



GENEVA CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
ADVANCEMENT AND GLOBAL DIALOGUE

UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

Interactive Dialogue on the High Commissioner's Report on the Human Rights Situation in Nicaragua

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PRESENTATION OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

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Presented in line with UNHRC resolution 58/8, the [report](#) of the High Commissioner explains that the human rights situation in Nicaragua is marked by the constitutional reforms of 2025, with major adverse impacts on the human rights situation in the country.

With a change to over 95% of the text conferring constitutional ranking to the [concentration of powers in the Presidency](#), this reform reduced the separation of powers and weakened political pluralism in future elections, and introduced the figure of co-presidency assumed by the Vice-Presidency without popular election. The new text suppresses the fundamental guarantees such as the express prohibition of torture, the right to due process, and the prohibition of censorship.

These changes consolidate a legislative framework that strengthens mechanisms of social control. In June 2025, at least 75 people were in [arbitrary detention](#) for political reasons. OHCHR documented [16 cases of torture](#) including sexual violence and 31 persons remained forcibly disappeared. This figure rose following mass raids by the national police between July and August 2025.



Civic and democratic space has been further restricted. Journalists have been subjected to arbitrary arrests, enforced disappearances and expulsions. Repression also transcends borders. OHCHR noted 52 cases of arbitrary denial of reintegration and **156 expulsions** without legal remedy, separating families and creating situations of statelessness. In September 2024, the Supreme Court **expelled 135 persons** detained for political reasons in Guatemala, revoking their nationality and confiscating their property. The reform of the Migration Law adopted in February 2025 institutionalised these practises. The murder of Roberto Samcam in Costa Rica in June 2025 reflects the risks faced by Nicaraguans in exile.

The **cancellations of legal status** of organisations continued, totalling 5,535 organisations closed since 2018, further undermining the social fabric. **Freedom of religion** continues to be curtailed, with 850 organisations banned, seven priests expelled, two lay people forcibly disappeared and an evangelical pastor arbitrarily detained. Despite **microeconomic stability**, state policies have not been transparent or tangible in terms of health, education, housing or other social protection, perpetuating deep inequalities and limiting the exercise of economic, social and cultural rights.

The exploitation of resources in **Indigenous and Afro-descent lands** continues without prior consultation or free, prior and informed consent. Meanwhile, land invasions, violence and forced displacement persist. Four community leaders were murdered, presumably for defending their lands, and one Indigenous leader remains forcibly disappeared. As a result, the physical and cultural survival of these peoples is at serious risk.

OHCHR has recorded a **21 per cent increase in femicides** in 2024 compared to the previous year and the persistence of acts of sexual violence against women and girls, including Indigenous women and girls, and serious abuse in detention centres. The absolute criminalisation of abortion remains in force. OHCHR urges the government to immediately release all persons arbitrarily deprived of liberty and to clarify the whereabouts of those who have been forcibly disappeared. OHCHR reiterates its call for the human rights of all Nicaraguans, within and outside the country, to be respected and guaranteed.

The recommendations made by OHCHR and human rights mechanisms are a guide for advancing the promotion and protection of human rights in Nicaragua. OHCHR reiterates its full willingness to accompany Nicaragua in this process.

REPLIES AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

With regard to **transnational repression**, Nicaragua has institutionalized actions that extend persecution beyond its borders in law and in practice. Such transnational repression is not only targeting any more political opponents and activists, but also ordinary citizens and their families, anybody who is considered to express dissent. Legal reforms since 2024 have exported censorship by criminalizing any expression made outside the country, but also by facilitating surveillance without judicial oversight and this results in arbitrary deprivation of nationality, confiscation of assets, denial of documentation, leaving hundred stateless, in a highly vulnerable situation.



Addressing transnational persecution requires decisive international engagement because now, another alarming concern is the **use of extradition requests** and **Interpol red notices** to persecute those in exile. These are actions that states also are in control of and are able to consider and take actions when receiving such requests.

International protection legal pathways for those stripped of nationality or rendered stateless or asylum seekers must be offered, which again is in the control of where Nicaraguans are seeking asylum. Host states must uphold the **principle of non-refoulement** and ensure protection for persons facing extradition to Nicaragua where they risk torture and forced disappearances.

At the same time, OHCHR must continue to document and monitor such practices because the continued public advocacy and scrutiny in multilateral environments such as the UNHRC matters. It is public **advocacy for justice** in the future. It is public **advocacy for accountability** in the future, but it is also an expression of solidarity for those who are either detained or disappeared or at risk.

Another important component is the **continued support for civil society** whether inside or outside Nicaragua. Such support can consist of financial resources, but also technical assistance or protection mechanism both for civil society organizations, human rights defenders and journalists.

OHCHR urges **Nicaragua to come back to the table** and to engage bilaterally and multilaterally with human rights mechanisms because their recommendations such as those emerging from the UPR and other mechanisms do provide a way forward on a human rights and promotion and protection agenda in Nicaragua. It also means that the monitoring work - even if done outside the country - counts for future accountability.

