



SANDINISTA NICARAGUA AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

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Presentation

Nicaragua has been living over the past few months a coordinated and reckless political operation aimed at destabilizing its Constitutional structure and, through violent actions such as roadblocks, arson, ambushes and provocation to the police force and undermining their institutionality, based on respect of the democratic electoral processes and the human rights of its citizens. There is a majority of men, women and young people whom, in the face of these criminal and terrorist acts, only ask that Peace may return to the Country.

**LATIN AMERICAN ECUMENICAL COMMITTEE
FOR PEACE IN NICARAGUA**

Socio-Political Analysis on the reality of Nicaragua

Until last April peace, security, tranquility and stability reigned in Nicaragua, the country was strengthening and developing a Constitutional Model of Alliances, Dialogue and Consensus at the National and Local Levels, ensuring Social Cohesion and Stability for Economic, Social and Cultural Development and permanently fighting for the Purpose of Wellbeing, Progress, Work and Peace, advancing in all fields of the national economy, which translates into a macroeconomic performance of almost 5% consecutive growth in the last 6 years, as a result of good management of public finances, recognized by International Organizations.

Nicaragua enjoyed Sovereign Security, being considered one of the safest countries in the Latin American region, with the lowest crime rate in the Central American region, being at the same time a Wall of Contention against Organized Crime, with its Proactive, Preventive and Community based Model, implemented by the National Police, with the active participation of the people, families and communities, in strict adherence to the Political Constitution and the laws of the Republic.

The university student protests began during the first week of April, in the context of a forest fire in the Indio Maíz Biological Reserve, which was present mainly on social media and some key-sites in the capital. These protests stated that the government was doing very little to stop the fire in the reserve, in a context of media manipulation, promoted by some media outlets, even though, from the outset, the Government attended the situation and managed to put out the fire, receiving the collaboration from the Governments of Mexico, El Salvador and Honduras.

Initially, these protests were non-violent, but later were taken over by political groups, that manipulated the protests, provoking destabilization in the Country, generating chaos and violence with the aim of generating within the population a climate of lack of governability and presenting Nicaragua to the world as a violent country, which requires the interference and sanctions from international human rights organizations.

It is known to all, that the second episode of this protest took place on Wednesday, April 18th, following the approval of reforms to the By-Laws of the Social Security System of Nicaragua, which began peacefully but were also taken over by opposition political groups, with the clear objective of manipulating and

escalating it through opposition media, also using social networks with the aim of creating chaos and national destabilization. In this context, the first victims of violence were reported in the Municipality of Managua.

As of this moment, a series of events proceeded, directed and financed by a group of people linked to the opposition, who have put at serious risk the stability and the normal operations of the State, the Government and its Institutions. Also affecting, in some aspects, citizen security, social peace, public and private property and the tranquility of the population, ultimately aiming to break the legitimacy of the democratically elected Government of Nicaragua, and alter the Constitutional order.

They seriously altered the public order. These violent groups attacked the democratic State and its legally established institutions, in a premeditated way, affecting the security and physical integrity of Nicaraguans; managing to alter the social, economic and political stability of the country, causing unfortunate losses of human lives and injuries, as well as the destruction of public and private property.

Given this situation, the Government of Nicaragua reacted immediately, calling for peace, nonviolence and peaceful protests, calling for respect and coexistence as brothers. Despite this, the violent groups intensified the strategy of terror, lies and aggressions through gangs, destroying public and private goods, looting supermarkets and businesses, committing vandalism, destroying buses from the public transportation system, and limiting the free mobilization of Nicaraguans, trade and investment, throughout the national territory.

The President of the Republic of Nicaragua, Daniel Ortega Saavedra, made an opportune call for a National Dialogue on April 21st, open to all social sectors, inviting the Episcopal Conference of Nicaragua to accompany this dialogue as mediators and witnesses, whom on April 25th accepted the governments invitation.

The National Assembly of Nicaragua, with the aim of contributing to peace, understanding and clarifying what happened, created on April 27th the "Truth, Justice and Peace Commission", integrated by public figures and sworn in, so that in a period of three months the Commission would submit a report to the country.

The State Institutions, which, by law, are called to protect Human Rights, activated all the protection mechanisms (Public Ministry, Ombudsman for Human Rights, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Family, Ministry of Education, among others).

In order to shed light on the deaths that occurred in these days of chaos and violence, the State of Nicaragua has initiated through the Public Ministry, the process of investigation, looking into loss of life, injury, looting, theft and damage to public and private property, in order to provide justice to the victims and their families. These actions were implemented immediately, long before any International Human Rights Commissions arrived in the country.

The Government, in a responsible manner, has taken the necessary steps to ensure dialogue and the restoration of peace, as well as compliance with the conditions required by the students, to initiate the dialogue process, such as the repeal of the INSS reform, withdraw of the police from the protests and the participation of all the sectors proposed to partake in the dialogue and inviting the IACHR to come to Nicaragua. Having also the Episcopal Conference as mediator and witness.

As a result of the serious and violent disturbances initiated in mid-April, the economic activity has been severely affected. Consequently, the Ministry of Finance made an estimate in order to quantify the negative impact of the events on economic activity, in the period from April 18th to May 17th, considering that the most affected sectors were commerce, tourism, construction, transportation and industry.

In this delicate political juncture, at the ecclesial level and from its highest sphere, it was a pleasant surprise to hear the poignant words of Pope Francis in the post Angelus saying: ***"Renewing my prayer for the beloved people of Nicaragua, I wish to unite in the effort being made by the Bishops of this country and so many people of goodwill in their role as mediators and witnesses for the ongoing national dialogue process, on the road to democracy."*** (July 1, 2018).

Undoubtedly, these words expressed by the Pontiff are a strong endorsement of what has been done in the context of the National Dialogue under the auspices of the Episcopal Conference of Nicaragua and with the participation of various social, political and governmental bodies. As a first observation from the political point of view, the most extreme sectors of the Nicaraguan right wing were left largely incapacitated by the papal request: **Dialogue for Peace**. This is a clear statement that calls for an end to violence, intolerance, destabilizing actions and the temptation of seditious riots of some who ask for the resignation of the President. The Dialogue must move forward to guarantee political agreements that reestablish national coexistence, the paths of development and social peace that the immense majority of citizens demand and expect.

