant increase in simultaneous **arbitrary detentions** in multiple departments across the country, including operations in which several members of entire families were detained together. The Experts' concern for the situation of political prisoners has not diminished. **Enforced disappearances** have intensified. The Group of Experts has sent a letter to the Nicaraguan government requesting very specific information on the fate and whereabouts of 13 people and regrets not having received a response to date.

The Experts have recently learned of two **deaths in custody**. Both occurred during the enforced disappearance of the same individuals. The Group has also documented arbitrary detentions and arrests of retired military personnel and people who belonged to Daniel Ortega's historical circle of trust. This demonstrates that no sector is currently exempt from the manifestation of repression.

Likewise, the Ortega-Murillo government continues to inflict recurrent practices of **repression against religious institutions** and their followers, including censorship of humiliating events, surveillance of masses, the presence of infiltrators, restrictions on processions, and confiscations.

Some of these violations conform to previously identified patterns and constitute the first phase of **crimes against humanity**, including politically motivated persecution. There is no doubt that transnational human rights violations against Nicaraguans in exile will continue until the international community puts an end to them.

The Group of Experts urgently calls on the international community to implement comprehensive measures to **protect Nicaraguans in exile**. To do so, the Experts recommend the following:

- Facilitate expedited avenues for asylum, refuge, or naturalization in accordance with the 1951 Convention on the Status of Refugees and its Protocol, and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness.
- Grant the protection recognized to de jure stateless persons enshrined in the 1954 Convention on the Status of Statelessness and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness.
- Hold the State of Nicaragua, a signatory to the 1961 Convention, accountable by adopting accountability measures before the International Court of Justice for violations of international obligations.
- Investigate the commission of crimes and ensure the determination of individual criminal responsibility, whether of agents of the Nicaraguan State or non-state intermediaries.
- Extend legal actions and sanctions against individuals, institutions, and entities identified by the Group of Experts, in particular in the report presented at the 59th regular session of the UNHRC.

VIEWS EXPRESSED BY NICARAGUA AS CONCERNED COUNTRY

The delegation of **Nicaragua** is not present.