

## AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC STATEMENT

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# NICARAGUA: UN HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL ENHANCES MONITORING OF THE CRISIS

The United Nations Human Rights Council today adopted its second resolution on the human rights situation in Nicaragua, renewing and strengthening the mandate of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to monitor and report on the situation. Amnesty International welcomes the continued attention by the UN Human Rights Council on the ongoing human rights crisis in Nicaragua. The resolution sends a clear message that the international community stands with victims in the pursuit of justice, truth and reparation that they have been demanding for more than two years.

As highlighted by the High Commissioner in her update to the Human Rights Council in February, “human rights violations have continued unabated” in Nicaragua,<sup>1</sup> despite attention from the Human Rights Council, which passed its first resolution on the country last year.<sup>2</sup> Meanwhile, the Government has consistently refused to cooperate effectively with regional and international efforts to address and improve the human rights situation.

Continued reporting by the High Commissioner’s Office is critical to ensure that crimes under international law and grave human rights violations committed during the 2018 protests do not go unpunished, as well as to ensure accountability for violations committed since then. Such monitoring is also crucial to curb future rights violations, including any that might occur in the context of the 2021 presidential elections.

Amnesty International calls on the Nicaraguan authorities to radically change its approach and cooperate fully with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in the discharge of its mandate, including by allowing access to the country. Failing this, the Human Rights Council must take further, more robust measures.

## BACKGROUND

Amnesty International has continued to document restrictions on civic space and the repression of dissent.<sup>3</sup> The government has raided the offices of local human rights organizations and independent media outlets, filed criminal charges against journalists, and cancelled the legal registration of nine civil society organizations. Journalists and human rights defenders are among the more than 100,000 people that have fled the country since the beginning of the crisis. In May, local organizations recorded that almost 90 government critics remained in detention for exercising their rights.<sup>4</sup> Impunity persists for crimes under international law and serious human rights violations committed by the police and pro-government armed groups.

<sup>1</sup> Human Rights Council 43rd Session. Statement by Michelle Bachelet United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. 27 February 2020. Available at <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=25624&LangID=E>

<sup>2</sup> Human Rights Council 40th session. Promotion and protection of human rights in Nicaragua. A/HRC/40/L.8. 19 March 2019. Available at <https://undocs.org/A/HRC/40/L.8>

<sup>3</sup> Amnesty International. Nicaragua: Government increases risk of COVID-19 infection in a country already devastated by two years of crisis. 16 April 2020. Available at <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2020/04/nicaragua-gobierno-aumenta-riesgo-contagio-covid19/>

<sup>4</sup> More information available at: <https://www.alianzacicivicanicaragua.com/lista-informe-preliminar-de-personas-presas-politicas-en-carceles-al-4-de-mayo-2020/>