The only desire of this simple Document is to expose to anyone who wants to see that in Nicaragua, the Government and an immense majority of citizens, struggle every day to improve the quality of their lives and that social action, framed in credible plans and services, confirms what is heard throughout the territory of this beautiful land:

Nicaragua is Christian, Socialist and Solidary



What are the Social Programs of the Government of Nicaragua?

Since 2007, the Nicaraguan Government has had the development of social programs as one of its main areas of work. Ten years later, Nicaragua is recognized for the results of these efforts that have improved the living conditions of the population in general.

Programs such as Maternal Homes, Love for the Little Ones, Usury Zero Program, School Meals, Solidarity Roof Plan and Houses for the People, Food Security Program, Productive Bonus Program, are part of the 40 social programs implemented by the Sandinista Government, which has allowed the country to be internationally recognized for the execution of its social policies, which as a whole attack the scourge of poverty in this Central American country.

The reduction of poverty in the specific case of the rural sector responds to the validity of the National Food Security Policy that guarantees the constitutional right of Nicaraguans to have access to healthy food, concatenated with the Food and Production Bonus Program, which allowed many families to go from having nothing, to being a part of the productive chain of their population settlements. Today, these small population centers, in addition to producing enough food for their sustenance, achieve a surplus and generate income.

According to the recent data on the standard of living processed by the National Institute for Development Information (INIDE), it is estimated that general poverty at the national level is 24.9% (42.5% in 2009 and 29.6% in 2014), and extreme poverty is 6.9% (14.6% in 2009 and 8.3% in 2014). This decrease in overall poverty is statistically significant. There is enough evidence to assert that poverty in Nicaragua has decreased.

Social programs contribute to a better distribution of wealth, emphasizing the human being and families, thus achieving true human development instead of the simple growth of macroeconomics, which constitutes a recurrent assessment of analysts.

International Recognition

The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) acknowledges in various documents that, from 1990 to 2014, Nicaragua managed to reduce the undernourished population ratio from half (50.5%) to 16%.

In this way, the Central American country arrived before the deadline (2015) to achieve the initial part of the first of the eight goals set by the Millennium Development Goals: reducing by half the proportion of people who suffer from hunger.

Likewise, the validation of the World Bank, a specialized agency of the United Nations System, was obtained for this strategy of poverty reduction. In the last five-year period, the per capita consumption of Nicaraguans grew by around eight thousand Cordobas (approximately \$ 290 at the official exchange rate to date), an increase of 33.8%.

Social programs in the field of education, for example, have helped to maintain school retention, since children from households with few economic resources can stay in school thanks to the School Bond Programs (facilitation of uniforms, backpacks and notebooks) and the Comprehensive School Nutrition Program (“School Meals”), which aims to improve the nutritional level and access to education, promoting school attendance and retention of children, with the participation of the community, and a close inter-institutional coordination in municipalities with very high food insecurity and extreme poverty.

The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) indicates that in recent years Nicaragua has been projecting a sustained growth of Gross Domestic Product, above 4.6%.



I. RESTITUTION OF RIGHTS DIGNIFIES NICARAGUANS

In these complex times, when Nicaragua is news only for regrettable or painful events, it is fair and necessary to recognize the great achievements of the Sandinista Government through its Institutions.

1. - Maternal Homes in Nicaragua: *Auxilium for Life*

For 10 years, there has been an innovative Program for Women in Nicaragua: "Maternal Homes". This unique experience is implemented in several cities of the country, hosting and serving hundreds of women who are going to give birth, and then the entire process of care for the newborn.

The data recognized by the World Health Organization indicates that about 60,000 women have been assisted. This is a huge event in a small country with limited economic resources for its vast social programs, where health is a right for the entire population.

Nicaragua is not an OECD country, it does not have a first world economy, however, this Maternal Homes Program provides valuable support for those thousands of mothers, many of them heads of households, who are accompanied -not forsaken- in the beautiful process of bringing to this world a new human being. For this reason, what Pope Francis said about this matter it is encouraging: "*a society without mothers would be an inhuman society...*"

For a long time, in Latin America and the Caribbean, women have been stigmatized when they enter the pregnancy process. Not to mention women in gestation when they are single. ECLAC itself tells us that in a continent of poverty, women fear "having more children" because this would lead to more poverty and more discrimination, simply because many of them are out in the open, without concrete *Auxilium* or a solidary hand of help, in other words, they do not have the help that mothers in Nicaragua have had, for a decade now.

In addition, this beautiful and longstanding process of the Maternal Homes, is implemented in a Nicaragua, with the shortcomings and limitations of an economic nature, but that objective situation is not an impediment for not allowing for exemplary health services, positive attitudes and adequate technical-

professional skills. Rather, in recent years this *diaconal* service has improved with better facilities, increased efficiency and specialized attention.

Government statics indicate that *"56,957 pregnant women were housed in the 178 existing maternity homes in all municipalities of the country. Accommodation, health promotion and prevention of complications during pregnancy were guaranteed. It was possible to transform the Maternal Homes into midwifery training centers "*.

As a result, a reduction of the Maternal Mortality Ratio was reported from 38.5 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births registered in 2016 to 36.3 in 2017, thanks to the timely detection of risks of pregnant women with qualified medical personnel, reducing their complications and deaths.

Today, when there are various Christian perceptions and not a few media manipulations on the social-political future of Nicaragua, it seems worthwhile and ethically correct to recognize this commendable program that is provided to mothers who will deliver new life. In addition to fully agreeing with what the Holy Father himself has expressed in some of his valuable documents for reflection referring to the gift of motherhood. Here is one of them: **"Mothers are the strongest antidote to the spread of individualism ... That child deserves your joy. Do not allow fears, worries, comments from others or problems to extinguish that happiness of being an instrument of God to bring a new life to the world. "** (Apostolic Exhortation *Amoris Laetitia*).



2.- Love for the Little Ones Program

The State of Nicaragua has commitments regarding the human rights of the child within the established Political Constitution of the Republic, the Code for Children and Adolescents, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and other national and international laws.

Since 2007, the National Early Childhood Policy "**Love for the Little Ones**" is a practical instrument to operationalize legal norms, that restores the rights of children through the articulation of all programs and actions that the institutions of the National Social Welfare System, Social and Community organizations, and City Halls promote throughout the country, in favor of Nicaraguan Children, starting from pregnancy to the age of six.

