

URGENT SOLIDARITY WITH NICARAGUA TO STOP STATE VIOLENCE

The MenEngage Global Alliance expresses once again its deep consternation at the brutal repression unleashed by the State of Nicaragua against its civilian population, as documented in the [reports of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights](#) and continuous [communications from the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights of the United Nations](#). In three months of social protests in that country, more than 300 people have been killed, most of them exercising their constitutional right to demonstrate against the government. More than 2,000 people have been injured. Hundreds have been detained and imprisoned arbitrarily, and many have been subjected to cruel treatment. Human rights defenders and activists of civil society organizations, including members of our networks in the country, are being persecuted, threatened and their work is being criminalized by the State. Journalists and Catholic priests who have denounced the repression and protected young people, have faced physical and verbal attacks, damage to their property, theft, and some churches have been the target of gunfire.

The authoritarian practice of the State of Nicaragua and its leaders is a deplorable manifestation of patriarchy in its most harmful expressions, resorting to violence to impose and perpetuate itself in power. But just as women struggle against the violence of individual men, sooner or later, justice will prevail, and the perpetrators of the current repression will have to face the consequences of their actions. It is no coincidence that the paramilitary groups that are sowing terror are made up of men who have been trained, paid or indoctrinated to kill and repress whoever gets in their way, be they unarmed youth, women, adolescents or even young children.

We express our admiration and respect for the civic and nonviolent struggle maintained by hundreds of thousands of Nicaraguans, mostly young men and women. Their courage to build a democratic society, free of authoritarianism and corruption, calls for a commitment from us all. They must know that they are not alone, that the international community is condemning state repression, as reflected in dozens of international pronouncements issued by national governments and parliaments, regional organizations, including the Organization of American States, institutions of global influence, world leaders and the United Nations itself.

We urgently call on president Daniel Ortega, to stop this massacre of the Nicaraguan people, to order the dismantling of the pro-government armed groups, as recommended by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights in its first report of May 21, 2018.

We ask the international community, especially to the governments of the world to continue speaking out, and to use international instruments - such as resolutions of condemnation, sanctions and monitoring of the State of Nicaragua - to put pressure on the Nicaraguan State to put an immediate end to the repression and all other violations of human rights.

We urge the Organization of American States (OAS), the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to accelerate their actions for Nicaragua, as required by their mandate to protect human rights in the world. Their work in supporting the independent investigation to determine those responsible for crimes committed is essential, as is their technical assistance in preparing fair and transparent early elections to put an end to the political crisis and give back to the people their right to elect who will represent them in government.

We ask the networks and organizations that are members of the MenEngage Alliance to contact the Ministries of Foreign Affairs in their respective countries and ask what they are doing about the human rights crisis in Nicaragua, to denounce what is happening in international spaces, to join the campaign on social media with the hashtag #SOSNicaragua urging Ortega's regime to end the state repression, and to reach out to the Nicaraguan embassy in each of their countries to demand an explanation.

MenEngage Alliance Global Secretariat. *This statement has been developed with the MenEngage Network in Nicaragua and the Latin America region. July 18, 2018.*