

**Question for written answer E-001514/2023  
to the Commission**

Rule 138

**Mathilde Androuët (ID)**

**Subject:** Consolidation of Daniel Ortega's dictatorship through trade benefits and investments in Nicaragua

Since 2018, there has been a deadly crackdown on opponents of Marxist dictator Daniel Ortega's regime in Nicaragua. In September 2022, the EU's diplomatic representative was expelled from the country<sup>1</sup> and COMECE<sup>2</sup> recently denounced its 'state persecution' of the Catholic Church<sup>3</sup>. The EU and the US have been applying sanctions against Nicaragua and senior members of the regime for four years. However, this has not prevented the country – one of the most corrupt in the world, according to Transparency International<sup>4</sup> – from recording strong economic growth since 2021 as a result of massive investments by the United States and Canada, in particular<sup>5</sup>.

1. Does the Commission intend to review the trade pillar of the EU-Central America Association Agreement provisionally applied since 1 August 2013, which encompasses Nicaragua<sup>6</sup>, despite the fact that the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Josep Borrell has described the country as 'one of the worst dictatorships'<sup>7</sup>?
2. Is it not concerned that the trade benefits and foreign investments help, above all, to consolidate a regime in which the assets of 300 of Daniel Ortega's wealthiest supporters amount to three times Nicaragua's gross domestic product<sup>8</sup>?

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2022/10/10/nicaragua-head-of-mission-to-the-eu-declared-persona-non-grata/>

<sup>2</sup> Commission of the Bishops' Conferences of the European Union.

<sup>3</sup> <https://missionetmigrations.catholique.fr/sinformer/amerique-latine/309920-le-cardinal-hollerich-demande-la-liberation-de-mgr-rolando-et-des-autres-detenus-au-nicaragua/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://dialogo-americas.com/articles/venezuela-and-nicaragua-most-corrupt-in-latin-america/#.ZDUSYnZByUk>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.lesoir.be/464439/article/2022-09-09/renverser-le-regime-ortega-pourquoi-et-comment>

<sup>6</sup> <https://trade.ec.europa.eu/access-to-markets/en/content/eu-central-america-association-agreement>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.rfi.fr/fr/podcasts/invit%C3%A9-international/20211024-nicaragua-le-r%C3%A9gime-de-daniel-ortega-est-un-r%C3%A9gime-corrompu-et-infect>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.lesoir.be/464439/article/2022-09-09/renverser-le-regime-ortega-pourquoi-et-comment>