It is a program of national coverage, in coordination with the Ministry of the Family, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Education. It has lasting effects on health, learning, motivation and adequate early stimulation, from the family, community and school, making it possible for girls and boys to fully develop their biological, psychological and social structures. It is coordinated with the efforts of the Ministry of Health through the "Healthy Child Program" and the "Maternal Homes".

According to the UNICEF report on the State of the World's Children 2016, **Nicaragua already complies with the plans established for 2030 in subjects such as infant mortality for children under five years age, as well as neonatal mortality.** The report highlights that the infant mortality rate in Nicaragua continues to decline, **placing Nicaragua in the 84th place among 193 countries**, with 22 deaths per thousand live births. This indicator records deaths in children under five years. In the case of infant mortality for children under one year, the number is reduced to 19 per thousand live births.

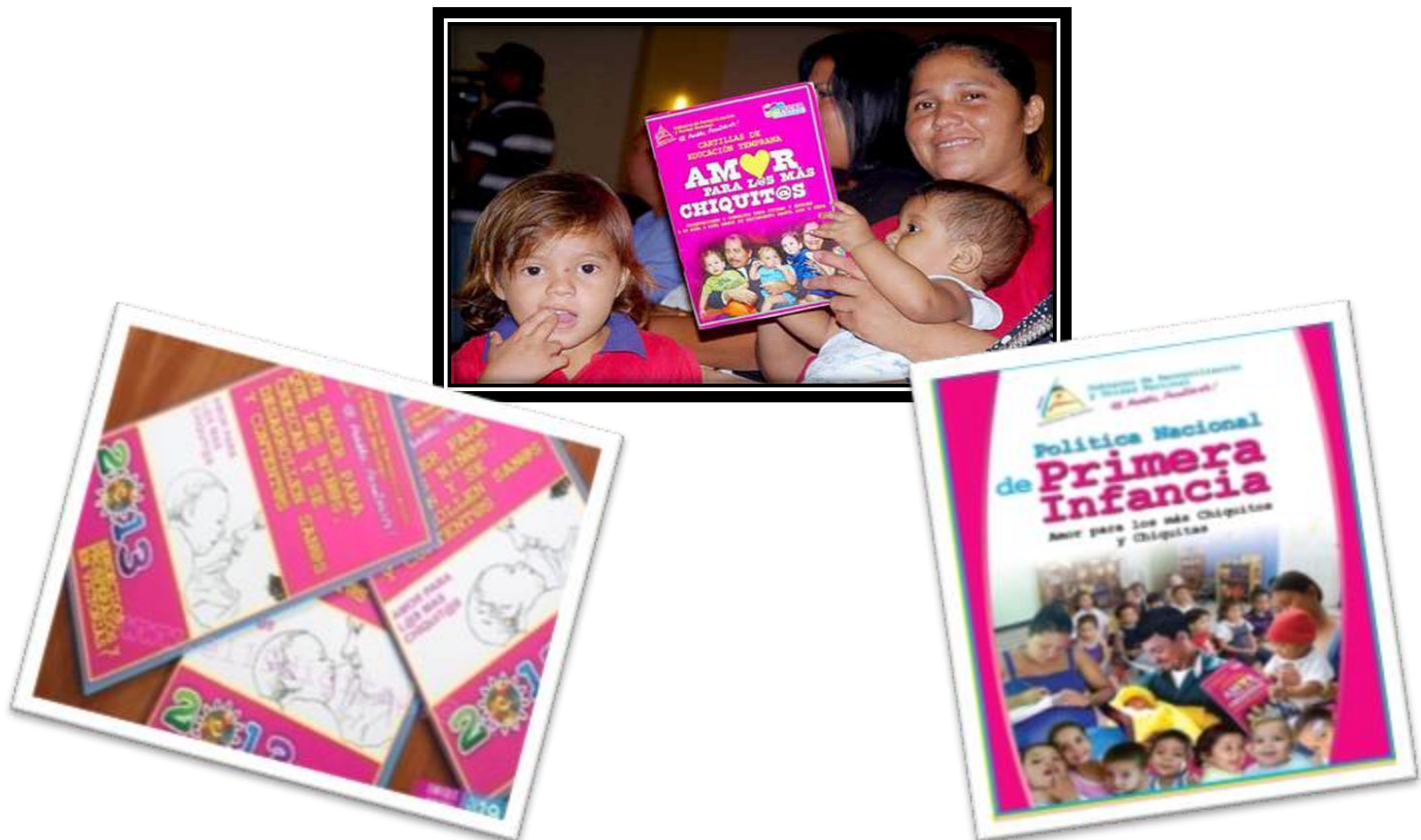
The decrease in this indicator of quality of life for children is due to the investments made by the Sandinista Government in the area of health, allowing for better coverage for families. With this number of 22 deaths per thousand children under the age of five, (which in 2012 was recorded at 24 per thousand), **Nicaragua already exceeded the goal set by the United Nations for 2030.**

On the other hand, the neonatal mortality at world level calculated by the UN for that same year indicates that it should be less than 12 per thousand live births, **another goal that Nicaragua is fulfilling, since it has now been reduced to 10.**

The UNICEF report adds other interesting data on the situation of children in Nicaragua. For example, every year 121 thousand births occur in Nicaragua, and the net enrollment rate in primary education is 98%. UNICEF adds that life expectancy at birth today in Nicaragua is 75 years.

Regarding the immunization coverage promoted by the Nicaraguan Government, UNICEF reports that between 98 and 99% of infants are vaccinated against ten diseases, including Poliomyelitis, Rotavirus, and Hepatitis B3. According to UNICEF, of the 6 million 82 thousand Nicaraguans, two million 89 thousand are less than 18 years old, and more than 600 thousand less than five, figures that measure the scope of the Love for the Little Ones Program.

With the “Love for the Little Ones” Program, 130,735 home visits were made to children, from their gestational development to 6 years old, providing them with comprehensive health care, education and protection.



3.- School Meals and School Packages

This Program promotes school attendance and retention of children, with the participation of the community and close inter-institutional coordination in municipalities with very high food insecurity and extreme poverty. Its execution seeks to improve nutritional levels and access to education of Nicaraguan children and adolescents.

