



Plenary sitting

B9-0401/2022

12.9.2022

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

with request for inclusion in the agenda for a debate on cases of breaches of human rights, democracy and the rule of law

pursuant to Rule 144 of the Rules of Procedure

on **Nicaragua, in particular the arrest of the bishop Rolando Álvarez**
(2022/2827(RSP))

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on behalf of the ECR Group

**European Parliament resolution on Nicaragua, in particular the arrest of the bishop
Rolando Álvarez
(2022/2827(RSP))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Nicaragua,
 - having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948,
 - having regard to the statements by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet at the 48th session of the Human Rights Council of 13 September 2021,
 - having regards to the Nicaragua country reports by the Office of High Commissioner of Human Rights of 1 July 2018, 17 September 2019, and 11 February 2021,
 - having regards to declarations on Nicaragua by the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy on behalf of the EU,
 - having regard to Rule 144 of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. Whereas, on Friday August 19, the regime of Daniel Ortega in Nicaragua issued a domiciliary arrest against Rolando Álvarez, bishop of the diocese of Matagalpa, along with four priests, two seminarians and a photographer;
- B. Whereas no official accusation has been filed nor evidence provided by the Nicaraguan authorities;
- C. Whereas, on 1 August, the Nicaraguan regime arbitrarily closed seven Catholic radio stations and two more community radio/TV stations shortly after, using excessive police force to disperse unarmed protesters with tear gas and gunshots;
- D. Whereas, since 2018, the Nicaraguan regime has undertaken actions accompanied by unprecedented levels of violence against its own people, in particular political opponents, who are now largely imprisoned and treated in the same manner as political prisoners under dictatorships i.e. Venezuela and Cuba;
- E. Whereas around 180 political prisoners remain imprisoned, including presidential candidates, political leaders, students, journalists and other members of civil society, being arbitrarily accused of different crimes such as terrorist acts, conspiracy or treachery;
- F. Whereas Daniel Ortega continues to centralize political power around himself, his family, and small number of loyalists, completely undermining the concepts of democracy and the rule of law;
- G. Whereas the IACHR has denounced the arrest of bishop Rolando Álvarez as part of a systematic context of persecution, criminalization, and harassment against members of the Catholic Church in Nicaragua, because of its role as mediators in the 2018 National Dialogue;
- H. Whereas the Secretary General of the United Nations, Antonio Guterres, has expressed his

grave concerns over the attacks against the Church and the civil society organizations;

- I. Whereas this year the Nicaraguan regime has authorised Russian military presence in the country, giving clear evidence of the strong relationship and common support between Ortega-Murillo and Putin's regime;
 - J. Whereas the Nicaraguan dictatorship has been consistently supported by other dictatorships like Cuba and Venezuela and other members of the Foro de Sao Paulo and the Grupo de Puebla;
1. Strongly condemns the actions of the Nicaraguan authorities against the Catholic Church, opposition political parties, media, journalists, other media workers, human rights defenders and civil society.
 2. Calls the Nicaraguan government for the immediately and unconditionally release of Rolando Álvarez, the rest of imprisoned members of the Catholic Church and political leaders, annulling all the legal proceedings against them including their sentences.
 3. Expresses its support to the Nicaraguan citizens protesting against the Ortega-Murillo regime;
 4. Requests to activate any economic and/or political sanctions to the Nicaraguan regime linked to the Association Agreement between the EU and Central America;
 5. Regrets the lack of realism in the "Road to 2023" strategy presented in July by Josep Borrell, High Representative for Foreign Policy and Defence in the European Union, with the intention of making Latin America and the Caribbean a geostrategic ally of the EU to gain ground against Russia and China; there are a growing number of authoritarian governments in the region and the deterioration of democratic mechanisms and rules is a fact. The ties between the governments of Nicaragua, Venezuela, Cuba, Colombia, Bolivia, Peru, Honduras, Mexico and Argentina with the Chinese Communist Party and with Russia are well known;
 6. Denounces and requests the suspension of the EUR 3,400 million that the European Commission approved to finance the "Road to 2023" strategy; this money coming from the European taxpayers will likely end up in the hands of dictatorial regimes and/or associations linked to these regimes, and not in the hands of citizens who are increasingly impoverished and subjected to reprisals in many countries of Latin America and the Caribbean;
 7. Calls on Member States and the UN Security Council, in accordance with Articles 13 and 14 of the Rome Statute, to open a formal investigation through the International Criminal Court into Nicaragua and Daniel Ortega for crimes against humanity;
 8. Calls on the EU and its Member States to closely monitor the situation on the ground through their local representatives and embassies in Nicaragua;
 9. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the Secretary-General of the Organization of American States, the Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly, the Central American Parliament, the Lima Group, and the Government and Parliament of the Republic of Nicaragua.