

## **NICARAGUA WANTS PEACE and TO BE LEFT IN PEACE**

I am Herman Van de Velde, a Belgian national, with 38 years of working in and from Nicaragua in the socio-educational area. This testimony comes from my profound feeling and thinking, critically analyzing the situation in which we live and the dreams that we are realizing in Nicaragua: that in good faith, they allow us to build together a future with an increasing quality of life for each and every Nicaraguan.

Since 2007, this country has been developing **socio-economic projects, never-before-seen in our history** (energy, drinking water, social housing, highways/roads and streets, free education - building quality in learning (initial and continuous teacher training, nutritional programs in all public schools, the "backpack" program that provides free textbooks and educational materials for all children within schools, a 450% salary increase from 2007 to date and programs such as Counseling for Educational Communities, which includes households and families in education, for example), coverage both in the city and in the countryside

(preschool, primary, secondary, university in the rural areas), free health care through the community health system (health posts, health centers, mobile health clinics, hospitals throughout the country), opportunities for recreation and sports in all municipalities, the fight against poverty through the support provided to production programs such as "zero usury" and "zero hunger," support for micro - small and medium enterprises, fostering a popular economy (promoting fairs and microloans), ... and more, much more, also establishing priorities for women in the different programs such as sexual violence and emergency response of all kinds (prevention). **To date, only the FSLN has presented and published a comprehensive program to combat poverty for the next 5 years.** I cannot find in this country another political proposal facing the elections of next November that can guarantee the continuity in the construction of an increasing quality of life for all our people.

Continuing to build the PEACE that we long for, also implies taking indispensable measures such as: **fighting**

**against disinformation and the media war** carried out by people with anti-free Nicaragua interests and the communication monopolies that want to see Nicaragua dependent on the interventionist policies of the US and EU, as in the time of Somoza. Among these people with interests unrelated to the wellbeing and good-living of our people, in addition to representatives of the historical bourgeoisie, are the ex-Sandinistas, who at some point played a role in the history of the Sandinista Popular Revolution, but have now turned against the party, being unable to fulfil their lust for power. These people operate on the authority that they had at some point during our history, to misinform, yesterday and today, about what is being built in Nicaragua. I personally knew several of them, so I know what I am saying.

Building Peace also implies taking measures at the internal level, **revealing the mechanisms for receiving external financing aimed at carrying out destabilizing activities, with the intention of a**

**mounting a coup**, as happened in 2018 and as they are trying to do now, in these pre-election months.

Likewise, it implies **exposing how disastrous regional and international organizations such as the OAS and others** are not only in the case of Nicaragua, promoting coups d'état (Nicaragua, Bolivia, ...), but also, representing and promoting policies of direct interventionism in the internal affairs of our countries, especially those that have policies not aligned with the interests of the US and EU.

***I call on the international community to respect Nicaragua, to recognize and enjoy the enormous advances that we have been able to enjoy since 2007, to stop intervening in her internal affairs through misinformation, absurd sanctions/ aggressions and wanting to ignore the results of an election yet to be held.***

NICARAGUA deserves respect,

**NICARAGUA WANTS PEACE, to be left in PEACE**, NICARAGUA is a free and sovereign country and, without a doubt, it

will continue to fight, just as it is doing, to deepen its independence, promoting an ever higher quality of life for everyone.

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