



## **NSCAG MARCH UPDATE**

Dear Colleagues

March has proved to be a busy month, with lots going on, not to mention an office move (see below), so we are bringing you lots of new and recent information in our latest update. If you have any questions, please feel free to email me on [nscag@nicaraguasc.org.uk](mailto:nscag@nicaraguasc.org.uk)

Also, a reminder that we are always pleased to provide speakers for regional and branch meetings either remotely or in person, so just let us know if this is of interest to you.

### **Office Move**

On 27 March, we are moving from our current office in Durham Road to new premises! We will no longer have an office but are moving into a co-working space where we will have a dedicated desk, some storage space and access to meeting rooms. This has been partly brought about due to a move to more remote working by our part-time staff, but more importantly as a cost-saving measure given that our resources are really stretched. Our new address will be as follows: - NSCAG, c/o Space 4, 113-115 Fonthill Road, London N4 3HH.

### **NEU Conference**

We are delighted to announce that we have a Nicaraguan guest with us this year at the NEU Conference. She is Aleyda Cruz Flores, a primary school teacher who is a member of Nicaraguan teachers' union ANDEN. We have organised a fringe meeting on Education in Nicaragua during the Conference. Aleyda will be speaking and will be joined by Guisell Morales, Nicaraguan Ambassador to the UK and Ireland and Heather Marcano, a participant in the NEU-sponsored teacher exchange with Nicaragua which took place last year. The fringe meeting will take place during lunchtime on Wednesday 5 April – full details will be available from the NSCAG stall during the Conference, so we hope that NEU members attending the Conference will come and see us!

### **Nicaraguan prisoner release**

In our February update, we included a statement on the recent release of 222 individuals by the Nicaraguan government on 9 February. If you missed the statement, it can be found at the link [here](#).

The individuals concerned were guilty of serious crimes. They actively participated in the US-funded 2018 violent coup attempt to oust the country's democratically elected government. Unfortunately, the government's action has been completely distorted by corporate media in the US, EU and in the UK, and the US continues to take aim at the country through a mix of illegal sanctions and threats.

We have now published some additional information on this issue which can be found on our website [here](#).

### **Webinar Recording**

A webinar organised by the Nicaragua Solidarity Coalition, of which we are a member, was held on 12 March. The webinar – *'Standing Tall to the Wrecking Ball'* – featured speakers Dan Kovalik, Nan McCurdy

and Sara Flounders and explored Nicaragua's resistance to violent overthrow, US intervention and coercive measures ('sanctions'). A recording of the webinar can be found [here](#).

### **Calls grow for cessation of hostility against Nicaragua**

A campaign which has sought to discredit the Government of Nicaragua and Sandinista Revolution has sparked a backlash.

Organisations in the United States, Canada and the UK are among a growing list of signers of a statement which denounces the escalation of aggression against Nicaragua through hostile policies, particularly illegal sanctions, which have been coupled with a strong media disinformation campaign.

See more [here](#)

### **Nicaragua: A History of US Intervention and Resistance**

A reminder that the new book from US human rights and labour lawyer Dan Kovalik is available to buy from Amazon – see link [here](#)

A review of the book can be found [here](#)

### **Women in Power**

'*We're not fighting for space any more*' – article by Becca Renk, see link [here](#)

'*Three Women Discover the Americas' Best Kept Secret: Nicaragua!*' – see link [here](#)

### **Maternity Waiting Homes**

Since 2013, the Nicaraguan government has promoted a strategy of building maternity waiting homes in order to reduce perinatal maternal mortality. Currently there are 181 maternity waiting homes to assist women in the final period of their pregnancy. The women are mainly from rural areas, although they can also come from the urban sector if they wish. The mayor of Ticuantepe, Dr. Ligia Ramirez, said that the strategy is to have at least one maternity waiting home in each municipality. *"It is a strategy that has supported the family, because there are people who live in places that are not close to health centres and here they can be seen by doctors. They can sleep and they will have their baby in a hospital or a well-staffed health centre. Here they come to rest, to relax, to de-stress and also to receive timely medical attention. This strategy has led to a decrease in maternal mortality. The women can come here two weeks before [their due dates] and sometimes they can stay for more than a month, depending on their condition"*. Among the benefits they receive are lodging, food, and education on subjects such as dental care, self-esteem, women's rights, risks during pregnancy, and newborn care. The maternity waiting homes have a staff dedicated to the care of pregnant women who provide 24-hour care.

### **Nicaragua Launches Booklet on Rights of Persons with Disabilities**

Nicaraguan government ministries have launched a booklet entitled *"Attention and care for persons with disabilities"* to promote and guarantee the full exercise of their human rights. The booklet states that every person with a disability has the right to be part of education, health, sports, culture, work, and

political activities. The booklet guides the family on how to care for and attend in a loving and respectful way people with disabilities who require greater support to live well, with peace of mind, wellbeing and a better quality of life. Through the programme Todos con Voz (everyone deserves a voice) house to house visits are made as well as delivery of aid to individuals and families. The head of the Ministry of the Family, Johana Flores, said, *“It is one more effort that adds to this whole strategy of promoting life.... We are mandated to work with the family and the community to strengthen the restoration of the rights of our brothers and sisters with disabilities.”*

### **Tripartite Commission Agrees on 10% Salary Increase**

On 23 February, Minister of Labour Alba Luz Torres, trade union leaders, and private sector representatives agreed on a 10% percent increase in the minimum wage for ten economic sectors effective from 1<sup>st</sup> March. The leader of teachers’ union ANDEN, Professor José Antonio Zepeda, emphasised that this agreement will allow workers to recover their purchasing power. *“Obviously, for us as a union movement, this is always about prioritising employment. This agreement follows that principle of tripartism, the principle through which our government establishes the active and direct participation of workers in the decision-making process.”*

### **Blog posts from Friends of the ATC (Rural Workers Association)**

From 3-17 January, Friends of the ATC hosted the Sustainable Agriculture and Environment in Nicaragua course with the University of Maryland. Students wrote about their experiences through blog posts and essays. A selection of these posts can be found [here](#)

### **Solidarity tours**

Casa Ben Linder are offering a highly recommended programme of ten day, reasonably priced solidarity visits including the following – May: Health & Hope; June: Voltage & Volcanoes; August: Sustainable Development; October: Salud & Solidaridad. Further information and registration can be found [here](#)

In solidarity



Louise

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