OHCHR must be allowed to continue and document and monitor and report back to the UNHRC on the situation. OHCHR will continue working with civil society inside and outside the country to capacitate them, to train them, to ensure that they have access to mechanisms of **universal jurisdiction** and human rights mechanisms to bring forward cases - whether Special Procedures, UN human rights treaty bodies or others.

The **2027 elections** are still far ahead, but could provide an opportunity in Nicaragua. With this in mind, many steps need to be undertaken and many conditions need to be put in place to ensure that such elections could be credible. Anybody who has leverage in conversations with Nicaragua could engage bilaterally to discuss on the conditions for the elections in the two years leading up to that process. There is a need to ensure amendments to the constitutional and criminal legislation. There is a need to restore the legal personality of civil society organizations, allow political parties to operate within safeguards, allow a safe return of those in exile, restore citizenship, and impartially and promptly investigate all human rights violations. Those are the conditions on which the international community must work in the next two years.

VIEWS EXPRESSED BY NICARAGUA AS CONCERNED COUNTRY

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



INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE

Regional and Cross-Regional Groups

Chile on behalf of the Core Group¹ on the Resolution on the Human Rights Situation in Nicaragua expresses its deep concern over Nicaragua's decision to withdraw from the Human Rights Council at the beginning of 2025. Deeply concerned about its failure to complete the fourth cycle of its Universal Periodic Review, the Core Group urges the Nicaraguan government to respond to the recommendations received as part of this exercise. This continued lack of engagement is a signal of a troubling disregard for its international human rights obligations. In this context, the Core Group welcomes OHCHR's most recent report and are particularly alarmed by the closure of civic and democratic space. The Core Group calls on Nicaragua to address OHCHR's recommendations and fully to restore cooperation with the Office and other UN human rights mechanisms, including by granting unrestricted access to the country. Such engagement is particularly urgent in light of the upcoming electoral cycle and the pressing need to re-establish the rule of law and the separation of powers. Finally, the Core Group urges the Nicaraguan authorities to fulfil their obligations under human rights and immediately release all 73 political prisoners, including stopping the repression of dissidents and journalists and that of a transnational character and ensure victims of human rights violations have meaningful access to justice and reparation.

The **European Union** thanks the High Commissioner for the report and regrets Nicaragua's disengagement from the UNHRC and from the UPR. The EU shares the High Commissioner's serious concern over the persistent erosion of the rule of law and human rights, including through the reform of the Constitution. The EU calls for the end of any form of repression against dissenting voices as well as for the immediate and unconditional release of all those arbitrarily detained. Families of those forcibly disappeared must be informed of their whereabouts. The EU is deeply concerned about allegations of torture on detainees, including sexual violence, as well as the targeting of their relatives, forced expulsion, stripping of citizenship and confiscation of property. The EU reiterates its strong call for the full adherence to international law and obligations enshrined in human rights treaties. The EU calls on Nicaragua to renew cooperation with the international human rights organisations, the UN Group of Human Rights Experts and OHCHR. The EU reaffirms its strong support to the Nicaraguan people and to all efforts aimed at finding a Nicaraguan-led, democratic, peaceful and negotiated solution to the ongoing crisis. Finally, the EU delegation asks Ms. Maarit KOHONEN SHERIFF to elaborate on the possible use of transnational repression against dissenting voices.

The **Netherlands jointly with Belgium and Luxembourg** remain deeply concerned about the human rights situation in Nicaragua, characterised by the erosion of the rule of law and increasing restrictions of fundamental freedoms. The report shows how the government has created a systematic climate of repression and flagrant violation of international human rights law. Arbitrary measures such as revoking the nationality of citizens, prohibiting the return of nationals from abroad or arbitrary detentions have compounded these violations and deepened human suffering. The Benelux countries deeply regret Nicaragua's disengagement from the Human

¹ Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Paraguay and Peru.



Rights Council and its increasing isolation from the international human rights system. Such steps strip Nicaraguan citizens of their vital protections and protecting of their human rights. the Benelux countries strongly urge Nicaragua to respect, protect and fulfil the human rights of all individuals. They encourage the authorities to fully implement the recommendations it has received, and further urge Nicaragua to reinstate the legal personality of civil society organisations. In closing, the Benelux countries ask the High Commissioner, given Nicaragua's withdrawal from the international human rights system, how can the international community ensure that Nicaragua is held accountable for its obligations under international human rights law.

Norway on behalf of the Nordic-Baltic countries thanks the High Commissioner for the comprehensive report, which sadly leaves no room for indifference. The Nordic-Baltic countries are gravely concerned by the persistent erosion of human rights and the rule of law in Nicaragua, particularly in light of the constitutional reform adopted on 30 January 2025, which removed human rights safeguards, including the prohibition of torture, essential fair trial guarantees, and protections for freedom of expression. Reiterating that the prohibition of torture is an absolute, non-derogable *ius cogens* right that cannot be suspended under any circumstance, the Nordic-Baltic countries are also alarmed by the undue restrictions of the rights of freedom of association and peaceful assembly, freedom of expression, including online, and limitations on the right to freedom of religion or belief, particularly against the Roman Catholic Church. The withdrawal of Nicaragua from the Human Rights Council is deeply regrettable. Urging the government to reconsider this decision, resume constructive engagement, and recommit to its international human rights obligations, the Nordic-Baltic countries would like to know which measures is OHCHR considering to address the lack of accountability in Nicaragua.

