

Preventing violence, migration and the status quo through international pressure in Nicaragua.¹

Introduction—Preventing extreme violence in Nicaragua

In 2021, Nicaragua became a site of fear and repression, where the space for freedom of expression, movement, and worship has been gradually eliminated by the Ortega regime. The law exists without any measure of justice and accountability, and is a vehicle for punishment and violence. In my 2018 testimony to this Commission, I showed how Daniel Ortega gradually achieved the monopoly of power during twenty years of political arrangements, effectively taking charge of all political institutions, and by any political standards establishing a full-fledged authoritarian regime.²

Three years later, the dictatorship has set out to defend its reign and prevent the opposition from gaining any rightful political space, by eliminating the possibility of having a competitive environment through elections. The major consequence of the monopoly of force is one whereby loyalty to the state has been reserved for a very small circle of power that deprives the majority of Nicaraguans of freedom and rights. Instead, the regime incarcerates, intimidates, and expels. To Albert Hirshman³, when repression is too strong, only two options, voice (in the form of protest) and exit (migrating) are left to people. In Nicaragua, *voice*, in the form of peaceful protest has been criminalized to the full extent of the Sandinista legal frameworks, and migrating by voting with their feet, *exit*, has become an unpleasant and bittersweet option for many.

After July 2021, the regime will now initiate a second wave of repression that will consist of giving discretion to its militant followers to intimidate and harass the average Azul y Blanco followers. This wave will be aimed at mitigating any interest and desire to participate in the elections and push voter abstention, while securing a political transition to another presidential term under Ortega's authoritarian rule.

The role of the international community between July and September 2021 is crucial to prevent a forthcoming wave of mob-inspired violence, and perhaps pave the way in the very short term for a competitive, legitimate electoral environment. The world must **act proportionally to the magnitude of repression** with its pressure and its means of condemnation, cooperation and economic might in order to return and restore the right of self-determination and sovereignty to the Nicaraguan people.

A. Buying loyalty: the deepening of repression in Nicaragua to oxygenate Ortega's militant base
Authoritarian regimes don't see political reforms as an alternative when they have full monopoly of authority. Rather, their options are power continuity by increasing control and repression, and eventually transferring authority to members of their own circle of power.

Continuing control.

After the fraudulent 2016 elections, where Daniel Ortega had eliminated the viable political opposition, the Ortega-Murillo dynasty had planned to transfer their authority post 2021 elections to someone

¹ Manuel Orozco. Testimony submitted before the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission, July 2021. Head of the Taskforce on Politics and Mediation in Nicaragua; Non-resident Fellow Inter-American Dialogue, Director of the Center for Migration and Economic Stabilization, and Senior Fellow of the Institute for the Study of International Migration at Georgetown University.

² <https://humanrightscommission.house.gov/events/hearings/evolving-human-rights-crisis-nicaragua>

³ Hirshman, Albert. 1970. *Exit, Voice, and Loyalty: Responses to Decline in Firms, Organizations, and States*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press

within their circle of power. They would handle a stable economy and a new political elite, with no way out through reforms, the government would push through a new replacement.

However, the April 2018 events disrupted their plans and instead the government adapted to the circumstances by deepening their control through force and the criminalization of protest and democracy. After calling the social protests a failed coup attempt, the government reformed the articles 395 of the Penal and Article 44 of the Anti-Money Laundering Law, in July 2018 stating that any individual attempting to alter constitutional order would face imprisonment.

A year later the government broke its promises of political reforms agreed upon in a [March 2019](#) agreement and in July of that year promised more repression and no dialogue.⁴ In the middle of the pandemic, neglecting to protect citizens against COVID-19, the government instead introduced four key pieces of legislation, to further shield itself from political opposition. In October 2020 the Ortega-Murillo controlled government, allegedly to protect the country against internet-based hate crimes, and the foreign agent laws requiring any NGOs receiving foreign donations to register as a foreign agent and committing to not participate in political activities, and Law 1055 in defense of sovereignty declaring social protest a criminal act.⁵ It also passed the Financial Consumer Protection law in February 2021 aimed at protecting relatives of those internationally sanctioned and threatening the financial system to not deviate from this law. These legislations have served two purposes, first, to ensure that Ortega-Murillo would be able to transfer their power and install to another member within their circle of power, and second, to weaken the opposition by all means.

Transferring power as an exit strategy

The power structure of the FSLN and Ortega's close-knit circle of power is best understood as a quasi-ethnic structure, a subgroup within Nicaraguan society with different modus vivendi and values.

