

**Declaration of the delegation from North America
on the January 10th inauguration of Nicaragua's President Comandante Daniel Ortega Saavedra**

We in the delegation of social and political movements from the United States and Canada have visited Nicaragua to be present for the inauguration of President Daniel Ortega as he assumes a new period of government. We congratulate the people of Nicaragua as they carried out their election in spite of U.S. attempts to interfere with their sovereign rights.

We have had the opportunity to visit and get to know Nicaraguan people at grassroots, for example in rural cooperatives, in urban market centers, on housing projects for low-income families, and have learned a great deal about the reality of life for ordinary Nicaraguans. We bear testimony to the fact that since the Sandinista Front led by Daniel Ortega returned, duly elected, to government in January 2007 the people of Nicaragua have had their basic rights restored.

These rights and the achievements in 15 years included free education from pre-school up to higher education institutions, including free vocational training. Their government has invested and continues to invest in brand new infrastructure in the country's highways, seaports, airports, and low-cost housing. The country now has 99% electricity coverage, 75% from renewable sources, whereas in 2007 the system was both partial, highly unreliable, and dependent almost entirely on fossil fuels. Nicaragua's people have the most extensive and modern system of hospitals and health centers in the region, with 21 new public hospitals built since 2007. Nicaragua has been one of the most successful countries in the America's in addressing the problems of the Covid-19 pandemic while also keeping open its economy and its schools. Nicaragua has also taken the lead among smaller nations in pressing for urgent action on climate change at COP26 and in other negotiations.

Nicaragua's model of government with the "People as President" has made it possible for Nicaragua to become one of the leading countries in women's political representation and in gender equality overall, ranking fifth on a recent worldwide index. Nicaragua has the most advanced, innovative, and successful model of indigenous peoples' autonomy and self-government, and has recently completed the recognition of Indigenous land rights covering over 30% of national territory. Nicaragua leads the region in citizen security and the successful fight against organized crime in all its forms. It has the lowest homicide rate in Central America and one of the lowest in hemisphere.

All these tremendous achievements explain the overwhelming electoral triumph of President Ortega and the Sandinista party in last November's national elections which a large group of international delegates accompanied and recognized as among the most free and fair electoral processes anywhere in the world. All of this gives unquestionable legitimacy to President Daniel Ortega, to Vice President Rosario Murillo and to Nicaragua's elected National Assembly.

We condemn the false, cynical, and hypocritical claims of the United States government and its allies in the European Union and elsewhere refusing to recognize Nicaragua's duly elected authorities. They have presented no concrete evidence to back their assertions, nor have they explained why they are ignoring the wishes of 75% of those who voted to return a Sandinista government in an election with a high turnout and including six candidates for the presidency, including from parties which have recently been in government.

The United States feigns concerns about democracy in the country while having gaping deficiencies in its own democracy. It ignores the fact that there was no democracy in Nicaragua until the Sandinistas overthrew the US-supported dictatorship in 1979 and then held Nicaragua's first free and fair elections

in 1984, which the US refused to recognize. It also ignores the fact that Ortega and the Sandinistas peacefully stepped down in 1990 after holding elections then.

We condemn the application of illegal, unilateral coercive measures against Nicaragua and its people by the US and the European Union, just as we condemn their genocidal economic blockades of our sister countries and peoples in Cuba and Venezuela. By delaying or blocking loans from institutions such as the World Bank, the US is deliberately preventing projects aimed at alleviating poverty in Nicaragua and in doing this is hitting its poorest communities, not the political figures it claims are its targets.

We demand an end to such unlawful anti-democratic and anti-humanitarian policies against Nicaragua and our sister countries and peoples in Latin America and the Caribbean and in the rest of the world. The US has been intervening in Nicaragua for more than a century and has never accepted the Sandinista revolution and its leader. It has never abandoned the idea of the Monroe Doctrine in which the US claims sole dominion over the Western hemisphere and reserves the right to intervene in any country to maintain this domination and prevent nations from other parts of the world from asserting any influence of their own.

We congratulate the people and government of Nicaragua for their decision to assert their independence once again, this time by re-establishing relations with the People's Republic of China, in accordance with the policies of the overwhelming majority of the world's countries and peoples who uphold the principle of China's territorial integrity.

We believe firmly that this new period of the presidency of Nicaragua's people led by President Daniel Ortega and Vice President Rosario Murillo, in firm alliance with the revolutionary peoples and governments of Cuba and Venezuela and other like-minded countries, including other allies in Latin America as well as the People's Republic of China, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Russian Federation and nations throughout Africa and Asia, Nicaragua is entering another period of victorious endeavor to eliminate poverty and injustice and to secure peace and security for Nicaragua's people and for humanity.