State Delegations

Argentina thanks OHCHR for providing the Council with a mirror that does not forgive in its report. A mirror that shows the grotesque mutation of a revolutionary who is committing a continuous series of stellar violations of human rights in Nicaragua. On 4 November 1984, Mr. Ortega said that 'the democracy that is going to be implemented in Nicaragua will set an example for Latin America.' Yesterday, the young idealist who spoke of democracy and freedom. Today, the man who imprisons everyone, even those who once marched alongside him, including his blood brother Humberto Ortega, who died under house arrest. Because when democracy becomes routine, it is no longer possible to distinguish friendship from enmity, family from conspiracy. But it is not just about Ortega; it is about us, about this thin, almost invisible line that separates indifference from complicity. What irony. Ortega turned his idea of freedom into a private revolution. But an even worse irony would be if we, in the name of prudence, neutrality or silence, ended up being his accomplices. The report calls us to action, challenges us, compels us, because indifference is never neutral. It is the most comfortable form of complicity. The only thing left is the power of words, a powerful weapon loaded with truths that will only cease firing with the end of autocracy, with his repentance or with our own death.

Austria is deeply concerned by the continued deterioration of human rights and shrinking of civic and democratic space in Nicaragua. Authorities continue to severely curtail the freedoms of association, peaceful assembly and expression both online and offline. Austria urges the



Nicaraguan government to seize arbitrary detention and release all remaining political prisoners including those arbitrarily detained for exercising the right of freedom of expression and to end the practice of citizen stripped of citizenship. Austria reiterates its call to take immediate steps to end and prevent acts of torture and ill treatment during detention and to ensure access to adequate medical care. Deeply concerned by systematic violations of due process and the right to fair trial of persons perceived as opponents of the government, Austria calls on Nicaraguan authorities to ensure fair trial and due process including access to legal assistance without interference. Austria reiterates its call on the Nicaraguan government to renew the cooperation with OHCHR and to grant access to international human rights mechanisms. In closing, Austria asks OHCHR to further elaborate on the prosecution of human rights defenders and journalists.

Brazil thanks the High Commissioner for his report and expresses concern over the deterioration of the human rights situation, the rule of law and the independence of powers in Nicaragua. Brazil notes the systematic restrictions on fundamental freedoms such as freedom of expression, opinion, association, peaceful assembly and religion, as well as documented cases of arbitrary detention and torture. The report highlights that the new constitution has weakened basic human rights protections by removing the explicit prohibition of torture. It is crucial to respect the rights of indigenous peoples and people of African descent in relation to their autonomy and territories. On the other hand, Brazil welcomes the high participation of women in government positions. Brazil also believes that these equality policies should be strengthened with concrete measures to combat femicide and sexual and gender-based violence. Brazil urges Nicaragua to resume its full cooperation with the Council and mechanisms, including the Universal Periodic Review, as well as to consider the Council's recommendations to align the constitutional text with human rights principles and to combat all forms of violence.

Burkina Faso takes note of the High Commissioner's report on the human rights situation in Nicaragua and appreciates the efforts of the Nicaraguan government to promote and protect human rights within its jurisdiction. Burkina Faso believes that these efforts deserve recognition and support from the international human rights mechanism, with strict respect for Nicaragua's sovereignty and priorities. It wishes to recall that the imposition of non-consensual mandates motivated by political considerations is counterproductive, divisive and contrary to the spirit and fundamental principles of the Human Rights Council as set out in its resolution 6251. In conclusion, Burkina Faso calls on the Council to take responsibility for the urgent need to promote a climate of sincere and constructive dialogue, which is the only effective means of promoting and protecting human rights.

Chile welcomes the High Commissioner's report, which clearly reflects the serious deterioration of the human rights situation in Nicaragua. There has been a profound erosion of the rule of law through regressive constitutional reforms, the weakening of the separation of powers and the arbitrary use of institutions to repress dissent. The report documents the systematic restriction of fundamental freedoms and the mass closure of civil society organisations and independent media outlets. Equally alarming is the arbitrary deprivation of nationality and the forced exile of thousands of Nicaraguans, who risk statelessness and family separation. In response, Chile has granted nationality to Nicaraguan exiles, including the writer Gioconda Belli, reaffirming its commitment to protecting those who have been arbitrarily stripped of their nationality. Chile is particularly concerned about the persistence of arbitrary detentions, enforced disappearances,



torture and sexual violence against persons deprived of their liberty. The report also notes an increase in femicides and violence against women and girls, particularly Indigenous and Afro-descendant women and girls, who face multiple forms of discrimination and lack of protection. Chile reiterates its support for the work of the High Commissioner and calls on the Nicaraguan government to immediately cease human rights violations, restore democratic spaces and resume cooperation.