The attitudes, values, loyalties and beliefs within Sandinismo are uniquely different and differentiated in so far as they operate as close knit minority structure with its own economic class, a political following handled by a leading clan, Ortega-Murillo, with a value system associated to a defensive posture against the status quo, using a primitive populist and nationalist sentiment, remotely resembling the nation's history, but deeply socially resentful of the prevailing class divides, and claiming class entitlements. While not anti-capitalist, is an anti-elite grouping with loyalties only to the family. Their supporting network relies of patron client relationships, transactional exchanges of favors within their tribe and promoting a belief as a minority under siege.

Sandinismo as a movement does not have more than 20% electoral support,⁶ and 10% base loyal to Ortega. However, they are effectively a minority holding political and legal authority believing themselves to be under a threatening environment moving against their own survival. Almost as an 'ethnic minority' the FSLN and Ortega-Murillo have designed the legal infrastructure which they believe will protect them against the threat of their removal by a majority led coalition. That defensive posture blinds them from exploring any possible negotiation and instead pushes against a society that they

⁴ <https://www.eleconomista.com.mx/internacionales/Daniel-Ortega-rompe-el-dialogo-con-la-oposicion-20190801-0119.html>

⁵ LEY N°. 1055 LEY DE DEFENSA DE LOS DERECHOS DEL PUEBLO A LA INDEPENDENCIA, LA SOBERANÍA Y AUTODETERMINACIÓN PARA LA PAZ.

⁶ June 2020 and April 2021 national public surveys.

consider to be prone to attack them. Therefore, a competitive national election is a threat to their survival.

Because the regime controls the political establishment and institutions, it can afford to exercise its power to legislate at will and control the opposition. The regime (and family members) owns parliament (71 out of 92 legislators are FSLN); the justice system (11 out of 16 supreme court magistrates are FSLN), the elections commission (7 out of 10 members are FSLN), autonomous institutions and the Police and Army.

The regime has also use of a loyal support network of Sandinista followers prepared to intimidate and ultimately destroy the opposition's popular and electoral base. This support base includes the paramilitary, formerly made up of mobs, 'turbas', as well as former members of the military.

They have been prepared and organized since late 2020 to mobilize and intimidate the population, especially any form of social disobedience. Given the wave of arbitrary detentions against the leadership, social protest is likely to emerge in any form, and the mobs have prepared to counterattack any form of disobedience with violence.⁷ Pro government media has set out to attack civic leaders, including those in the diaspora.⁸ Ms. Rosario Murillo's daily briefings use ambiguous moral arguments of hate and religious statements to attack and denigrate the right to dissent and political opinion.⁹

According to an April 2021 survey, to the Sandinista supporter the two main problems in the country are 'political terrorism' (38%) and the failed coup d'etat (IFGE) and its social protests (21%). The Covid-19 pandemic is third (16%) as the main problem in the country.¹⁰ Therefore, in combination with the criminalization of protest, the state will now ensure that 'hatred' is legally and socially prevented among its base. This phase was to be activated last year but pushed back during the pandemic.

Its base is entering into a political stage to 'prevent' any form of civil disobedience or social unrest in ways that can escalate into violent attacks against mid-ranking leaders, and other Azul y Blanco opponents, including average Nicaraguans. Currently any Nicaraguan suspected by the Police as a threat is detained in the street, their cell phone searched for any links, contacts to opposition followers or leaders, and intimidated and threatened with imprisonment or mistreatment.

B. Repression of social protest and criminalization of constitutional rights: Silencing voice

The legal framework established and the monopoly of force at hand by the government have sequestered Nicaraguans. The citizens have a law that criminalizes their Constitutional rights, and gun in their head if they attempt to perform civil disobedience. The events that have occurred since May 2021 with the arbitrary detention of 27 leading figures without due process of law, and based on false charges, are the culmination of a first stage of repression, which consisted of decapitating the leadership of the Azul y Blanco movement (opposition leaders, elites and influentials).