Since its implementation in 2007, the leading role of families in education has been integrally supported, providing means for entry and retention in school, also contributing to improving the conditions for the growth and development of boys and girls.

In 2017, the “School Meal Program” has achieved 100% coverage of students enrolled in community, public and subsidized schools that provide Initial Education, Primary Education, Primary and Secondary Education in Rural Communities, Special Education and Normal Schools, with an average of 1,094,959 protagonists during the school year (536,530 female), delivering 191,673,712 portions of food, restoring the right to food and nutritional security, complementing efforts to reduce malnutrition rates.

With the Educational Solidarity Packages, 626,670 students were attended in Initial Education, Primary Education, Special Education and Secondary Education in Rural Communities. In addition, shoes were delivered to 625,772 students of Initial Education, Primary Education, Special Education and Secondary Education in Rural Communities.



4.- Literacy and Education for Young People and Adults

In 2017, within the framework of the restitution of the right to education and the educational continuity of illiterate and under-educated youth and adults, 151,247 people were enrolled in Literacy and Primary Education, 67% were young people and adults from rural areas.



The proactivity of teachers, literacy brigades and the involvement of families and communities continues to be fundamental for the development of this educational modality. At the end of the year, 78% of the students remained in school and 99% approval was obtained.

The Literacy and Education Program for Young People and Working Adults, has allowed for the conclusion of primary education in an accelerated form of three levels and a secondary accelerated form in two levels, with a duration of three and two years respectively. This educational method is an action of restitution of the right to a quality and free education, of people who for different reasons could not finish their basic and middle studies.

To complement the training of Young People and Adults and facilitate their insertion into the work force, courses on Orientation for Work and Productivity are carried out in themes such as graphic design; maintenance and repair of cell phones, appliances and motorcycles; basic masonry; leather crafts; basic carpentry; electricity; automotive mechanics; welding and veterinaries. More than 50% of the participants in this program are women. In 2017, 3,922 parents and adolescent mothers at risk, graduated, with scholarships from pre-vocational training centers.



Work is underway to expand the Youth and Adults Program with new innovative modalities that allow educational continuity according to the needs and realities of the actors.

5.- Usury Zero Program

In 2007, with the implementation of the “No Usury Program”, as part of the socio-economic policies of poverty reduction, promoted by the Sandinista Government, thousands of Nicaraguan entrepreneurs, particularly female heads of households, have been attended in order to improve their economic and family conditions.

Through the creation of small solidarity groups, funding has been provided for their family businesses, in response to the great demand of many actors, who for years could not qualify for a benefit of this type due to their economic condition and lack of collateral.



In Managua alone, during the period from **2007 to 2011**, more than 120,000 women were assisted, who received around 200,000 loans and from **2012 to 2016**, almost 500,000 loans have been provided. Once the loans have been granted, they are invested in various businesses, expanding the coverage of the program towards tourism as part of the poverty reduction strategy in recent years.



In 2017, the program served 103,640 women protagonists, organized in 41,297 Solidarity Groups in 4,576 neighborhoods of 143 municipalities in the country, granting 136,811 credits, which represented accumulated placements for more than 1,053.8 million cordobas (approximately 34 million dollars at the exchange rate of January 2017). The success of the program lies in the responsibility of each of the protagonists, who have met their financial commitments in a timely manner, an action that has led to an expansion of the financing throughout the country and benefits for thousands of self-employed Nicaraguan workers.

6.- Voice for All Program

The emblematic program “Everyone with You”, executed by the Ministry of Health, consists of providing personalized attention to people with disabilities, through a medical check-up and the delivery of the corresponding medicines. It began in February 2010 when the President, Comandante Daniel Ortega asked Cuba for support to make a study on the situation of this sector in the country.

Thus, the Nicaraguan Government has promoted the restitution of rights to people with disabilities, within the framework of solidarity, complementarity and the pursuit of the common good.

In Nicaragua there are two references on disability issues, the “Everyone with You” Program and Law 763 "Law on the rights of persons with disabilities", which is the legal framework that favors people with disabilities.

In addition to the assistance provided to patients with disabilities and chronic diseases, the medical authorities together with members of the community, annex the registry to new cases with the purpose of providing follow up so that they can more adequately treat their illnesses and may have the opportunity to lead a full life.

The program includes the provision of food packages, mats, wheelchairs, auxiliary devices for walking (crutches and canes), as well as the performance of special examinations such as magnetic resonance imaging and tomography.



7.- Solidary Roof Plan

In 2009, the Nicaraguan Government established the “Solidarity Roof Plan Program” to provide access to decent roofing for poor families in the countryside and the city, which allows them to live in better conditions of health and greater physical security.

The Local Governments, in coordination with the Family, Community and Life Cabinets, and the “Solidarity Promoters”, survey the housing situation, in order to attend first to the families in critical social situations. On the other hand, the families that are the protagonists of the Program are responsible for the activities of unloading, storage, safeguarding of materials in each house and repairing the roofs, also they make commitments to not utilize the materials for any other purpose.

Between 2012-2017, the delivery of 504,421 Solidarity Roof Plans was completed throughout the country, benefiting an equal number of families with limited resources.



8.- Houses for the People

The construction and delivery of social housing to the population living in poverty in rural and urban areas, seeks to guarantee children's access to decent housing, equipped with basic services of water and sewerage. The houses are financed with a 20-year loan.

The 2016 “Good Government Plan” included among its goals the improvement and construction of thousands of homes as a part of the process of restitution of the right to a dignified home in favor of Nicaraguan families. In this regard, the Institute of Urban and Rural Housing (INVUR) promoted the construction and renovation of more than 25 thousand houses nationwide for the same number of families. In this manner, about 125 thousand people were benefited, and now have better living conditions.

Together, the National Government, Local Governments and the Private Sector generated 119,145 direct jobs to boost the construction sector. Likewise, 1,500 workers from the public and private sector enjoyed the application of seniority for housing purposes. The Registrar for Property delivered more than 75 thousand new property deeds to 350 thousand new protagonists.

In 2017, work was carried out to ensure that the families that fulfilled the requirements had access to long-term housing loans under favorable conditions, facilitating the payment of the premium and granting subsidies to the interest rate for the acquisition of homes. This was possible thanks to the coordination with financial and urbanization institutions.

