

# On the Latest UN Human Rights Council Report on Nicaragua

By [Stephen Sefton](#)

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*In general, practically all reports on Nicaragua by international human rights institutions and organizations fail to check information supporting false claims, omit facts inconvenient to their findings and claim a commitment to transparency even while failing to engage adequately rival versions of events. They make highly selective use of sources and systematically avoid genuinely independent corroboration of accusations by seeking to verify accounts only with sources suffering from these self-same failings. [This latest report for the UN Council for Human Rights](#) shares these irremediable defects.*

It is worth pointing out that in [an interview in June 2021](#), Nicaraguan Foreign Minister Denis Moncada complained,

"We see that the High Commissioner for Human Rights is always reporting in a distorted way, without objectivity, and although we have constantly sent our reports, she ignores what Nicaragua informs her and stays with what the United States says, which is to accuse and use lies and falsehoods against Nicaragua."

This latest report by a team with a long record of association with the Organization of American States and the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, confirms Foreign Minister Moncada's remarks. The expert group assertion that it sought to engage with the Nicaraguan authorities is entirely in bad faith given the repeated failure of their predecessors to make fair use of substantial material presented by the Nicaraguan government to both the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and to the OAS Inter-American Commission for Human Rights. This material was presumably available to the expert group had they chosen to ask for it.



Poll from early 2023 showing public sentiment about respect for basic rights un Nicaragua

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In fact, The report continues the double standard generally applied by North American and European human rights institutions and organizations. They invent or grossly exaggerate concerns about Cuba, Nicaragua and Venezuela and other countries targeted by the US ruling classes and their NATO country counterparts. But they downplay, minimize and even ignore serious concerns about US allies like Chile or Colombia and others, including the United States itself.

One fundamentally important issue is that the available report constantly refers to what it calls “an extended report” without making that supposedly more detailed report generally available. This disingenuous ploy makes it impossible for independent researchers to appraise and evaluate the detail of the available report’s unsubstantiated accusations. It also lays the UN Human Rights Council open to the accusation that they have deliberately published the available report so as to prejudice world opinion in advance against Nicaragua. Thus, most world opinion will then be uninterested in or highly resistant to any honest examination of information that may or may not eventually be made public in what the expert group call their “extended report”.

The available report:

- falsely claims that the initial protests on April 19<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> 2018 did not involve well organized extremely violent attacks by hundreds of often well armed

opposition activists

- fails to offer a credible explanation of how, between April 18<sup>th</sup> and July 17<sup>th</sup> 2018, 400 police officers suffered gunshot wounds, 22 officers were killed and how over 60 Sandinista supporters were killed with many hundreds injured
- omits testimony from the many hundreds of victims of opposition violence and abuse
- repeats without reliable independent corroboration accusations and claims from supporters and members of Nicaragua's US government financed political opposition and non-governmental organizations
  
- omits credible reports and reliable testimony contradicting those false accusations
- suppresses evidence repeatedly presented by the Nicaraguan authorities contradicting those false accusations
- evades the authors' duty to take note of competing versions of the events on which they are reporting and explain why they discount or dismiss those versions

The report makes many false accusations:

- the demonstrations from April 18<sup>th</sup> 2018 onwards were peaceful but were attacked by police
- the police and armed sandinista supporters committed extrajudicial murder of dozens of people
- the health ministry ordered health workers not to attend to wounded opposition supporters
- the Institute for Legal Medicine discriminated against relatives of opposition victims of the violence and denied them service
- opposition supporters suffered arbitrary arrest and were denied due process
- Nicaragua has provoked a refugee crisis in Costa Rica
- marches and demonstrations are banned (in fact, the authorities have applied prior long standing rules requiring a commitment by the organizers of marches and demonstrations to ensure indemnity for any damage or destruction caused during the event)

The report makes innumerable omissions of evidence contradicting their claims for which the bloc of contrary evidence is overwhelming. This link contains just [some examples of innumerable relevant reports and interviews](#). Perhaps, the most serious omission in the expert group report is any reference to the attacks by hundreds of opposition supporters over April 19<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> including the use of firearms and molotov cocktails in Managua, León, Masaya, Chinandega, Jinotepe, Diriamba, Granada, Estelí and elsewhere which were extensively reported at the time in local media. Likewise the report omits mentioning the well documented armed attacks on police stations in Masaya, Jinotepe, Nagarote, Mulukuku, Morrito, El Cuapa, El Coral, El Morrito and Puerto Príncipe, among others.