Costa Rica appreciates OHCHR's report, whose findings show the climate of intimidation and fear endured by the population of Nicaragua, especially human rights defenders and journalists. The transnational repression by the government is also extremely serious, such as the murder of Roberto Samcam in Costa Rica. On arbitrary restrictions on the right to nationality and freedom of movement in Nicaragua, Costa Rica points out that citizens are denied re-entry. Expulsions are carried out without justification or legal recourse. The grounds for loss of nationality have been expanded, including for dual citizenship, creating risks of statelessness. In addition, consular services and official documents are denied to perceived opponents, hindering their legal and professional lives and leaving many without official recognition. The serious deficiencies in economic and social rights in Nicaragua are alarming. Minimum wages do not cover the basic basket of goods and services, and informal employment persists. Discriminatory dismissals for political reasons and arbitrary confiscations of property have been documented. It is concerning that access to employment, health care, and education is conditional on loyalty to the Sandinista party. Costa Rica urges states to read and study the reports of the High Commissioner and the Group of Experts. The international community and the UNHRC must address the situation in Nicaragua.

Cyprus expresses deep concern over the persistent erosion of the human rights situation and the rule of law in Nicaragua. Cyprus condemns the systemic repression of dissent, the closure of civic space and the targeting of journalists and human rights defenders. The arbitrary deprivation of nationality and forced exile of political opponents are unacceptable and violate international human rights law. The climate of repression, intimidation and harassment also affects Nicaraguans in exile. Cyprus urges the authorities to immediately cease these practices, and regrets Nicaragua's decision to withdraw from the UNHRC and the UPR. As highlighted in the report, the lack of cooperation with international human rights mechanisms remains deeply troubling. Cyprus calls on Nicaragua to reengage with the human rights ecosystem and to implement the recommendations of OHCHR. In view of Nicaragua's deepening isolation and its evident lack of commitment to human rights applications, Cyprus asks what could the international community do to maintain scrutiny of the situation.

Georgia is deeply concerned over the continued deterioration of the human rights situation in Nicaragua. Arbitrary deprivation of nationality and restrictions on leaving or re-entering the country, torture and ill-treatment, sexual violence and arbitrary detentions are particularly alarming. The latest wide-ranging constitutional amendments which entered into force in February of 1995 represent yet another erosion of the rule of law in Nicaragua allowing a systematic suppression of a decent and demonstrating a total disregard for human rights and fundamental freedoms in breach of international human rights law. Georgia also deeply regrets that OHCHR does not have access to the country and conduct its work remotely. Georgia reaffirms its solidarity with the people of Nicaragua in their pursuit of peace, justice and



accountability, and it supports their aspirations for a democratic future where human rights and fundamental freedoms are fully respected. Georgia calls on the government to respect, protect and fulfill the human rights of all Nicaraguans to fully implement the recommendations of OHCHR and international human rights mechanisms.

Germany thanks the High Commissioner for his report and shares its deep concern regarding the continued deterioration of human rights in Nicaragua. Germany regrets Nicaragua's continued disengagement from the UNHRC and other UN mechanisms. Alarmed by the latest constitutional reform which has further deepened the erosion of the rule of law and human rights protection, Germany notes with deep concern reports of arbitrary detentions, torture and ill treatment including sexual violence and detention and forced disappearances and revocation of nationality. Deploing the confiscation of property, dispossession of Indigenous and African-descending communities and the risk faced by returnees fearing arbitrary arrest, Germany urges the authorities to end harassing civil society not least through the cancellation of legal status of 80% of registered organizations and to cease attacks on women's and Indigenous organizations, journalists and religious leaders. Germany further stresses Nicaragua's obligation to restore fundamental freedoms of expression, peaceful assembly, religion and belief. Reaffirming its solidarity with the people of Nicaragua and supports a peaceful democratic solution to the crisis, Germany asks OHCHR to elaborate on how the international community might more effectively address acts of transnational repression against Nicaraguan voices in exile.

Italy is deeply concerned about the report's findings, particularly the backsliding of the rule of law following the recent constitutional reform. Italy deplores the alarming deterioration of the human rights situation in Nicaragua, especially the undue restrictions on freedom of association, of peaceful assembly of expression, as well as severe limitations on the freedom of religion or belief, notably the worrying targeting of the Catholic Church. Italy condemns the practice of arbitrary arrest and detention against individuals not aligned with the government, such as political opponents, human rights defenders, journalists, civil society members and entrepreneurs who also face expulsions, confiscation of property and revocation of nationality. Italy calls on the Nicaraguan authorities to engage in constructive dialogue and cooperation with OHCHR and the UN human rights mechanisms, including the UPR, also by granting access to the country and urges them to uphold their obligation to respect, protect and fulfill the human rights of all.

Paraguay welcomes the High Commissioner's report and expresses its deep concern about the worsening human rights violations in Nicaragua. Paraguay strongly condemns the systematic use of forced exile, deprivation of nationality and even denial of entry to the country to nationals for political reasons, as well as other forms of censorship and persecution against critical voices both inside and outside the country. Paraguay is particularly concerned about the situation of people in the academic sector who have been subjected to harassment, intimidation and reprisals. It expresses serious concern about the increasing censorship of freedom of the press and religion. Journalists continue to face surveillance, threats, and persecution, which has forced many to seek exile to protect their lives. Similarly, restrictions have been imposed on religious celebrations, and harassment of clergy and lay leaders persists, evidencing a pattern of repression and limitations on all independent expression. Finally, Paraguay urgently calls on the Nicaraguan government to fully respect international human rights law, cooperate with all



relevant international mechanisms, guarantee conditions for the existence of independent democratic institutions, and allow critical voices to express themselves freely without fear of reprisals.