These actions are carried out in coordination with the Verification, Reconciliation, Peace and Justice Commission "Cardinal Miguel Obando" and the Cabinets of Family, Community and Life.



II.- FOOD AND NUTRITIONAL SECURITY

The Political Constitution of Nicaragua recognizes the right of Nicaraguans to food. It states that it is the right of Nicaraguans to be protected against hunger, with the State being responsible for promoting programs that ensure the availability of food and its equitable distribution.

Consistent with this constitutional mandate, the Food and Nutritional Security Policy from the Agricultural and Rural Public Sector is framed within the National Human Development Plan and is designed in response to the problem of high vulnerability to food insecurity and malnutrition in children within the Nicaraguan population.

The general objective is to achieve nutritional food security for the population through the provision of adequate services throughout the agricultural value chain - technical assistance, credit and incentive to production, post-harvest and agribusiness, stockpiling, treatment, storage, support to marketing, information, education, training, communication -which guarantee the sustainable use of natural resources: land, water, forests- and submit them to procedures, rules and regulations that stimulate food production and productivity, prioritizing the ones of basic consumption, -roots, beans, corn, sorghum, meat, milk and derivatives, in an articulated effort that stimulates small and medium producers, particularly women, in the rural sector.

In order to guarantee this right, the State's action together with community organizations and families, makes joint efforts to converge four fundamental dimensions:

a. Availability. That there is food in quantity and quality in an uninterrupted manner.

b. Access. That the entire population can acquire the food they need without interruptions.

c. Consumption. That people have the knowledge that allows them to decide on the foods with the highest nutritional content, the best combinations and hygiene in their handling, preparation and conservation.

d. Biological exploitation. That people have the health conditions that the body requires.

In this regard, the axes of the policy are also materialized in an articulated manner, starting from the territorial interinstitutional coordination that allows to approach the agricultural sector to the territories and reach the most vulnerable populations.

The guiding principles of the Sectorial Policy on Food and Nutrition Security are among others: Guarantee of the right of all Nicaraguan citizens to have adequate food, respect for local practices in all areas of production, storage, processing, preparation, consumption; Environmental and economic sustainability of the national agricultural system and Inclusion; no type of social, economic and / or political discrimination, nor for reasons of gender, ethnicity, religion and / or territoriality.

The Strategic Guidelines aim to:

- Increase production and national diversification of safe food, agricultural, forestry, livestock and aquaculture, prioritizing foods such as - beans, rice, corn, meat, milk and its derivatives - privileging productivity, diversification, processing and articulation to agrifood and value chains;

- Orient actions so that the population has the necessary food, generate the necessary income to acquire or produce them and in situations of economic crisis or natural disasters have access to them;

- Improve the consumption practices of energy and protein foods and the rescue of the food culture of the population, as well as the promotion of hygienic, agricultural, manufacturing and environmental practices that favor the physical and biological wellbeing in the population for the efficient use of the ingested food.

1.- Productive and Food Programs

Mainly aimed at women, the **Productive Bonus Food Program (BPA)** that the Sandinista Government provides to thousands of actors in rural and semi-rural areas, is constituted as a tool of technological work, capable of transforming the lives of peasant families and helping them to fight the phenomenon of poverty.



Through the Ministry of Family Economy, the BPA protagonists are trained to take full advantage of this work tool, forming productive nuclei that benefit not only the family, but the entire community.

It consists of the delivery of cows, poultry, seeds and fruit trees, so that each peasant family is able to produce and supply its own table and in the medium term, establish local markets, fostering a sustainable family economy that guarantees food security and that at the same time, reduces the high levels of rural poverty.

The Bonus, which is valued at 2,000 dollars, also includes a line of credit and a biodigester to convert organic waste into energy. It also prioritizes the feeding of children who attend school and the payment of money for work that results in community welfare. It is a model that is born in the family and expands in the communities.

In the 2007-2016 period at least 200 thousand BPA's were delivered and more than 3 billion cordobas were invested, which is materialized in 2 thousand organized production centers and more than 700 cooperatives. The only requirement is to have your own land. The Government assumes 80% of the total cost and the beneficiary pays the remaining 20%.

The aspiration is for each peasant family to be able to produce to supply their own table with milk, meat, eggs, fruits, vegetables and cereals, and in the medium term to establish local markets and export those products.



During 2017, the **Food and Production Program**, achieved the following goals:

- Training of 3,303 protagonists for the acquisition and management of their assets; 6,336 women members trained to strengthen the production of food for

self-consumption and 2,610 obtained technical support to improve their productivity.

- Training of 33,801 small farmers in production, conservation and transformation of agricultural products, cooperativism, associativity and leadership; and 19,373 producers are receiving technical assistance on agricultural technologies.

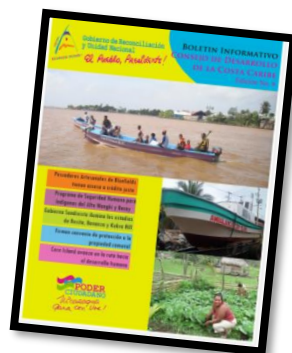


- Technical support to 2,545 protagonists gathered in 1,475 small and medium businesses (tourism, gastronomy, crafts, family farming, natural medicine and entrepreneurship), to improve the quality of their products and increase their productivity; which allowed them to offer and promote their products in **419 Family Economy Fairs** held at national, regional, departmental and municipal levels.

In 2017, the implementation of the **“Healthy Garden Program”** in the communities of the Caribbean Coast, increased food production by accompanying 1,173 families using the associative model.

With the **“Basic Grains Program”**, 2,524 producers received training and technical support to improve their productivity. Likewise, the development and implementation of Business Plans for family owned businesses reached 2,275 families, only on the Caribbean Coast.

With the execution of the **“Support Program for Increasing Productivity, Food Security and Nutrition on the Caribbean Coast”**, 10,576 protagonists of both autonomous regions were capitalized. Likewise, 13,699 protagonists were technically accompanied in **Innovative Development Plans (PDI)**, family farming, fishing, agribusiness and small non-agricultural businesses, grouped into 6,212 associative and cooperative groups, with goods and services.



The World Food Program (WFP) recognized that in Nicaragua investment to alleviate hunger has positive results in terms of food security by creating economic opportunities in rural areas so that families can produce their food and, if possible, sell the surplus.

