



46th session of the UN Human Rights Council

Oral Statement

ITEM 2: Interactive Dialogue on the High Commissioner's report on the human rights situation in Nicaragua

The Right Livelihood Award Foundation and CEJIL

Madam President,

The Right Livelihood Foundation, CEJIL and CEJUDHCAN thank the High Commissioner for the report and welcome the inclusion of human rights violations facing indigenous and Afro-descendant peoples in the Caribbean Coast of Nicaragua.

Throughout 2020 land grabbing and violent attacks by illegal armed settlers have severely increased, with at least 13 murders, eight people injured, two kidnappings, the forced displacement of a community, and two assaults on two underage Miskito indigenous girls. These aggressions are coupled with deliberate attacks against the communities' livelihoods.

We condemn that despite granting land rights to indigenous peoples through Law 445/ 2003 and the ruling of the Inter-American Court demanding the removal of irregular settlers, the Nicaraguan government not only has failed to implement them, but it instead colluded with business interests in actively promoting illegal land-grabs.

The situation for indigenous human rights defenders has also deteriorated as the democratic collapse deepens in Nicaragua. Impunity for crimes committed against indigenous leaders is structural as Nicaraguan authorities have been unable to conduct proper investigations to deliver justice to victims, and the adoption of the recent Law on Foreign Agents has put their organisations' operation at serious risk.

Madam High Commissioner,

We echo your calls upon the Council to urge Nicaragua to uphold its national and international human rights obligations, in particular by ensuring the protection of indigenous peoples and their defenders, including from third parties. Lastly, we call on Nicaragua to promptly carry out independent and impartial investigations to identify perpetrators of these crimes.

Thank you.