Peru welcomes the presentation of the High Commissioner's report on the serious human rights situation in Nicaragua. Peru expresses its deep concern over the constitutional and legal reforms that have eroded the rule of law, weakened the separation of powers, and systematically restricted fundamental freedoms. Peru is alarmed by the persistent repression against the media, religious organisations, civil society, and indigenous and Afro-descendant peoples, who face violence, land dispossession, and deprivation of their basic rights. The practice of arbitrary detention, enforced disappearances, torture, and deprivation of nationality openly contravenes international human rights law. Peru calls on the Nicaraguan government to immediately release all arbitrarily detained persons, restore due process guarantees, return legal status and confiscated property to organisations, and guarantee free, authentic, and transparent elections. Peru will always support all efforts aimed at re-establishing dialogue and understanding among Nicaraguans in order to achieve a peaceful and sustainable solution to the crisis that will allow for a return to democracy and the rule of law.

Poland remains deeply concerned by the persistent erosion of the human rights situation and the rule of law in Nicaragua. The report clearly shows that the authorities of Nicaragua eliminated any sign of independence and the restricted representatives of civil society organizations from exercising their rights to freedom of peaceful assembly. Those in detention face torture and cruel and degrading treatment including sexual violence. Poland regrets that Nicaragua decided to disengage from the Human Rights Council and its mechanisms following the trend of disengagement from other international human rights mechanisms. Poland urges the authority of Nicaragua to uphold its obligation to respect, protect and fulfill the human rights of all individuals, especially by ensuring the most fundamental political freedoms and stopping torture or inhuman treatment during detention.

Romania thanks OHCHR for its report and recommendations. The persistent erosion of human rights and the rule of law on democratic freedoms in Nicaragua highlighted in the report continue to raise serious concerns. Deeply worrying are also extensive constitutional changes that concentrate power in the executive branch undermining judicial independence, political pluralism and human rights protections. Political participation has been curtailed. Freedom of association, assembly and expression have been severely restricted. Journalists face arbitrary detention, intimidation and exile. Civil society organizations, universities and religious entities have faced repressions, confiscation of assets and censorship. Arbitrary arrests and torture are widespread. Detainees face inhuman conditions including physical and sexual violence, psychological abuse and denial of medical care. Sexual violence and feminicides persist with inadequate investigation and protection. Romania urges the authorities to cease all human rights violations, ensure accountability and grant reparations for all victims. It calls on Nicaragua to resume its participation in and cooperation with the UNHRC, the UPR and other human rights mechanisms and to reestablish cooperation with OHCHR. However illusory restoration of democracy may seem in the light of the detailed account, Romania ask how feasible could be a reversal in the current policies in the country.



Spain welcomes the High Commissioner's report, which reflects how the executive branch's takeover through successive constitutional and legislative reforms is deepening the systematic repression of human rights in Nicaragua. Spain is particularly concerned about the persecution suffered by dissident political opponents and human rights defenders both in Nicaragua and in exile, including the use of violence and torture against prisoners and detainees. Spain rejects the arbitrary deprivation of nationality, which is contrary to international law and a violation of human rights. For this reason, Spain adopted an extraordinary mechanism for granting Spanish nationality, which remains in force as part of our commitment to Nicaraguans who have been stripped of their citizenship. Spain urges the Nicaraguan authorities to cease repression against political opponents, civil society organisations and the media. Spain calls for the immediate release of all political prisoners, the lifting of restrictions on non-governmental organisations and religious groups, and the holding of free, fair and transparent elections. It is crucial that the right to political participation be fully respected so that the Nicaraguan people can decide the future of their country with security and freedom. Finally, Spain regrets that Nicaragua has decided to withdraw from the Human Rights Council and its mechanisms, including its absence today. Spain calls for the restoration of cooperation with OHCHR and with all the mechanisms of the UNHRC, including the Universal Periodic Review.

Sri Lanka takes note of OHCHR's report on the human rights situation in Nicaragua and values the progress achieved by the government of Nicaragua in restoring the right to education and right to health for all its people. Sri Lanka respects Nicaragua's effort in seeking economic and social development. It also positively notes that the recent legal reform on creating the new regulatory framework for the management of protected areas in the country aimed at the rational use of natural resources and the preservation of biodiversity which shows Nicaragua's commitment in protecting and valuing the environment. Sri Lanka reaffirms its principle position that country specific resolutions and initiatives which do not enjoy the support of the country concerned are counterproductive, ineffective and will not achieve peace or stability. UNGA resolution 60/251 which set up the UNHCR recognizes the importance of ensuring universality, objectivity and non-selectivity in the consideration of human rights issues which must be respected by the Council as well as the principle of non-interference in internal affairs.