For its part, the **Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)** has highlighted that *“Nicaragua in terms of general poverty reduction, has managed to reduce the rates from 42% to less than 30% (2014), a situation that no other country of the region can match. On combating extreme poverty, it decreased from 14.6% (2009) to 8.3% (2014). These figures, according to the IDB added to the progress in fiscal matters in the external and financial sectors, having allowed an improvement in the country's rating”*.

The World Bank emphasized that, "in spite of the global economic turbulence, Nicaragua has stood out for maintaining levels of growth above the average for Latin America and the Caribbean. Disciplined macroeconomic policies, combined with a constant expansion of exports and foreign direct investment, have helped the country to cope with the economic turbulence arising from the 2008-2009 crisis and the rise in food and oil prices."

It points out on its website that, in 2011, growth reached a record of 5.1%, with a slowdown to 4.7% and 4.5% in 2016 and 2017, respectively. In 2018, the forecast stood at 4.4%, placing it in the second place of growth among Central American countries, with favorable prospects for foreign direct investment and trade, before the events of April.

Also, the **International Monetary Fund**, referring to its conclusions of the Article IV Consultation for Nicaragua, highlighted through an official press release, the positive performance of the Nicaraguan economy during 2015, the progress in the fight against poverty and robustness of the financial sector. "The directors praised the solid policies promoted by the Nicaraguan authorities, which have improved macroeconomic stability and have led to strong economic growth and poverty reduction," the IMF said in its note.

III.- A CHRISTIAN VISION FOR THE AGRICULTURAL AND RURAL SECTOR

With the implementation of the “Christian, Socialist and Solidarity Programs” (CRISOL) in the agricultural and rural sector, the Sandinista Government seeks to restore the rights of families producing basic grains at the national level, which are not subject to credit by financial institutions, providing them with financial resources for the purchase of seeds such as beans, corn, rice and sorghum and work tools that they use in their farms.



This also seeks full incorporation into the System of Production, Consumption and Trade of Families, Micro, Small and Medium Production and Enterprise, including the Cooperative and Associative Model.

CRISOL is a credit scheme that provides resources to farmers with much easier payment than financial institutions and works as a future purchasing program on crops with small producers, with whom a price is fixed and then they pay with produce. This scheme prevents farmers from being exposed to the fluctuations of market prices.

The CRISOL Program has had a great impact on the peasant sector, prioritizing above all small producers of corn, beans, rice or sorghum, in the rural sector.

Since the beginning of the CRISOL Coffee Program in 2013, around 3 million dollars have been granted in loans, and it is expected that in the coming years the disbursement will increase to 20 million dollars, to support the maintenance, renovation and rehabilitation of coffee plantations of small producers throughout the country.



Among the main results of the program is the increase in crop yields from 3 to 6 quintals per manzana, thanks to technical assistance for pest management and agroecological management of coffee plantations.

In 2017, the CRISOL Coffee Program accompanied 4,948 protagonists in the delivery of financing for the rehabilitation of 1,372 acres and the renovation of

7,211 acres of coffee cultivation; and with the CRISOL Cocoa Program, 154 protagonists received financing for the establishment of 250 cocoa plantations.

In the corn sector, CRISOL has allowed the establishment of more than 17,879 producers and for the planting of around 25,030 hectares and with an annual projection of 1,250,000 quintals, approximately 11% of the national production plan.

Families were also trained to process medicinal plants, manage bee hives for honey, bamboo producers, and thousands of small producers of the agricultural family economy in the development of a more productive cattle raising, with better use of resources and more friendly to the environment, all for the improvement of quality and productivity at the national level.

Through the implementation of Irrigation Systems for Small Producers of the Family Economy of the Dry Northern Corridor of Nicaragua, hundreds of small producers have received technical support for the installation, use, management and maintenance of the irrigation systems, developing their productive capacities.

Along with these efforts, work is also being carried out to promote the development and promotion of businesses, workshops, fairs and small businesses through training programs to improve administration and marketing, formalization processes for business ventures, exchanges on commercial strategies and product diversification, use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), productive linkages and successful innovation experiences for small business players, strengthening associativity and cooperativism.

Source: La Voz del Sandinismo



IV.- SAFEGUARDING LIFE: **RISK MANAGEMENT AGAINST DISASTERS AND** **CALAMITIES**

Based on its Law No. 337, " Law for the Creation of the National System for the Prevention, Mitigation and Attention of Disasters (SINAPRED), and its incorporated Reforms (2014)", the National System for the Prevention of Mitigation and Disaster Attention is aimed at reducing the vulnerability of people at risk of suffering disasters, caused by natural phenomena and / or generated by human action that endangers the lives of citizens, their goods, ecosystems and national economy.

The vision of this National System, assimilated by the Nicaraguan people, under the concept that SINAPRED is made up of all citizens; favors the construction of safe and sustainable development scenarios for the country; inducing and driving the synergies of all the institutional, sectoral and territorial components, within the framework of a risk management process with a social, environmental and economic focus, with broad citizen participation.

To this end, meteorological, hydrometric, tidal, hydrogeological and geophysical monitoring networks have been created to guarantee the timely observation of natural phenomena that could put the life of the Nicaraguan population at risk.

In fulfillment of this vital mission in 2017, a series of adaptation actions to climate change contemplated in the National Human Development Plan were implemented, which allowed the collection of an important amount of territorial information for disaster prevention and for the rational use of natural resources and the location of investments. Also, territorial and institutional planning was strengthened through the development of methodologies for analysis, preparation, organization and action for rapid response at all levels.

The permanent preparation of the model by the individual, the family and community to consolidate the culture of integral management, for the reduction of risk in the face of disasters, has also allowed the development of capacities in all areas of society in emergency situations (community level, territorial and Institutional) and thus allows us to respond effectively in the processes of recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction.

This has been achieved through an effective-educational communication strategy, with the aim of promoting a culture of prevention in the population aimed at improving the behavioral changes of the Nicaraguan population, in terms of knowledge, attitudes and practices in the face of natural phenomena.

