



Nicaragua Solidarity News January, 2019

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Junieth Leiva, Fair trade coffee producer from the co-operative SOPPEXCCA, will be visiting Bristol and London during Fairtrade Fortnight

Our grateful thanks to all our members and supporters for your continued support for our work in solidarity with Nicaragua through the most challenging period since the 1980s contra war.

These two statements by Ronald Reagan in 1985 and Donald Trump in 2018 epitomise the parallels between the two periods.

I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, find that the policies and actions of the Government of Nicaragua constitute an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States and hereby declare a national emergency to deal with that threat.

I, DONALD TRUMP, find that the situation in Nicaragua.....constitutes an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States, and I hereby declare a national emergency to deal with that threat.

In 2019 we will continue to condemn and reject US interference in Nicaragua's internal affairs, and to build solidarity with our partner organisations in the Nicaraguan trade union movement, the co-operatives and the organisation of the wider social economy. These are the organisations who are fighting for the rights of those who are most impoverished and who have suffered the most serious consequences of the attempted coup.

With good wishes for the New Year from all at NSC and NSCAG

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News from Nicaragua

Donald Trump’s Xmas ‘present’ to Nicaragua: the intensification of intervention:

As President Trump’s brinksmanship threatens a "very long" government shutdown over border wall funding, the President found time to sign off the Nicaragua Investment Conditionality Act (NICA Act) imposing sanctions on Nicaragua.

This approval comes in the wake of a speech by the Trump administration national security advisor John Bolton on 1 November when he denounced Cuba, Venezuela and Nicaragua as ‘the troika of tyranny’ responsible for ‘fostering communism in the region’ and threatened that the Trump administration would take direct action against all three countries.

[NSC and NSCAG reject these sanctions](#) as yet another violation of Nicaragua’s sovereignty. This intensification of intervention will not only deepen the poverty of those already impoverished but will also exacerbate the polarisation within the country making it even more difficult to the restoration of peace and stability in the country.

Economic reactivation through the social economy: Nicaragua’s wealth is created by foreign capital, national capital and the social economy. The social economy is the least recognised despite the fact that it generates 40% of the country’s wealth and represents 90% of the workforce. It is made up of co-operatives, associations, small and medium businesses and farms, and self employed workers such as street sellers.

‘Our aim is not just to raise the personal living standards of individuals with few resources but to create and support co-operatives, associations, and small and medium businesses that join together with the social objective of seeking improvements for everyone.’ Ariel Bucardo, CONACOOOP (National Council of Co-operatives).

These organisations now form an umbrella organisation called the [National Council for the Social Economy \(CONADES\)](#) which, with government support, is the key driving force in the reactivation of the economy following the disastrous impact of the attempted coup.

[Nicaragua 5th place in the world for gender equality](#): According to the World Economic Forum (WEF) global gender gap report 2018, Nicaragua is the highest ranked country in the Americas in terms of gender equality with fifth position.

Particularly noteworthy is Nicaragua’s second position on political empowerment, and first position in terms of the ratio of women in ministerial positions. This is a result of a 50-50 law that mandates gender equality in party candidate lists for elections.

[The truth about Felix Maradiaga, leading Nicaraguan opposition figure:](#) Felix Maradiaga, the most prominent opponent and lobbyist against the Nicaraguan government, is described by his supporters as a ‘renowned scholar and political strategist.’ But research reveals an elusive man with multiple identities linked to right wing free market interests, at pains to distance himself from organisations that form the Nicaraguan opposition.

[Video: The New Battle for Nicaragua:](#) This Redfish documentary illustrates the complexity of what has happened in Nicaragua and refutes some of the distorted, biased, context-free mainstream coverage of the country over the past seven months. An antidote to the international media coverage that chooses to blame the Nicaraguan government for all acts of violence and ignores Nicaragua’s history and the current geopolitical context.

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[Latin America Conference & visit of Dr Florence Levy:](#) A huge turnout of around 600 people attended the 14th annual Latin America Conference at the TUC’s Congress House in central London – the biggest annual event of its kind in Britain – featuring over 75 politicians, trade unionists, ambassadors, academics, journalists and activist speakers.

Nicaragua representative Dr Florence Levy, trade unionist and MP, spoke in a plenary session and seminars about the achievements of the government, the attempted coup, and current initiatives to build peace and reconciliation.

Florence also travelled to Birmingham, Oxford, Manchester, Edinburgh and Dublin for meetings with twin town groups, trade unionists, and politicians.

Social economy interviews and briefing: In January and February NSC will be publishing a series of interviews with leaders and grassroots members of co-operatives, small and medium businesses, and street sellers. They represent sectors whose rights to freedom of movement and a dignified livelihood were violated during the period of the attempted coup but whose perspective on events has been completely ignored by human rights organisations and the mainstream media.

Nicaraguan Fair trade coffee producer to visit Bristol and London during Fairtrade Fortnight:

A representative of the co-operative union SOPPEXCCA, [Junieth Leiva](#), will be in Bristol and London from 20 February – 9 March. Bristol Link with Nicaragua (BLINC) will be organising visits and talks with schools, universities and businesses in Bristol and Bath and NSC a public event in London to launch a briefing on Nicaragua and the social economy.

