

Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the EU on the situation in Nicaragua

Five months after the outbreak of social protests in Nicaragua, the situation in the country remains of serious concern to the European Union and its Member States. Basic principles of democracy, accountability and rule of law continue to be severely undermined by the repressive environment, which creates a climate of fear and mistrust. The national dialogue with the aim of reaching political solutions to these problems is now stalled due to lack of engagement by the authorities.

The lack of official cooperation with the international missions investigating human rights abuses prevents full accountability and justice to be served and encourages impunity. To this end and in line with previous statements, the European Union and its Member States urge the government of Nicaragua to allow the return of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNOHCHR) and enable it to continue its mission in the country as well as to provide the necessary support requested by the Follow-Up Mechanism on Nicaragua (MESENI) and the Interdisciplinary Group of Independent Experts (GIEI) to carry out their mandate.

We call on the government of Nicaragua to stop the disproportionate use of force against demonstrators, halt arrests based on laws which criminalise peaceful protest, free peaceful demonstrators and re-establish the full respect of due process for all detainees. We also call on the government of Nicaragua to act on the findings and recommendations by the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights (IACHR) and UNOHCHR, in particular to ensure full accountability for perpetrators of human rights abuses and the disarming and disbanding of armed groups.

The European Union and its Member States continue to support an inclusive dialogue on justice and democracy as the way out of the current crisis and reiterate their willingness to contribute to this process as a means to deliver on the legitimate democratic aspirations of the Nicaraguan people. To this end we renew our call on the government of Nicaragua to resume the national dialogue and we stand ready to further support this process.

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