

Brussels, 14 FEB. 2019
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To all MEP signatories of the letter on the Human Rights situation in Nicaragua

Dear Colleagues,

I would like to thank you for your letter on the situation of rule of law and Human rights in Nicaragua and share your assessment and concern, in particular concerning the need to support dialogue, justice and democracy.

The EU has been very vocal and active in support of human rights and dialogue since the crisis started in April 2018. This expression took the form of EU 28 declarations, statements by my Spokesperson and myself, support to a declaration on the country's situation at Human Rights Council, active dissemination of our messages on social networks and local EU declarations. Most recently, Council Conclusions reiterating the EU views were just adopted (see in annex).

In this context, I want to salute the excellent work done by the Parliament ad-hoc delegation that met with the main actors of the crisis in Managua on 24-26 January.

Our position is clear: the Nicaraguan authorities must put an immediate end to all violence and intimidation, free any persons unlawfully detained, reinstate the civil society and press organisations recently banned, and ensure accountability for the crimes committed over the last months whoever the perpetrator. Only a genuine national dialogue on justice and democracy involving all parties and the adoption of electoral reforms to allow for free and fair elections will permit reconciliation, laying the basis for a permanent peaceful solution to the crisis. We are ready to contribute to such a solution including if necessary by supporting mediation acceptable to all stakeholders. We have addressed the situation with our main partners in particular the OAS, SICA, the US, Canada, Russia, the Vatican, the UN and very recently Mexico.

With regard to the recent crackdown on civil society organizations and independent media, a demarche was carried by the EU delegation with Foreign Minister Moncada but also in Brussels and several EU capitals with the local Nicaraguan Ambassadors. The EU Delegation increased support to Human Rights Defenders and is adapting its funding modalities for the Civil Society Organisations that have lost legal personality. The EU also supported the mechanism put in place by the Inter American Commission for Human Rights (GIEI and MESENI by their Spanish acronyms) to documents the human rights abuses since April 2018.

Finally, the EEAS is in close contact with the Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights with a view to ensuring its activities in the country after its expulsion in August 2018.

Such a tense political situation has also generated increased hardship for the Nicaraguan population with a substantial drop in GDP and hundreds of thousands of jobs lost. In such conditions, a screening of our cooperation activities was carried in order to ensure they support only the population.

Rest assured that, following the adoption of the Foreign Affairs Council conclusions our resolve to engage with the government of Nicaragua and all stakeholders to end the repression and violence, relaunch dialogue and engage in electoral reforms is stronger than ever.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Federica Mogherini', written in a cursive style.

Federica Mogherini