Switzerland thanks the High Commissioner for his report and expresses alarm at the continuing deterioration of the human rights situation and the rule of law in Nicaragua. Regressive legal reforms, particularly to the constitution, and the lack of investigation into human rights violations are having a clear repressive effect on civic space. Victims and witnesses of these violations, as well as those who cooperate with the High Commissioner, live in fear of reprisals. Switzerland strongly condemns the actions against Anexa Alfred Cunningham, a human rights defender and Indigenous leader who was forced into exile from Nicaragua after participating in a session of a United Nations expert group on the rights of Indigenous peoples in Geneva. Switzerland calls on the authorities to immediately allow all Nicaraguan citizens to return freely to their country, to cease all repression against opponents in exile and to guarantee respect for their rights to nationality. Switzerland encourages the Nicaraguan authorities to rejoin the Human Rights Council and its mechanisms. Broad and constructive participation contributes to the credibility and effectiveness of the Council. In August, the adoption of a law led to the nationalisation of



10% of the territory. Switzerland asks to the High Commissioner to assess the impact of this law on human rights, in particular on Indigenous peoples and on the right to property.

Ukraine thanks the High Commissioner for the comprehensive report and expresses great concern over the rapid deterioration of human rights in Nicaragua. Recent constitutional reforms consolidating power under the so-called co-presidency have dismantled checks and balances and destroyed judicial independence. The crackdown on civil society, closure of thousands of NGOs, prosecution of religious leaders and the silences of the media all illustrate the government's determination to eradicate dissent. Arbitrary detentions, enforced disappearances, torture including sexual violence and the stripping of nationality from hundreds of citizens have left many stateless and in exile. Equally alarming are Nicaragua's hostile actions on the international stage. Reports that its leadership conveyed full recognition of the occupied Ukrainian regions of Donetsk, Lugansk, Kherson and Zaporizhia as parts of Russia flagrantly violate the UN charter, General Assembly resolutions and international law. Any such recognition is legally null and void and will be treated by Ukraine as an unprecedentedly unfriendly act with consequences to follow. Nicaragua's continued maintenance of the so-called honorary consulate in occupied Crimea only deepens these defiance. Ukraine demands accountability for crimes under international law and urges Nicaragua to immediately restore democracy, respect fundamental freedoms and cease legitimizing Russian aggression.

The **United Kingdom** is grateful to the High Commissioner for its report. The continued deterioration of human rights in Nicaragua is deeply concerning. The report reinforces the need for sustained international scrutiny of the systemic dismantling of democratic institutions and repression of civil liberties. The Nicaraguan authorities' regrettable decision to withdraw from the UN Human Rights Council and other international human rights mechanisms must not deter that scrutiny. The arbitrary expulsion of citizens, denial of re-entry and deprivation of nationality are unacceptable and must end. Moreover, the reformed cybercrime law will enable the arbitrary criminalization of peaceful expression contributing to a climate of fear, censorship and of intimidation, particularly for journalists in Nicaragua. The report also sheds further light on violations of the rights of Indigenous peoples and people of African descent as well as evidence of the suppression of religious freedom. The UK would welcome the High Commissioner's views on how the international community can best support implementation of OHCHR's recommendations and ensure accountability for these serious violations.

Uruguay thanks the High Commissioner for Human Rights for his report and update on the human rights situation in Nicaragua. Uruguay continues to follow with deep concern the persistent deterioration of the human rights situation and the rule of law, aggravated by regressive legal reforms and the lack of accountability for human rights violations. It reiterates its condemnation of the continuing repression of citizens, human rights defenders, journalists, political leaders and anyone who expresses a different opinion, as well as the violation of individual freedoms. The erosion of civic space caused by the deprivation of civil and political rights is making the situation increasingly difficult. The constitutional amendments that allow for the deprivation of nationality as a constitutional sanction against those found guilty of acts of treason render many people stateless and force them into exile. Uruguay urges the restoration of the rights of those deprived of their nationality. Uruguay encourages Nicaragua to consider resuming its participation and cooperation with the Human Rights Council, including the



Universal Periodic Review and other United Nations human rights mechanisms, and to engage in an inclusive national dialogue leading to the restoration of the rule of law and respect for the human rights of the Nicaraguan people.

Non-Governmental Organizations

The **Protestant Agency for Diakonian Development** welcomes the High Commissioner's report, which highlights the systematic human rights violations that persist in Nicaragua and which tend to worsen with the state's withdrawal from the main protection mechanisms, including the Council, leaving victims in a situation of absolute defencelessness. To date, more than 30 people are missing. Dozens of relatives of political prisoners live in anxiety and fear due to persecution and the silence imposed by state violence, which in many cases forces them into exile and leaves them completely defenceless. In Nicaragua, there are no judicial guarantees. Becoming a political prisoner is also a death sentence. In August 2025, two political prisoners, Mauricio Alonso and Carlos Cárdenas, were returned to their families dead, weeks after their arbitrary arrests. In these cases, the authorities forced the families to hold express burials without any investigation. Their deaths are attributable to state agents. The state has intensified a policy of transnational repression characterised by espionage, threats and extrajudicial executions in host countries, the latest being the murder of Roberto Samcam in his home. The message of silence and paralysis was directed at the entire exiled community. These patterns constitute serious violations of the human rights of refugees and asylum seekers. The Agency calls upon the UNHRC to adopt all necessary measures to put an end to this saga.

Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW) thanks the High Commissioner for this timely report on Nicaragua and shares its concern over enforced disappearances of Carmen María Sáenz Martínez and Lesbia del Socorro Gutiérrez Pove, both Roman Catholic lay women. CSW is also concerned by the recent deaths of two political prisoners held incommunicado until their deaths. Carlos Cárdenas Zepeda, a lawyer and Roman Catholic lay leader was arbitrarily detained and held incommunicado from 13 August until his death on 29 August. His wife was prohibited from holding any funeral services and was not provided with a death certificate or cause of death. His coffin had already been sealed on collection. Less than a week earlier, on 25 August, political activist Mauricio Alonso Petrie died in arbitrary detention. His cause of death also remains unknown. Mauricio Alonso Petrie was detained on 17 July during a coordinated armed police operation against pastor Rudy Palacios Vargas, an outspoken critic of the regime and several family members including Mauricio Alonso Petrie and his son. No news has been given to the loved ones about the whereabouts, meaning their cases amounted to enforced disappearances. CSW continues to call for the immediate and unconditional release of all political prisoners in Nicaragua with transparency including a full and detailed investigation into what led to the deaths of Dr Carlos Cárdenas Zepeda and Mauricio Alonso Petrie. Those responsible must be held to account and extensive reparations made to their widows.

Center for Justice and International Law (CEJIL) welcomes the High Commissioner's report and gives the floor to Mr. Joao Maldonado, a Nicaraguan activist for freedom, democracy and human rights, who, because of its opposition, was stripped of his nationality and exiled. In exile in Costa Rica, he suffered two attacks as a result of international persecution by the Nicaraguan state. In the last one, in 2024, his partner Nadia Robleto was wounded by gunshots and today faces



serious consequences. He speaks not only on his own behalf, but on behalf of thousands of Nicaraguans who have disappeared, been imprisoned, tortured, stripped of their nationality or forced into exile. He speaks for the political prisoners who survive in inhumane conditions and for the families who await justice. The regime's repression has crossed borders, violated sovereignties and defied international law. Even refugees and defenders in exile remain at risk. He urges the Council to request the immediate release of political prisoners and an end to kidnapping and repression; effective international mechanisms for investigation, punishment and protection for opponents in exile; support for the Nicaraguan people in their legitimate aspiration to restore democracy, the rule of law and fundamental freedoms. Silence and inaction fuel impunity. Only justice, protection and international solidarity keep hope alive for Nicaragua.

Aula Abierta appreciates the High Commissioner's report and draws attention to the serious crisis in Nicaragua's public universities. Throughout 2025, the government has continued to carry out arbitrary dismissals, acts of political proselytism and political indoctrination, systematically interfering in academic life. These acts have eliminated university autonomy, deteriorated the quality of education and violated the rights of students and teachers, in clear contradiction with the state's international obligations to respect academic freedom and the right to education. There is concern about the deepening concentration of power in the presidency and the dismantling of civic space with the arbitrary cancellation of more than 5,000 organisations to date. This context has reinforced a pattern of repression against journalists, defenders, religious leaders and indigenous communities, including journalists, defenders and indigenous leaders, and more than 14 people who are presumed to have been forcibly disappeared. The new general migration law has increased the possibility of stripping exiled Nicaraguans of their nationality. In addition, mining concessions continue to be granted on indigenous territory without free, prior and informed consultation, violating fundamental collective rights. Aula Abierta urges the UNHRC to maintain close scrutiny of Nicaragua, to ensure that these abuses are investigated, and to demand that the state comply with its obligations.

Article 19 welcomes the High Commissioner's report, which ensures essential scrutiny to the systematic undue restrictions of fundamental freedoms in Nicaragua. Since 2019, Nicaragua has been democratically backsliding with criminalization, prosecution and violence against journalists and other dissident voices causing an impact on civic space. The administration has resorted to a battery of legal and coercive tools, notable among them are the modification of laws such as foreign agents, cyber crimes as well as sanctions for spreading fake news and committing treason. These ambiguous rules have been used to punish dissent and strengthen state repression. Between January and July of 2024, 16 of them which occurred in exile, highlighting repression transcending borders. Among these attacks registered by civil society are arbitrary detentions, restrictions to Internet access, legal proceedings, stigmatizing rhetoric, forced displacement, exile and even sexual abuse. This has been exacerbated by Nicaragua's multiple withdrawal from human bodies causing zones of silence within the country. Regarding the UPR process in 2024, the Nicaraguan government has rejected all recommendations, dismisses criticism as interference and authorities have denied systemic violations. Article 19 urges Nicaragua to ensure the full respect of the right of freedom of expression, particularly through repealing and amending repressive laws and ceasing all attacks against the press. Lastly, Article



19 asks the High Commissioner and UN Member States to continue monitoring the human rights situation in Nicaragua, especially with regards to freedom of expression.