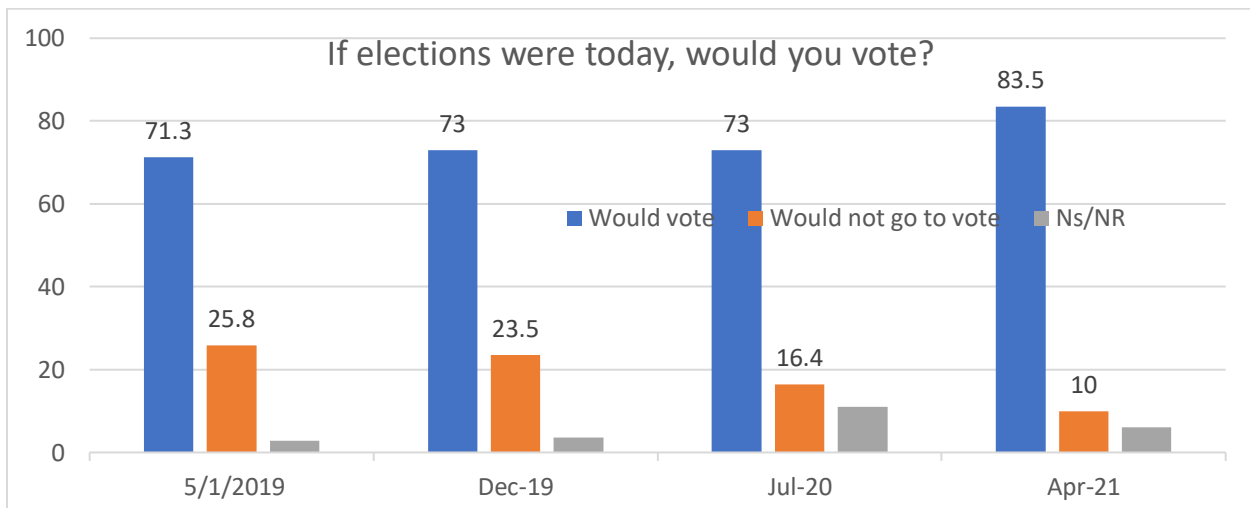
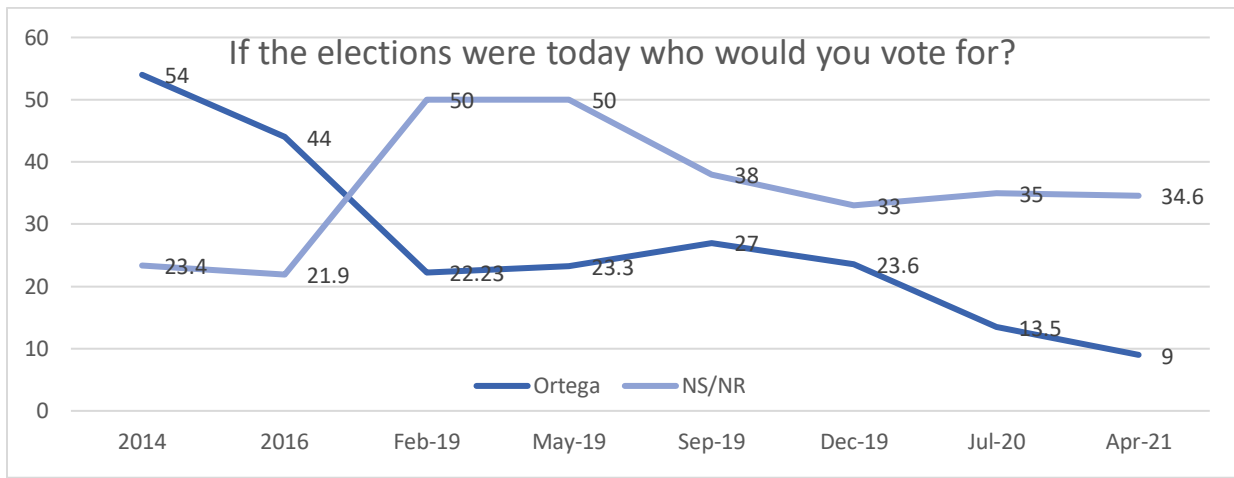
⁷ Orozco, Manuel. <https://www.confidencial.com.ni/opinion/hay-que-desnudar-el-discurso-de-odio-que-fomenta-la-violencia/>

⁸ William Grisby has deployed a regular and systematic disinformation campaign against civic leaders, pre-announcing who is next in the list of detained individuals. See for example, his attacks to various leaders, including the author (https://radiolaprimerisima.com/sin-fronteras/sin-fronteras-lunes-12-de-julio-de-2021/?fbclid=IwAR350Cw1jth7_INRCXXDjflxckxxyWSDTSvgfV4zGSfVG5Tn84I7pRecG8)

⁹ <https://elpais.com/internacional/2021-06-12/rosario-murillo-la-mujer-que-salvo-a-ortega-y-hundio-el-sandinismo.html>

¹⁰ Orozco, Manuel. April 2021 national survey of political opinions.

