



NICARAGUA SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN ACTION GROUP (NSCAG) Annual Report 2017

NEU-NUT Section Teacher Exchange

July and August saw the launch of a teacher exchange programme between UK and Nicaraguan teachers of second languages. The purpose of the exchange, the first of its kind, was to enable teachers to share information and knowledge on the methodology and strategy for teaching a second language.

The visit was sponsored by the National Education (NEU)-National Union of Teachers (NUT) Section, in partnership with Nicaraguan teachers' union ANDEN, the Nicaraguan Ministry of Education MINED and the NSCAG.



Teachers arrive at MINED HQ. Photo: Liz Light

Ten members of the National Education Union (NEU)-National Union of Teachers (NUT) Section, all teachers of Spanish as a second language, travelled to Nicaragua and participated in workshops and practical sessions with Nicaraguan teachers of English as a second language. They also took part in classroom activities in local schools. Part of the exchange took place in regions outside of the capital Managua and during their stay in the regions, members of the delegation stayed with local families in order to learn more about the culture of Nicaragua.

On their return to the UK, members of the delegation produced a video which can be found at the link below:-

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xj9jPRvtv1s>

UK Trade Union Solidarity

In October 2017, Central America was hit by Tropical Storm NATE. The system wrought a path of destruction across Central America with the highest death toll reported in Nicaragua, where at least 16 people lost their lives. Almost 6,000 homes were damaged, and 30,000 people in the region were affected by landslides and flooding. NSCAG launched an appeal to provide much needed assistance to public sector union UNE and health union FETSALUD. Thanks to the generosity of our trade union affiliates, xxxx was raised.

During the year, three guests from Nicaraguan unions visited the UK at the invitation of UK sister unions. In February, Camila Mejia from health union FETSALUD attended UNISON's National Women's Conference at the invitation of UNISON, in April Jose Antonio Zepeda, General Secretary of teachers' union ANDEN attended the Annual Conference of the NEU-NUT Section and in October, Mercedes Sanchez from the university support staffs union FESITUN attended a number of events in Birmingham and Wolverhampton at the invitation of UNISON's West Midlands Region.

UNISON continued support for a project developed by health union FETSALUD aimed at women and young people and also agreed to support a project around workplace bullying submitted by FESITUN. UNITE sponsored our summer raffle and also continued to offer free rooms at its Headquarters for our events. In addition, the T.U.U.T. Charitable Trust approved a grant of £5000 to fund a project submitted by the Self Employed Workers' Union CTCP. The aim of the project is to address the problem of child labour in Nicaragua's informal sector.

As in previous years, we were present at all the major trade union conferences.

NICA Act

2017 was marked by campaigning activities to counter US proposals to impose sanctions on Nicaragua by introducing the so-called NICA Act. This included launching an online petition, lobbying MPs and the Foreign Office and organising briefings, publicity and social media around the campaign. We welcomed the support given to us by UK trade union members, who helped by raising the issue with their own MPs.

Our appreciation

We would like to thank all those who have contributed to NSCAG's work, whether a trade union individual, branch, region or national office. We are also extremely grateful to the volunteers who have staffed our stalls at trade union conferences around the country and to those who have assisted us with translation work throughout the year. A full copy of the NSCAG accounts is available on request from the office.

Affiliations

Ten national unions were affiliated at the year-end: BECTU, BFAWU, CWU, FBU, GMB, NEU-NUT Section, RMT, UNISON, UNITE and USDAW. The number of affiliated branches and regions was the same as that of last year, 114; this takes into account both lapsed branches and regions and new ones.

There were 16 new branches and regions over the year compared to 9 last year. Of the 16 new ones, 6 were from UNISON, 5 from UNITE and 5 from GMB. Four trades councils are also affiliated.

Affiliation breakdown by union:

	Dec 12	Dec 13	Dec 15	Dec 16	Dec 17
CWU	14	13	15	12	12
GMB	2	2	5	5	9
NUT	6	6	8	8	9
RMT	1	1	1	1	1
UNISON	21	24	24	36	38
UNITE	23	18	57	51	45
USDAW	1	1	1	1	0
TOTALS	68	65	117	114	114

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