Ingénieurs du Monde states that Nicaragua is experiencing a human rights crisis that transcends its borders. Ortega and his circle exercise transnational repression, threatening and accusing exiled individuals through immigration tools and persecution in exile. In Costa Rica, thousands of opponents are at risk. On 19 June 2025, opposition figure Roberto Samcam was murdered in San José. According to the authorities themselves, this appears to be a politically motivated contract killing. This incident calls for a thorough independent investigation, international cooperation and protective measures for Nicaraguan exiles. The persecution of the Catholic Church and many Protestant churches continues, including restrictions on worship, harassment and criminalisation of natural assistance. The right to return is also restricted. Thousands have been stripped of their nationality or prevented from returning. There is also concern about the strained relations with Russia, China, Iran and other autocracies, which exacerbates the repression. It calls on the UNHRC to strengthen mechanism on Nicaragua, in particular to support the excellent work of the group of experts; to demand an end to the repression; to restore nationality and the right of return; and to coordinate with UNHCR and the states of chosen protection for those in Costa Rica, with special attention to high-risk cases.

Peace Brigades International appreciates the High Commissioner's report and gives the floor to Claudia Vargas, feminist human rights defender. She is a Nicaraguan exiled in Costa Rica, naturalised Spanish citizen and widow of Roberto Samcam, who was murdered on 19 June 2025 in San José, Costa Rica. Roberto was an army major, political analyst and writer. His books and his voice denounced the authoritarian drift and national and transnational repression in Nicaragua. It was precisely because he spoke out, wrote and refused to remain silent that he was murdered. His crime was planned and executed with precision. His murder violated the sovereignty of Costa Rica, the country with the most Nicaraguan political refugees, and is part of a documented pattern of repression, hate campaigns, surveillance, denationalisation, attacks and murders that confirm that Nicaragua's repression is being exported beyond its borders. The border, the home as the very essence of peace, was violated. The international community and the UNHRC must act decisively in the face of transnational repression. Claudia Vargas requests protection for those exiled in the name of democracy, the life and memory of Roberto Samcam, and those who live under the threats and harassment of the Nicaraguan state. She asks the Council to act decisively and prevent further impunity and injustice.

Amnesty International gives the floor to Tininiska Rivera, daughter of Brooklyn Rivera, the Miskito indigenous leader and human rights defender. Her father was detained on 29 September 2023 in Bilby, Nicaragua, and has been missing ever since. His whereabouts are unknown. His only crime has been to defend the human rights of the people in his community. Her daughter demands that the Nicaraguan government immediately report his whereabouts, guarantee his immediate and unconditional release, provide information about his health, and allow him to communicate with his family. Her father's disappearance is not an isolated incident; it is part of a pattern of repression against dissent, incommunicado detention, and disappearances. In August, two people arbitrarily detained for political reasons were found dead, confirming that the government's strategy combines forced disappearance and death in state custody. Nicaragua is experiencing severe repression in the form of detentions, torture, exile, deprivation of nationality,



and laws that criminalise criticism. More than 5,000 civil society organisations have been shut down since 2018. Amnesty International continues to urgently call on the international community not to allow this impunity to continue. Amnesty demands that the Nicaraguan government be held accountable, that it release more than 70 people who have been arbitrarily detained, and that it immediately cease the repression.

The **International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute (IBAHRI)** is concerned about the findings of the report of the High Commissioner on the brutal human rights crackdown in Nicaragua which is marked by violations that include extrajudicial killings, arbitrary detentions, forced disappearances and arbitrary denial of nationality to an extent that qualifies as crimes against humanity as part of a campaign to eliminate any form of dissent. President Ortega's constitutional reforms have dismantled the separation of powers by granting him de facto control over their legislature, judiciary and electoral institutions. At the same time, his government has removed the explicit prohibition of torture and withdrawn Nicaragua from several UN bodies. Since 2023, at least 546 perceived opponents have been arbitrarily stripped of their nationality rendered stateless in violation of international law and therefore left along with their family profoundly vulnerable to abuse. 80% of NGOs registered in the country since 2017 had their legal status revoked dealing a devastating blow to civic space in the country. IBAHRI calls for the immediate release of all those arbitrarily detained and further calls on the international community to robustly respond to the deteriorating situation in Nicaragua and use all possible avenues to hold the Ortega government accountable for the international crimes committed including before the International Court of Justice under the Convention Against Torture and the Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness.

International Service for Human Rights (ISHR) welcomes the High Commissioner's report highlighting the exposure of Indigenous peoples and people of African descent to violence, illegal exploitation and the usurpation of their lands and resources, which seriously threatens their cultural and physical existence. In recent months, the Nicaraguan government has carried out various legal reforms to endorse the plundering and dispossession of the country's natural resources in order to favour its economic interests and those of its Chinese partners and to finance its perpetuation in power. On 6 May 2025, the government formalised Law 12/48, which for the first time allowed mining concessions to be established within protected areas. According to the official Nicaragua's public registry (La Gaceta Nicaragua), to date, nine lots have been concessioned within seven duly titled Indigenous and Afro-descendant territories without prior consultation and free, prior and informed consent. In addition, nine mining concession lots to Chinese companies are located within the Bosawás biosphere reserve and four within the boundaries of the Río San Juan biosphere reserve. The mining activity promoted and encouraged by the government not only violates the rights of Indigenous and Afro-descendant peoples but also generates revenue to finance the model of repression.

FACTS & FIGURES ON ID PARTICIPATION

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20 State Delegations

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