



NSCAG NOVEMBER UPDATE

Palestine – Nicaragua government statement to UN General Assembly

“It is reprehensible that this body did not adopt a simple humanitarian resolution urgently demanding a cease-fire, with access to and provision of humanitarian assistance. Nicaragua... have always supported the just cause of the Palestinian people, it is a matter of principle, of solidarity between brothers and sisters in struggle, and together with the rest of the international community we consider it necessary to intensify international efforts in the search for a definitive and peaceful solution that culminates in the realization of the Palestinian State”.

To read the full statement made by Nicaragua to the Special Session of the UN General Assembly on 31st October see [here](#).

Sanctions

Nicaragua’s development is being held back by the politically motivated withholding of loans. See article by John Perry [here](#)

Forthcoming webinar, Sunday 3 December, 8pm UK time

‘*Nicaraguan Migration: Myths and Reality*’ - Speakers: John Perry, author and journalist; and Lenin Munguia, Nicaraguan migrant currently in the US. Spanish-English interpretation provided. To register: <https://bit.ly/NicaDec3>

See also ‘*The Journey North*’ – article by John Perry, link [here](#)

Latin America Conference 2024

The Latin America Conference 2024 will take place on Saturday 27 January 2024, 10am – 5pm, Hamilton House, Mabledon Place, London WC1H 9BB. Book your place now! See link [here](#)

Education

Since 2007, when the Sandinistas returned to power, until 2023, Nicaragua’s education budget has increased by a staggering 457% and the number of teachers has increased two-fold. The education curriculum and teaching in multiple languages in the autonomous Caribbean regions of Nicaragua are a government priority. Education from primary through university education has been free since President Daniel Ortega returned to the presidency. A free school meal is guaranteed for more than 1.2 million children including preschool and primary students and secondary distance learning students and ensures a plate of food in the classroom.

Over the past 16 years, 244 government child development centres have been created, now a total of 276. All are subsidized by the state, all with trained personnel, all with specific programmes to instil values and knowledge in the children. These centres serve 16,500 children under age six who receive comprehensive care, food, weight and height monitoring, early stimulation and education and more.

For more see article by Nan McCurdy and Katherine Hoyt [here](#)

Another factor resulting from the complete overhaul of the country's education system since 2007 is the fact that record numbers of students are now graduating from secondary school. With increased access to free public universities and hundreds of vocational training programmes, the class of 2023 has more options open to them than ever before. Compared with the previous generation who went through school during the neo-liberal period not only do they have more options but also the freedom of not having to worry about paying fees or accumulating huge amounts of debt. For more see article by Becca Renk [here](#).

Good Infrastructure Makes People's Lives Better

With the support of CABEI (Central American Bank for Economic Integration), Nicaragua is executing 24 public sector projects. CABEI has supported the generation of more than 113,000 jobs in the last two years in key areas of the economy such as construction, health, agriculture, and tourism, among others. Development projects have improved the quality of life of thousands of Nicaraguans with access to electricity, health care, drinking water and modernized road infrastructure. Read more [here](#)

Caribbean Coast Autonomy Law celebrates 36 years.

On 26 October during the opening of its plenary session, the National Assembly, through Sandinista representative Shaira Downs, made a Special Mention in tribute to the 36th Anniversary of the passage of Law No. 28, Statute of Autonomy of the Regions of the Caribbean Coast of Nicaragua. This historic law was approved on 30 October 1987 thanks to the determination of the Sandinista Government led by President Daniel Ortega. "Thirty-six years ago, Nicaragua took the lead among countries the world over by recognizing the historical rights of the native and Afro-descendant peoples that inhabit the Caribbean, when the National Assembly approved Law 28, the Statute of Autonomy of the Caribbean Regions of Nicaragua," Downs said. She indicated that, as we reach this 36th anniversary of the passage of the Autonomy Law, it is important to remember the origins of this political initiative, which has allowed the country to make progress in developing the multi-ethnic and pluricultural regions. "We cannot forget that this approval has its origin in the historical program of the Sandinista National Liberation Front, which since 1969 has clearly outlined how the inclusion of the Atlantic Coast, today the Caribbean Coast, is vital for the construction of our new revolutionary homeland," Downs emphasized.

In June this year, Nirad Abrol from Birmingham took part in a delegation to the Friends of the ATC (Rural Workers Association) delegation to the Southern Caribbean Coast autonomous region. Of particular note was the fact that the 25-person delegation was made up of young activists and organisers from African, Asian and Indigenous communities in their own countries, almost all from the US. Nirad has written about why he took part in the delegation and the importance of building international connections and solidarity based around common political interests – see link [here](#)

Nicaraguan Budget 2024

On 19 October, Nicaraguan Minister of Finance and Public Credit, Iván Acosta presented to the plenary of the National Assembly the draft Law of the General Budget of the Republic for fiscal year 2024. The draft law assigns greater resources for social investment and productive infrastructure, prioritising health, education, the fight against poverty, and public investment. It aims, he stated, to build "the country that our people deserve". In cash terms, the 2024 budget will be about 24% higher than that for 2023, and of this, there will be a big increase (43%) in public sector investment. Overall, the proportion of the budget directed to anti-poverty measures totals 61%, and the proportion going specifically to health and education sectors will be 37.5%. Less than 3% goes on defence.

Acosta said that the increased budget will enable the country to continue the advances in health, education, transport, energy, water supply, housing and municipal services that it has been making since 2007.

Forthcoming delegations

Casa Ben Linder have organised a number of solidarity tours in 2024: -

- Power and Protagonism: Women in Nicaragua, 6-14 January
- Advances and Autonomy Brigade: Rights of Indigenous & Afrodescendant Peoples on Nicaragua's Caribbean Coast, 20 January – 1 February
- The Bird Brigade: Birding in Solentiname Arquipelago, 10-19 February
- Sindicatos & Solidaridad: Labour Movements in Nicaragua 2- 10 March

For further information see [here](#). It is sometimes possible to register after the official application deadline if places remain.

The trade union delegation in March may be of particular interest to trade union regions. If your region is interested in participating and would like to discuss further, please contact Louise on nscag@nicaraguasc.org.uk

Webinar recording

'Church & State in Nicaragua: Probing the Relationship' - this webinar confronts allegations that the Nicaraguan government is conducting "a cutthroat campaign to silence its opponents, targeting religious orders, Catholic institutions, and media in addition to ordinary people of faith...." (Newsweek, Oct. 3) The speakers also provided troubling evidence about some church leaders' anti-government activities. See link to the recording [here](#)

European Solidarity Conference

On October 21 and 22, a European Conference in solidarity with Nicaragua took place in Madrid, Spain. The title of the meeting was '*United for Independence and Sovereignty*'.

The Conference was attended by more than 60 participants from 25 organisations involved in solidarity and internationalism – this included trade union and political organisations. Representatives from the Embassies of Nicaragua, Cuba and Venezuela attended as did, via video link, two senior Nicaraguan government officials – Orlando Tardencilla, advisor to the President of the Republic of Nicaragua for Policies and International Relations, and Brenda Rocha, President of the Supreme Electoral Council of Nicaragua.

To read more see [here](#)

Speakers

We are always pleased to provide speakers for regional/branch meetings, so if you would like someone to come along to one of your meetings, please email Louise on nscag@nicaraguasc.org.uk

In solidarity



Louise

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