



Republic of Nicaragua

Statement by
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(Check against delivery)

Mr. President,
Mr. Secretary-General,
Distinguished delegates,

The struggle for democracy being waged by Nicaragua has transcended our borders and aroused feelings of solidarity and support in different parts of the world.

The Nicaraguan people raised its voice and it was heard by Central America. With the integrating force of seven fraternal countries, that voice then resounded in the Andean Community, Mexico, the United States of America, Canada, the Rio Group, the Organization of American States (OAS), the European Union and Japan, to mention only the most recent ones.

The echo of this voice has reverberated in the United Nations in various reports and resolutions.

In this hall, where the General Assembly of the United Nations convenes, I convey to you the deep gratitude of the Nicaraguan people for the solidarity shown to us by the Member States.

Mr. President,

We come to the sixtieth session of the General Assembly of the United Nations under circumstances that will determine our future, for we are in the throes of a struggle for democracy to keep from returning to dark days, which are a thing of the past.

Like other peoples of the United Nations who fought for their freedom, thousands of Nicaraguans died for it, the victims of a perverse pendulum that swung from authoritarianism to totalitarianism.

The lessons learned in those years left us a legacy of freedom, democracy and above all, peace, as principles and values that cannot be renounced.

In the past four years, we have been striving to bring about a national rebirth and an institutional overhaul, whose driving forces are transparency, freedom, the rule of law, social equality and individual initiative.

But to carry out this mammoth task, we must overcome the errors of the past. That is why we are engaged in a frontal battle against corruption and impunity, with continent-wide support.

We have also attempted to restore independence and integrity to our institutions, held hostage by personal and partisan interests.

This includes the sphere of justice, where utter impartiality and objectivity of judges and magistrates, an inclusive electoral system capable of guaranteeing respect for a popular vote cast in freedom.

It also includes the need for institutions that act in the service of the higher interests of the nation and are not used as weapons of a political vendetta in campaigns to intimidate public officials in the executive branch, are absolute necessities.

The joint forces opposing democracy responded by escalating the breakdown of constitutional order and the legitimate exercise of power. 15. They then attempted to upset the balance of power, an essential principal of representative democracy in the inter-American system.

The opposition attempted to execute a new variation on a coup d'état by tainting the institutions of the State and using them as instruments of political coercion.

Instead of accepting the separation of powers, they escalated the allocation of power, attempting to modify the powers of the President retroactively without consulting the Nicaraguan people, the sole depository of the national sovereignty and proprietor of the presidential mandate conferred at the polls in November 2001.

In the face of these threats to democracy, we have harnessed all the resources available to us under our national legislation and international law.

The Central American Court of Justice, the judicial organization of the Central American Integration System, rooted in democratic values, handed down a far-reaching decision on 29 March 2005 recognizing the separation of powers as a democratic principle.

Under the Inter-American Democratic Charter, we also turned to the Organization of American States, which affirmed that the disturbing turn of events in Nicaragua was compromising the balance of public power and the legitimate exercise of power.

Mr. President,

With a view to overcoming this situation, President Enrique Bolaños has expressed his willingness to launch a broad national dialogue with all sectors.

This is not, however, as the forces attempting to destroy our institutions have conveniently claimed, a dialogue aimed at surrendering democracy.

Nor should it be a dialogue in which a gun is being held to the President's head in order to force him to make concessions that would consolidate in Nicaragua a new model of dictatorship, never before seen in the history of Latin America, and bring back the trials and tribulations of earlier years that put an end to freedom and dashed the democratic hopes of nations.

On the contrary, as the Organization of American States itself said in its resolutions, it is a dialogue to seek "democratic solutions", which should be "free of pressure, threats and coercion" and aimed at "the cessation of any action that could aggravate the crisis" and the restoration of the balance of power.

Mr. President,

We deplore the murder of journalists in any part of the world in the gravest possible manner.

