

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC STATEMENT

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International Women's Day: Amnesty International supports Nicaraguan women and girls

Amnesty International stands alongside women and girls in Nicaragua this International Women's Day. Amnesty International supports the women's movement demand to end sexual violence against women and girls. Together we are calling on the Nicaraguan authorities to eradicate rape and widespread sexual abuse of girls.

According to police statistics, between 1998 and 2008, more than 14,000 cases were reported. Two thirds of the victims were under the age of 17.

Amnesty International research has shown that young victims of rape and sexual abuse demand that their right to be free from sexual violence is protected by the Nicaraguan government, and that they are supported so they can overcome the physical and psychological trauma caused by such acts of violence. This is Nicaragua's obligation under national and international law.

With regards to these obligations under international law to protect the rights of women and girls, five UN expert committees have highlighted the problem and repeatedly asked the government to take action on violence against women and girls, without clear results to date.

Amnesty International stands with the women's movement in Nicaragua in calling for the development and implementation of a fully resourced and integrated national plan to tackle this problem as a matter of the utmost urgency. The plan should include measures to prevent sexual violence, protect survivors, and ensure justice and reparation to young victims of sexual violence so that they can rebuild their hopes and dreams in the wake of rape or sexual abuse.

Rehabilitation measures must include repealing the law which criminalizes all forms of abortion, so that young girls pregnant as a result of rape can make their own decisions over how to manage the consequences of rape without the fear of imprisonment.

Background

For further information, please consult Amnesty International report "Listen to their voices and act: Stop the rape and sexual abuse of girls in Nicaragua" (AMR 43/008/2010).

To take action on this issue, please visit

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/appeals-for-action/stop-sexual-violence-against-nicaraguan-girls-listen-their-voices-act-their-words>

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