A further notable omission is any discussion of how the expert group's report of events in 2018 explains the massive economic damages and losses suffered as a direct result of the opposition violence during their failed coup attempt. Damage to state institutions and municipalities totaled U\$206.5 million. 53 buildings were destroyed, 203 buildings were

damaged. 1,416 vehicles and large machines were damaged or destroyed. 18,165 items of office machinery and equipment were damaged, destroyed or stolen. 18 government institutions, municipal authorities and 3 universities reported damage and destruction to sites of cultural heritage. The expert group report completely omits this information, although it is readily available in government statements and media reports.

Anyone familiar with Nicaragua, or who follows in good faith reporting by national and international media on the country, will be aware of this information and its respective sources. But the expert group report, like all the previous US and European human rights reports on Nicaragua, appears to have limited its research almost entirely to sources overtly supporting Nicaragua's violent coup promoting opposition, funded by the United States government or the European Union and its respective governments. All these sources overwhelmingly support not only the promoters of the terrorism enacted during the 2018 failed coup attempt but also these same people's subsequent efforts to continue destabilizing Nicaragua's economy and overthrow its elected government.

Similarly, the scandalous false accusations of systematic torture and ill treatment of prisoners are contradicted by repeated opinion polls indicating the Nicaraguan population's faith and confidence in the country's institutions and overwhelming support for the government. The regionally respected M&R polling company has the best record of prediction with regard to Nicaragua of any of the local or regional opinion poll companies in Central America. M&R has produced a series of polls many of which are available [at this link](#) and which make nonsense of the UN expert group's false allegations.

The same is true of repeated election results since 2018, namely, the regional Caribbean elections of March 2019, the national elections of 2021 and the local municipal elections of 2022. The FSLN won all those elections involving high voter participation with strong majorities and a consistent pattern of support for the opposition political parties running a few points over 30%. That pattern has persisted in all the elections held since 2011. Thus, both the most accurate regional polling company and the Nicaraguan people themselves repeatedly demonstrate overwhelming support for their government, implicitly contradicting the outrageous allegations of the UN Group of experts portraying Nicaragua as a repressive dictatorship.

A constant theme in the Expert Group's report is the claim that the Nicaraguan government has "instrumentalized" the country's legal system for political purposes to attack legitimate political opposition. In fact, Nicaragua's authorities have simply [applied the law to prosecute criminals](#) responsible for organizing, funding or carrying out acts of terrorism, as documented in many of the accompanying links. The expert group itself has politicized and weaponized the UN human rights system so as to attack Nicaragua.

Essentially, on Nicaragua or any other country targeted by the Western ruling classes and the governments they own, the question is who to believe. On one side the United States, its allies and their powerful institutional, media, academic and NGO apparatus suggest that Nicaragua is a failed state dictatorship whose authorities are ruthless and sadistic and enjoy very little popular support. On the other hand every available real world social and economic indicator indicates that Nicaragua has a successful developing economy and an optimistic society with a government that enjoys overwhelming popular support. Now, this false UN report will be used to justify economic and trade measures to damage Nicaragua's economy and its people's well being, just as similar false reports to the UN Council for Human Rights have been used in the past, seeking to destroy other countries, from Libya to Syria and

Venezuela, and even the Russian Federation.

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*This article was originally published on [Tortilla con Sal](#), translated from Spanish.*

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*Featured image: Nicaragua 2018 – police officer Gabriel de Jesús Vado Ruiz, tortured, murdered and set on fire by opposition thugs in Masaya in 2018 (Photo from opposition social media video)*

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