We are particularly concerned by the murder of three Nicaraguan journalists in the past three years, not only because the criminals cut short precious human lives but also because, occurring at the height of the electoral campaign, the murders constituted an attempt to terrorize our journalists and suppress freedom of expression in our young democracy.

By attacking freedom of expression, they are harming the democratic processes.

These forces are well aware that freedom of expression is the voice of democracy.

Freedom of expression protects all the other fundamental rights and, without it, freedom loses its sustenance and democracy is orphaned.

We will continue doing our utmost to punish the guilty and to break up all networks of terror and intimidation.

Mr. President,

We are aware of the importance of the upcoming electoral processes for democracy in Nicaragua.

Under the current circumstances, we must guarantee the Nicaraguan people that every vote will be duly deposited, counted and respected, and that their sacred right to elect their authorities in conditions of absolute freedom, will not be violated.

Accordingly, we have asked the Secretary-General of the United Nations for technical assistance for the elections, in the hope that the specialized agencies of the Organization will help us strengthen our democracy, complementing the work being carried out by OAS with the assistance of the European Union.

Mr. President,

Despite the energy, resources and efforts diverted from development in order to preserve the democracy, Nicaragua has made major strides towards fulfilling the millennium development goals.

Destabilizing actions have not stopped the Nicaraguan people from enjoying the first fruits of the war against corruption and the restoration of an honest and transparent civil service that has succeeded in attracting foreign investment and winning the confidence of the international community.

The latest gauge of the success of President Bolaños in enabling more and more Nicaraguans to lead a decent life is the Human Development Report 2005, showing that we progressed from the 118th to the 112th position.

The best medium-term strategy for sustainable poverty reduction is to acquire access to new markets and make international trade the driving force of growth, combining economic growth with social development in order to develop our human capital.

The Government of Nicaragua is therefore in favor of the ratification of the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) between Central America, the Dominican Republic and the United States with the aim of fortifying our economy by integrating it globally and raising the standard of living of our population, particularly the poorest sectors.

We welcomed the words of President George Bush in his statement to this Assembly: "A successful Doha round will reduce and eliminate tariffs and other barriers on farm and industrial goods. It will end unfair agricultural subsidies...Under Doha, every nation will gain, and the developing world stands to gain the most".

We have agreed today, to follow-up the request made by the Central American Integration System's Heads of State and Government to President Vicente Fox of Mexico, on 12th September, and send him immediately the information that will allow us to explore innovative finance mechanisms to help our countries absorb the external shocks brought by the international price of oil.

Mr. President, Mr. Secretary-General, distinguished delegates,

Poverty is a multi-dimensional phenomenon associated with economic and structural problems.

Reducing unemployment and social inequality, as well as social investment, are determining factors in human development: in other words, sustainable economic growth, within the context of a democracy that enjoys social and gender equality.

The Government of Nicaragua is developing social programmes to protect the rights, and satisfy the basic needs, of the most vulnerable sectors of Nicaraguan society - women, children, young people, the elderly and persons with disabilities.

This protection extends to Nicaraguans abroad.

We reaffirm our priority commitment to promoting respect for the dignity of all our migrants who, with their work and their efforts, contribute to socio-economic development, both in their host country and their home country.

Mr. President,

A duty of justice and solidarity moves Nicaragua to raise its voice in support of the just and legitimate aspiration of the Republic of China on Taiwan to become a member of the universal forum of the United Nations, on behalf of 20 million nationals of that country who deserve to be regarded as an integral part of the peoples of the United Nations.

Distinguished delegates,

Nicaragua is grateful to the Central American Integration System (SICA) for endorsing our candidacy for a non-permanent seat on the Security Council of the United Nations for the 2006-2007 term, reflecting the right of countries with small economies to be represented on an equal footing.

At a time of reform of the Organization, Nicaragua is grateful for the significant support it has received thus far and confirms its resolve to continue seeking the support of all Member States.

We hope to be elected and to share our experience in such areas as peacekeeping and peace building and support the just aspiration of developing countries to full participation in decisions in matters of security, with all the responsibility, benefits and consequences that implies.

Thank you very much!