Ortega's recent measures are a strategy designed in 2020 but pushed back due to the pandemic. When in May the only legitimate opposition party, Ciudadanos por la Libertad, (CxL), opened its doors to all presidential hopefuls¹¹ as candidates competing to run for that party's platform, it irked and scared the regime's chances of having an 'easy' electoral victory. Ortega's electoral base has diminished and Nicaraguans for the most part would rather vote for anyone than Daniel Ortega. In fact, until April 2021 there was still a firm belief among Nicaraguans that elections are the way for change by voting for some other than Ortega.¹² Ortega-Murillo saw an urgency to act swiftly to contain a democratic avalanche. Ortega and Murillo compressed the mix of detention, intimidation, and elimination in time and space rather than spread them over the course of six months prior to November 2021.



In that context, the detention measures were designed for domestic consumption, consistent with an effort to oxygenate Ortega-Murillo's electoral, most militant, segment of their base to compensate for

¹¹ Particularly allowing entry to Cristiana Chamorro, independent presidential hopeful, and Felix Maradiaga (leader of the National Coalition), whose party was denied the right to register in the elections by the electoral authority.

¹² Survey data presented here is from public opinion surveys conducted by Borge y Asociados commissioned by Manuel Orozco and Inter-American Dialogue between 2019 and 2021.

the potential loss of political capital, the country's economic deterioration, and strengthen the loyalty of his followers in lieu of a shortage of clientelistic economic favors.

Ortega 'offered' prison time to the 'rich bourgeois' and 'traitors of the left' as reward to its militant base; and in return he asks for loyal support for the next 24 months. The 27 individuals in arbitrary detention are leaders of the opposition representing all sectors of civil society. All segments of society, including peasant, youth, private sector, political and civil society organization leaders, are all being repressed. Nine of these leaders are members of a Taskforce on Politics and Mediation in Nicaragua that had met nine times to discuss peaceful solutions and intermediation from the Organization of American States to have free and fair elections.¹³ Others detained are presidential hopefuls and the head of the largest bank in Nicaragua falsely accused of illicit financing.

The rhetoric of foreign aggression and Yankee imperialism, combined with the detentions of leaders are means to maintain the Sandinista base loyal. The tactics also compensate for drop in economic favors that the regime cannot provide to them. Between 2019 and 2020, the government borrowed over US\$700 million in loans¹⁴ to compensate for revenue losses due to the 2018 crisis (ten percent of government revenue has been financed through foreign borrowing). US\$400 million of that debt is dedicated for public works during election time, and to support the police's payroll and a Sandinista client base in the bureaucracy. Effectively however the government has less than \$400 million in foreign financing available for the two years after the November 2021 elections. This money is not enough to keep its client base satisfied. Therefore, Ortega-Murillo need to exchange detentions and anti-US rhetoric for the loyalty of his political base. That approach will ensure an electoral transition that includes a handover of power in 2024 to someone of their choice in the FSLN ranks.

To Ortega, the elections are an unnecessary inconvenience where 3.7 million Nicaraguans are eligible to vote, with less than one million votes to his favor. But because he failed at fragmenting the opposition, the detention of leaders, and intimidation from his followers and the police, he can dig at least 40% abstention. In turn, only 2.3 million voters will be going to the ballot box, leaving 400,000 votes open for fraud, and a split of votes into minority groups. This scenario will have him being declared winner with a 1.5 million victory against a few minority parties playing the game for him in exchange of political favors.

C. Exit as escaping from repression and poverty.

Amidst this specter of violence is a forthcoming migration wave and a diaspora in need of mobilizing¹⁵ and receiving humanitarian support. The growth (and the so-called root causes) of migration from Central America¹⁶ is not unique to the Northern Triangle, it includes Nicaragua. The country's 2018 political crisis led to migration and joining a diaspora in need of economic and humanitarian support.

Further economic deterioration and a worsened political crisis forced thousands of people to move abroad after 2018. In a December 2019 study, 9% of Nicaraguan households said they had a relative leave the country since the ongoing political crisis began in April 2018. This amounts to 140,000