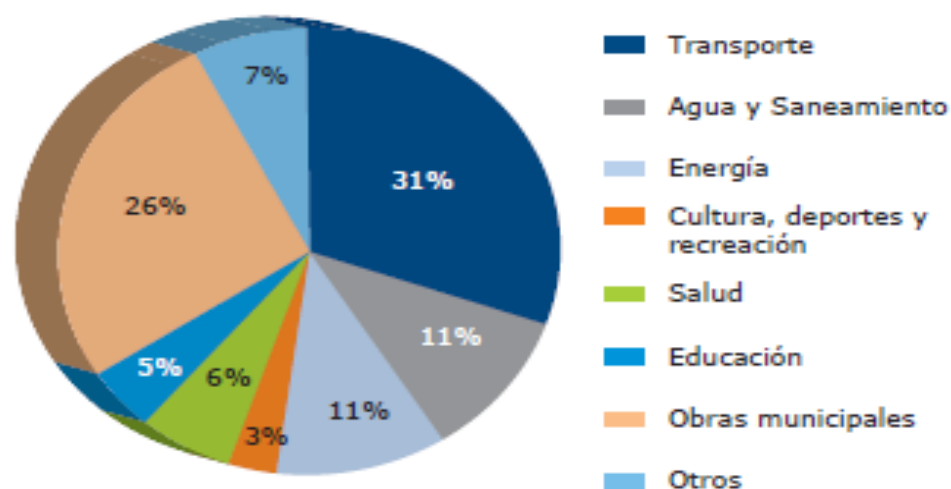
In 2017, 3 National Exercises for the protection of life were carried out, with an average of 1,613,422 people, including workers from public institutions, the private sector, students, teachers, neighborhoods, communities and first response teams, which observed the operation of 153 command posts in the same number of municipalities, to provide an adequate response to the emergencies that occur at the local level, permanently monitoring the situations that may result in disasters or emergencies and thus guaranteeing the **solidarity, effective and timely attention to affected families.**



GRAPHICS

Programa de inversión pública 2017 por sectores económicos

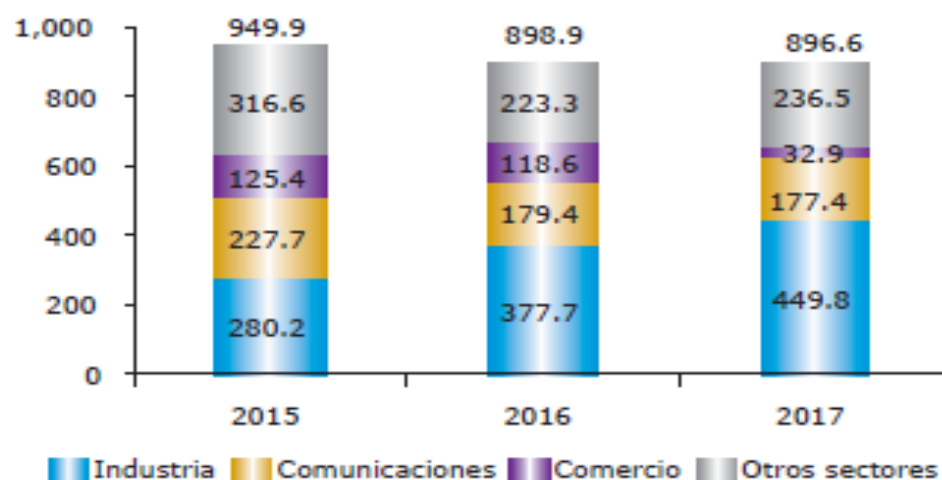
(participación de la ejecución total)



Fuente: MHCP.

Inversión extranjera directa por sector

(flujos en millones de dólares)



Fuente: MIFIC, MEM, INTUR, CNZF, TELCOR, ALBANISA y BCN.

Enfoque de producción

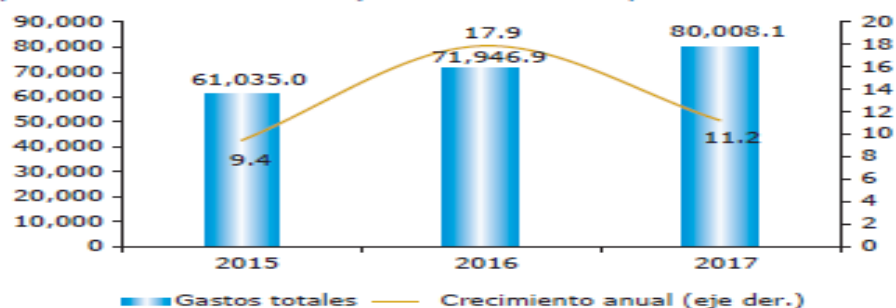
El 46% de la producción nacional estuvo concentrado en tres grandes rubros de la economía.



Fuente: Banco Central de Nicaragua

Presupuesto General de la República (gastos totales originales)

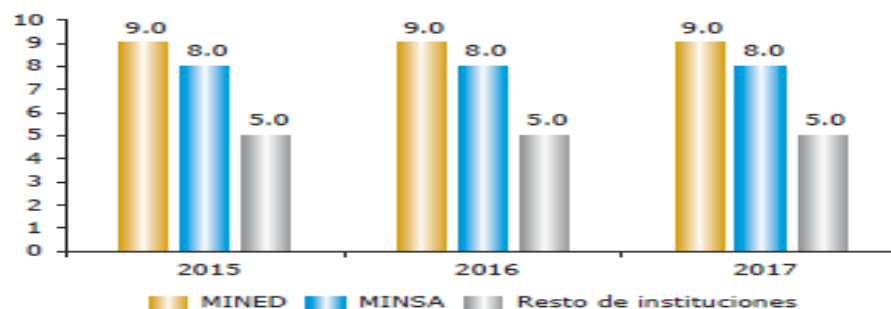
(millones de córdobas y variación anual)



Fuente: MHCP.

Gráfico I-4.4 Política salarial del PGR

(ajustes porcentuales)



Fuente: MHCP.

Source: Central Bank of Nicaragua

ANNEX

**ECUMENICAL SYMPOSIUM FOR PEACE
IN NICARAGUA
Managua, July 10, 2018**

Presentation

Why this Ecumenical Symposium for Peace in Managua?

