

INTERVENTION OF MINISTER DENIS MONCADA COLINDRES AT THE  
EXTRAORDINARY SESSION OF THE PERMANENT COUNCIL OF THE OAS ON THE  
REPORT OF THE IACHR

June 22, 2018

Good Morning,

Mr. Secretary General Luis Almagro.

Mr. Chairman of the Permanent Council, Ambassador Andrés González.

Ms. Commissioner Antonia Urrejola

Mr. Executive Secretary of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, Paulo  
Abrao.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Permanent and Alternate Representatives and Observers to the  
Organization of American States.

We thank the Secretary General for presenting his report on the situation in Nicaragua.  
Likewise, we took note of the presentation by Commissioner Urrejola and Mr. Abrao and of  
their report: Human Rights in the context of social protests in Nicaragua.

The Government of Reconciliation and National Unity (GRUN), Nicaragua completely  
rejects the IACHR report as it is subjective, prejudiced and entirely biased.

The report analyses the social protests that occurred on April 18, which did not result in  
any deaths. However, the media, manipulating the information, published fake news about  
the death of a university student at the Central American University (UCA), which never  
happened, information that served as a trigger for the events that occurred from April 19  
onward.

From that day on, groups seeking the destabilization and rupture of the country's  
constitutional order, oblivious to any social claim, instigated a coup, which turned into  
ravages, fires, looting and riots.

The Nicaraguan state categorically expresses its position on the facts analysed by the  
IACHR, which do not occur within the framework of social protests, but rather within the  
framework of an attempt to break the constitutional and institutional framework, to de facto,  
change the authorities and the legitimately elected Government of Nicaragua.

From that fake news, the preconceived plan of the political coup began to evolve, with the  
participation of armed gang members, which caused three deaths on the 19th, including a  
policeman who died by gunshot fire while restoring public order and free movement of  
people in the vicinity of the Polytechnic University of Nicaragua (UPOLI).

Simultaneously, this criminal pattern was replicated in some of the main cities of the  
country, which revealed the existence of previously designed and financed planning and  
organisation.

The Government of Nicaragua reaffirms that it is not a policy of the state to repress social  
protests and even less so, the excessive and arbitrary use of force by the National Police;

it is enough to mention the multiple marches that have occurred in the country, in which no deaths have occurred. We reject the recurring and unfounded affirmations of convictions, based on complaints made against the state of Nicaragua, and in particular, against the National Police to which the report alludes.

The report presented by the IACHR, up until June 6, on deaths attributed to the state, bears no relation to reality, because 98 dead persons linked to this situation were reported, which includes police officers, Sandinista citizens and the population in general. Not all the deceased are attributable to the situation that was happening at that time, as some of them were due to causes unrelated to the events, which are being investigated by the competent authorities.

The 143 deaths indicated in the report have not been properly investigated and verified by the IACHR, since in reality several citizens have stated that their identities have been used, making them appear as deceased; others of those identified as dead have been for causes unrelated to the events.

This report deliberately omits all armed attacks, sieges, harassment and kidnappings of which the national police have been and continue to be a target, as has occurred in Matagalpa, Jinotepe, Masaya, Leon, Jinotega, Diriamba, Sébaco, Nagarote, Nindirí, among others and the massacre and kidnapping of police officers in Mulukukú and El Jicaral. By decision of the President of the Republic, and at the request of the Commission for Dialogue, they were confined to their units. This has led to an increase in criminal activity.

It should also be noted that the IACHR disregards human and constitutional rights, such as the right to work, the free movement of people, the right to receive health care, as well as the right to food and education.

This report also omits the destruction, arson and looting of public institution offices, municipal buildings, police units, buildings and property of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) and homes of FSLN leaders and public officials; besides the destruction and looting of ambulances, health centres, mobile clinics, maternity homes, schools, equipment and machinery of municipal authorities.

Most of the sources of information cited in the IACHR report come from agencies and media that are hostile to the government, which in general are false and manipulated news.

The IACHR does not take into account the testimony of families who have been affected or of those who have had their property destroyed. This removes the objectivity of its report since it is not based on in-depth investigations and therefore cannot have definitive conclusions, since it does not incorporate the complaints of citizens who have been the victims of abuse by destabilizing groups.

The State of Nicaragua rejects categorically all the irregularities and denial of medical attention that the IACHR reflects in its report. The Ministry of Health showed evidence to the members of the IACHR of patients who were and are being treated in the different health units, and the follow-up in the outpatient clinics of the hospitals. During this period we have also received patients from private hospitals so that they receive continuous care. We reaffirm that patient care has never been denied.

On June 6, the state offered and provided the IACHR with detailed information on the 1,337 injured, with information from the health unit where each was attended, the situation in which they arrived and the care provided. This has been deliberately omitted by the IACHR, who have reported that there has been poor quality of care in some cases, but without having carried out a medical audit to evaluate the care process.

The state of Nicaragua strongly rejects the alleged irregularities in the initiation of the investigations regarding the deceased and injured. In all of the cases it has processed, the Public Prosecutor's Office has acted in compliance with international standards and exhausting all possible lines of investigation.

We reject the alleged lack of confidence in filing complaints, as the Public Prosecutor's Office has received more than 60 complaints by relatives of deceased persons, as well as numerous complaints of damage to public and private property that demonstrate the confidence of the population in the institution.

During the visit of the IACHR, the Public Prosecutor's Office provided this information and information about the investigative measures that have been carried out, all of which have been ignored in this report.

In Nicaragua, there is absolute freedom of expression, and what's more this is sometimes abused, spreading fake news that keeps the population in confusion and provokes criminal acts, such as the burning of Radio Ya and Radio Nicaragua, acts which were omitted in the report, even though the life of working journalists was put in danger.

