

Date: 19 December 2018

Subject: CMI! statement on human rights violations in Nicaragua

To: António Guterres (United Nations Secretary General); Michelle Bachelet Jeria (United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights; High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy & Vice-President of the European Commission; Stef Blok (Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs); Sigrid Kaag (Dutch Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation)

CC: Kenneth Bell (Head of the delegation of the European Union to Nicaragua and to the Central American Integration System); Peter-Derrek Hof (Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to Costa Rica, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Honduras and El Salvador)

In the face of violence against human rights defenders, journalists and feminists in Nicaragua

The Count Me In! (CMI!) consortium, made up of Mama Cash, including the Red Umbrella Fund, the Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID), Just Associates (JASS), CREA and Urgent Action-Africa (UAF-Africa) along with her sister funds in the United States (UAF) and Latin America (UAF-LAC), expresses its deep concern regarding the escalation of violence against human rights defenders, journalists, feminists, social movements and civil society organizations in Nicaragua.

In the context of social protests that began in April of this year, and according to data from the IACHR's Special Monitoring Mechanism for Nicaragua (MESENI), at least 325 people have been killed, primarily at the hands of state agents, and over 400 people have been arbitrarily detained (over 40 of them women) and subjected to cruel and degrading treatment for exercising their right to protest. This is on top of the total prohibition of social protest, the systematic persecution of journalists and media, and the harassment, persecution and promotion of hate against human rights and feminist organizations and individual activists.

On December 12, the National Assembly of Nicaragua approved a request made by Daniel Ortega's government to cancel the legal registration of the Centro Nicaragüense de Derechos Humanos (CENIDH) and the organization Hagamos Democracia¹. On December 13, the legal registrations of another 5 organizations were also canceled: Centro de Investigación de la Comunicación (CINCO), Fundación Popol Na, Instituto para el Desarrollo y la Democracia (IPADE), Fundación del Río and the Instituto de Liderazgo de las Segovias. Prior to this, the legal registration was also revoked of the organization Centro de Información y Servicios de Asesoría en Salud (CISAS), and the Instituto de

¹ CEJIL <https://www.cejil.org/es/organizaciones-derechos-humanos-condenamos-acciones-estatales-dejar-indefension-poblacion>

Estudios Estratégicos y Políticas Públicas (IEEPP). These organizations have recognized trajectories in the defense of human rights, research and freedom of speech.

In light of this situation, we call on:

- The Dutch government and the EU to continue rejecting violence and attacks against organizations, protestors, journalists and human rights defenders in Nicaragua. We acknowledge the efforts of the Dutch government and the EU thus far, and implore them to continue urging the Nicaraguan State to urgently construct a political and peaceful settlement to the current situation, grounded in access to justice for all victims, the immediate cessation of all repressive and criminalizing measures, and a dialogue with social and human rights movements in the country.
- The United Nations (UN) Secretary General to send a high level delegation to Nicaragua and offer their support for generating options that allow for a prompt settlement of this crisis, as requested by human rights organizations from different parts of the world.²
- To the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and Special Rapporteurships on Human Rights Defenders, Freedom of Expression, Extrajudicial Executions, Torture, Freedom of Association and Discrimination of Women in Law and Practice, amongst others, to continue documenting and denouncing the violation of the rights of human rights defenders and organizations in Nicaragua. Furthermore, to re-install the Office of the High Commissioner in Nicaragua, with due guarantees provided by the Nicaraguan State to exercise its functions.

² <https://www.cejil.org/es/organizaciones-derechos-humanos-condenamos-acciones-estatales-dejar-indefension-poblacion>