With this pressing question, we met representatives of churches, social organizations, political parties, Christian academics and goodwill institutions. We were in Managua because we had to express the word of Christian Hope before the serious political events that have affected beloved Nicaragua, a Blessed land in which Sandino put all his strength and Spirit to realize the Utopia for all of his people, that cried out for liberation from imperial yoke.

We see too often that some hierarchies of the Catholic Church make serious efforts to defend their own status quo, understood as a sphere of power, establishing, in addition, a close link with sectors that, clearly, want to alter the normal political-constitutional process of Nicaragua under ideologies opposed to the political sensibilities that drive a Sandinista government. That is to say, the Church takes sides and joins the power of money over the irremovable precepts of the coveted common good that the government authority is undoubtedly seeking.

Faced with this opposition political attitude of the Episcopal Conference of Nicaragua, it seems to us that it is the religious institution that is harmed, particularly its evangelizing message, since, in times of societal transformation promoted by the Sandinista Government, the ecclesial power aims, from the partisan sphere, to stop and tear down the process of political and social transformations that benefit the poorest and most precarious sectors of the population.

In short, it fills us with joy that this Ecumenical Symposium for Peace in Nicaragua will be held in moments of violent turbulence, but there is the Declaration that points out a path and a genuine Hope that it is possible to achieve Peace through a constructive dialogue. And for Christians who do not feel represented by a clerical hierarchy attached to the political project of the Private Sector, we remind you that "The revolutionary struggle is inserted in the perspective of the construction of the kingdom of God ... We express, as a Community, our support to the believers who, because of their commitment, are separated from their local Church and feel alone in the Faith". (Frère du Monde - Moral and new man).



DECLARATION OF THE ECUMENICAL SYMPOSIUM FOR PEACE

MANAGUA - JULY 10, 2018

**"It is not enough to talk about Peace,
Peace must be made"**

From the city of Managua, gathered together men and women of different religious beliefs, accompanied by personalities of good will, we reaffirm that without exception, we are called to promote, spread and safeguard peace. In this sense, we happily confirm that ecumenism is important for peace, because ecumenism is unity and unity leads us -sooner or later- to peace. We give thanks because in this Ecumenical Symposium, we have seen and heard that it is an ethical mandate and a Christian auxilium to work and strengthen dialogue as a democratic praxis to find solutions to sociopolitical problems that, by the way, must be resolved within the framework of understanding and not confrontation.

**In this Ecumenical Symposium we have asked ourselves
Why has the peaceful and democratic coexistence of
Nicaragua been altered?**

Being in this land blessed by God, we have enough elements of truth to affirm that until April, peace, security, tranquility and social stability reigned in Nicaragua. The country was developing a constitutional model of alliances,

dialogue and consensus at the national level, ensuring a good balance for economic, social and cultural development.

We have also verified that Nicaragua has been advancing in all fields of the economy, specifically in the macro economic sphere, growing around 5% in the last six years, sound management of the economy, national accounts and public finances, allows the maintenance of significant social programs, which have been recognized by various International Organizations.

From this Symposium, we must recognize -in light of the facts- that various political forces and others have managed to alter the social coexistence described above, in light of the political violence, social chaos and attempts to create an atmosphere of terror and social destabilization, as Christians we cannot remain silent, and considering the relevant facts, we must seek and create dialogue structures for peace which is demanded, with insistence, by the Nicaraguan citizenry.

In this political situation in which the peace and social coexistence of the country was altered, we recognize as an important step the decision of the President of the Republic of Nicaragua, who on April 21st, called for a National Dialogue among all social and political actors and, especially to the Episcopal Conference to be mediators and witnesses of this body, created for peace. Also, we must highlight the creation on April 27th of the "Truth, Justice and Peace Commission", constituted by recognized personalities of the public life in this country.

We perceive that it is the great powers that still do not accept the notorious social advances of a Sandinista revolution that has managed to maintain itself in the midst of the neoliberal wave that affects the continent and, in particular, Central America and the Caribbean. At this

juncture, in itself challenging for Christians, the question arises as a cry out to heaven: **Who should we be with?** From our Christian perspective and love of life we say to the world with determination and in good conscience:

- We are for the Democracy and Institutional order of the country, and under no circumstances with those voices that directly or covertly seek to alter the Constitution of Nicaragua through chaos, terror and violence.

- We value, today and tomorrow, the efforts made by the National Dialogue to seek political solutions peacefully, banishing any desire for ideological prejudice that leads to an alteration of the spirit of healthy coexistence between all citizens.

-We reaffirm our recognition to the Government of Nicaragua for its varied social programs, which for more than ten years, have benefited directly, vulnerable sectors of the population. We refer specifically to those who are related to the maternal world, children, youth, women and the elderly.

- As Christians, it hurts us to observe certain selective silences related only to the cases of violence and chaos produced within the framework of manifestations of the political opposition, added to an unjust silence before an opposition plan -supported by certain hierarchies- that seek, by all the means, not only to alter the public order, but to prepare in all its forms, a real soft coup regardless of the consequences and the majority opinion of a citizenship that only wants peace.

- We are all called to be tireless builders of peace. In this last time, and not detracting from what the people of Nicaragua live today, we cannot but adhere with all our strength to what Pope Francis expressed in the context of a recent Angelus:

"Renewing my prayer for the beloved people of Nicaragua, I wish to join the effort being made by the bishops of this country and so many people of goodwill in their role as mediators and witnesses for the ongoing national dialogue process on the road to democracy. " (Plaza de San Pedro, July 1st, 2018).

- As a result of our conversations, consultations, discernments and prayer, in the framework of this Ecumenical Symposium, we have the deepest conviction, from the perspective of democracy, that Nicaragua must continue to travel the path of peace (lux et veritas).

There is no other alternative for every believer and goodwill person who loves his people and sincerely desires a just and good Homeland for all.

Managua, July 10th, 2018

Let us pray

*Jesus, our teacher, our example,
our partner.*

*You have taught us what is good, and you
call us to remember; that we have to love
Peace.*

*Teach us, Lord, how to do justice, how to
achieve Peace with humility.*

*Allow us to fight for Peace and find
solutions to the social and political problems
of this blessed land of Nicaragua.*

So be it.

**Latin American Ecumenical Committee
for Peace in Nicaragua**

NICARAGUA SANDINISTA AND THE SOCIAL JUSTICE



SANDINISTA NICARAGUA AND THE SOCIAL JUSTICE