It is enough to read the written, radio, television and virtual means of communication opposed to the government, to verify the existence of freedom of expression, spreading fake news, derision and media lynching of Nicaragua's public servants. We strongly reject the accusation that most audiovisual media are governmental.

The reporters from the media which is hostile to the government inexplicably arrive in advance at the locations where vandalism is being committed, such as fires and destruction of public and private property, among others.

The damage suffered by officials and citizens identified as Sandinistas are not reflected in the IACHR report; as well as the fires provoked in Masaya, León and Managua with people burned and others kidnapped, which constitutes real terrorist acts. Likewise, the stigmatization of public officials and their families through social media constitutes a true media lynching, in violation of human rights, to which the IACHR did not refer in the report.

In the IACHR report, the state of Nicaragua is condemned a priori for the deaths which occurred on May 30th, among which there were Sandinista militants killed, and the report reaches the hasty conclusion that the national police are to blame for the fire and deaths which occurred on 16<sup>th</sup> June. The Velázquez Pavón family in the Carlos Marx neighborhood in Managua had been threatened on June 14 by opposition elements for not participating in the national strike. The state of Nicaragua is investigating to determine those responsible for all these regrettable events, which is why we have agreed with the General Secretariat of the OAS and the IACHR to the creation of the Interdisciplinary Group of Independent Experts (GIEI), to assist in the penal investigations that the state of Nicaragua is already carrying out.

Based on the foregoing, we reject the conclusions of the report presented by the IACHR, for totally omitting the truth, offending the dignity of Nicaraguans.

The state of Nicaragua denies and rejects that it has violated the right to life, personal integrity, health, personal freedom, assembly, freedom of expression and access to justice.

It should be noted that Nicaragua, on the two occasions that it has attended the Human Rights Council of Geneva, has successfully gone through the Universal Periodic Review. It is not the policy of the state of Nicaragua to violate human rights, rather, they constitute a fundamental axis of our Political Constitution and of the action of the Government of Reconciliation and National Unity. Suffice it to say that Nicaragua was the safest country in Central America and the second in Latin America, until the occurrence of these unfortunate events which have sought to overthrow a lawful and legitimately constituted government.

The Government of Nicaragua takes due note of the recommendations of the IACHR. The GRUN is committed to achieving the cessation of all forms of violence in the country and to the exercise of the right of the population to free movement, to health units to allow them to attend to their work, to schools and the right to live in peace.

We have recently extended a warm invitation to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the European Union, the General Secretariat of the Organization of the OAS and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights to visit Nicaragua and accompany us with their valuable technical support in the work of the Verification and Security Commission created last June 16th, within the National Dialogue Commissions, with the mediation of the Conference of Bishops.

Before these acts of violence took place, we were working well with the Secretariat of the Organization of American States. In this sense, an Electoral Accompaniment Mission was established for the municipal elections held in November 2017, whose report was presented in December of last year in the Permanent Council. In this context, the General Secretariat of the OAS and the Government of Nicaragua agreed on the establishment of a Technical Cooperation Mission for the implementation of the recommendations of the Electoral Accompaniment Mission, based on the project "Strengthening of Democratic Institutions in Nicaragua through the Implementation of the recommendations of the MAE / OAS Nicaragua 2017", which consists of the following components that are and which were referenced by the esteemed friend of the OAS:

- 1) Electoral Reforms;
- 2) Technological Solutions;
- 3) Protocols and Technical Specifications Guide;
- 4) Electoral Registration,

all of them to be executed according to the schedule that has been agreed for these components, which will be concluded in January 2019 with the delivery of proposals for electoral reform.

The Government of Nicaragua firmly believes that dialogue and negotiation is the only peaceful solution to any difference, that is why we advocate and will continue working for a dialogue with constructive participation that will result in consensual agreements that respect the constitutional order for the benefit of the peace, tranquility, security and stability of the nation as a necessary route towards advancing the path to democratization and the strengthening of electoral institutions.

Based on the above, we express our disagreement with the report presented by the IACHR entitled "Human Rights in the context of social protests in Nicaragua," considering that it is biased and partial, and does not include the information that the State presented. The IACHR takes as its sole source news and information published by media which is hostile to the government, which has a clearly defined political position, information that is intended to be legitimized by its report, without being previously investigated and verified.

The state of Nicaragua does not agree with the content and conclusions of the IACHR Report, because they are based on assessments, biased and subjective information, which consequently and logically leads to conclusions that do not conform to reality, conclusions in which the state is condemned, without waiting for the results of the investigations that clarify the truth.

The report does not reflect any concern for the acts of violence on the part of opposition groups that, with their claim to take political power in the country, have tried to violate the constitutional order, disrespecting the rights to life, personal integrity, free movement, the right to work, health, public safety, among others, of the people in general and of people associated with the Government or state officials.

The humanist vocation and deep social sensitivity of the Government of Nicaragua will continue to express its commitment, together with our people, to combat violence, insecurity, destabilization and social chaos, induced by some sectors in the search for political power; they intend to break the constitutional order with actions that, unfortunately, have brought mourning to the Nicaraguan family.

We request that the IACHR include in its report all the observations that the State has expressed in its considerations.

The state of Nicaragua wants to record the firmness of its call for peace, dialogue and security of democratic strengthening and strengthening of its institutions, aware that the way out of this situation, where chaos and social, economic and political instability have been created, must be in accordance with the constitutional order of the Republic.

The state of Nicaragua continues and will continue to work for peace and stability, so that truth and justice, social order, security, and the human rights of all Nicaraguans and people who are in our territory prevail.

Washington, D.C. June 22, 2018.