

November 22, 2019

Statement of Solidarity with the People of Nicaragua

The Jesuit Conference Office of Justice and Ecology, the Ignatian Solidarity Network, the International Association of Jesuit Universities and the Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities, in solidarity with our Jesuit brothers and colleagues in Latin America, express our grave concern over the continuing erosion of democracy and human rights in Nicaragua. More than a year and a half after protests initially broke out, the Nicaraguan government continues to repress peaceful demonstrations, incarcerate political prisoners and even to “disappear” opposition figures.

We are particularly concerned over the targeting of students and faculty members of the Jesuit University of Central America (UCA) in Managua. On November 19, there was a violent attempt to enter the UCA campus by government-controlled groups in response to student protests. We condemn the government’s attempts to violate the University campus.

We express our solidarity as well with the Nicaraguan mothers conducting hunger strikes to secure the release of their incarcerated children and with those who have been arrested for bringing water to those on strike. We condemn the recent siege of Managua’s Catholic cathedral where some of these mothers were on strike.

We call on the Government of the United States to condemn these acts of violence by the Government of Nicaragua against its own people and to support peaceful efforts to restore democracy and civil rights, including freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, freedom of the press and freedom of religion. We also call on the United States to endorse the conclusions and recommendations of the November 19 report of the Organization of American States High-Level Commission on Nicaragua, which documents “ongoing grave human rights violations and abuses of power by the Government of Nicaragua.”

The restoration of order, democracy and civil liberties must not come at the expense of more bloodshed. We therefore reject any possibility of armed intervention.

We extend our deepest sympathies to the families of those who have lost their lives or liberty as a result of this conflict. We continue to hope for a just and peaceful resolution to the current violence. Finally, we pray for renewed strength for those who continue in the struggle to bring justice, peace and reconciliation to the people of Nicaragua.