¹³ <https://www.thedialogue.org/taskforce-on-nicaraguan-politics-and-mediation/>

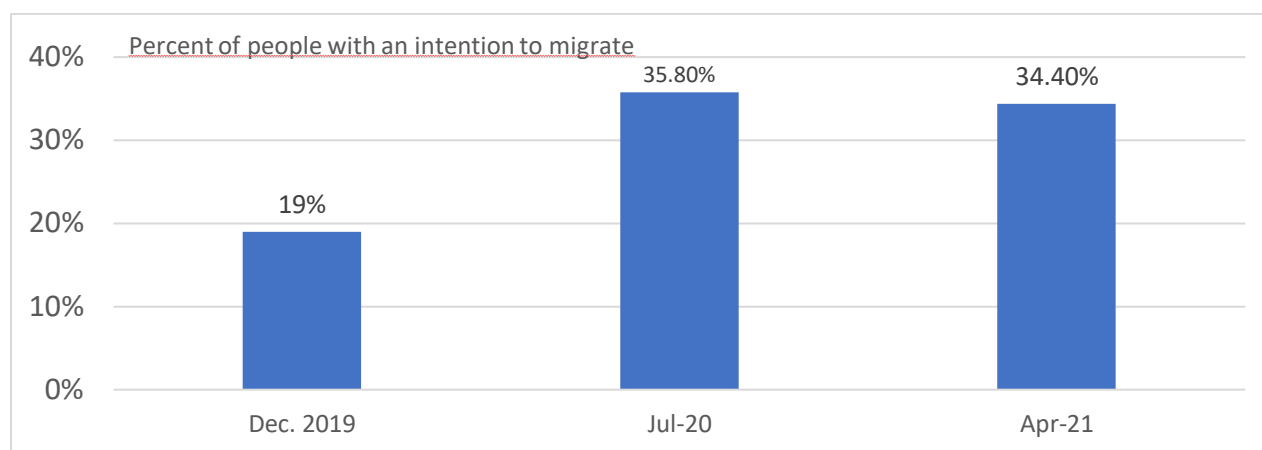
¹⁴ Financing from the Central American Bank of Economic Integration, the International Monetary Fund, the Inter-American Development Bank and the World Bank.

¹⁵ Orozco, Manuel. <https://www.confidencial.com.ni/opinion/el-voto-en-el-exterior-y-los-derechos-politicos-de-la-diaspora-nicaraguense/>

¹⁶ Orozco, Manuel. [Migration and the Economy in Central America](#). April 2021.

people.¹⁷ Six months later in June 2020, 13% said a relative had left since that political crisis.¹⁸ Most of these individuals fled to Costa Rica, Spain, and the United States. Many have sent money to their relatives, sustaining the country's fragile economy: family remittances are the only positive macroeconomic indicator since 2018.

Additionally, in December 2019, 19% of people expressed that they or a relative had an intention to migrate. The pandemic added another complication to the economic and political situation, and in June 2020, the number of people saying they had a relative planning to migrate was 35%. By April 2021, with economic growth at -2% for a fourth consecutive year, the number of people wanting to migrate continued with 35%.¹⁹



Orozco, Manuel. Survey of 750 Nicaraguans, April 2021.

In fact, the number of Nicaraguans apprehended in 2019 was over 13,000²⁰ with 4,000 of them applying for asylum. In prior years, the number of apprehensions of Nicaraguans was under 4,000 people with less than 300 asylum applications. As of 2021, 18,446 Nicaraguans were detained between January and June at the US border.²¹ Many are seeking asylum and turning themselves at the border, half traveling with families and children seeking protection.

Nicaraguan migration to the United States

Year	US Apprehensions	Irregular cross border entry	Non-immgr visas	Visa Overstay	Immigrant visas	Irregular migration
2010	2,587	466	12,987	390	2,115	855
2011	2,278	410	14,855	446	2,002	856
2012	2,532	456	16,518	496	1,833	951
2013	2,712	488	19,621	589	1,845	1,077
2014	2,912	524	19,275	578	1,598	1,102
2015	1,577	284	19,122	574	2,130	858
2016	1,350	243	18,550	557	2,115	800
2017	1,098	198	18,227	547	1,983	744
2018	3,337	601	10,044	301	1,972	902

¹⁷ Orozco, Manuel. Based on survey with 1,010 individuals conducted by Borge y Asociados, December 2019.

¹⁸ IAD. Public Opinion Survey to 1000 individuals, June 2020.

¹⁹ Orozco, Manuel. Public Opinion Survey to 750 individuals, April 2021.

²⁰ DHS. U.S. Border Patrol Nationwide Apprehensions by Citizenship and Sector.

²¹ USCBP, [Nationwide Encounters](#), 2021.

2019	13,333	2,400	11,304	339	2,248	2,739
2020	3,417	615	7,139	214	1,077	829
2021 est.	18,446*	3,500*	8,000	240	1,100	3,340

Source: DHS, US Visa Statistics, author's estimates. * as of January to June 2021.

For 2021 an estimate of the size of Nicaraguan migration to the US, may be at least 35,000 including 30,000 apprehended at the US border, visa overstayers, and legal migration. Another 35,000 will go to Costa Rica this year, specially from July 2021. This adds to at least 70,000 people leaving Nicaragua in 2021 to these two countries (not including other important destinations like Spain and Panama), or one in six of those with the intention to migrate.²²

Migration into Costa Rica

Year	Total Estimated migration (Irregular plus overstays)
2015	22,390
2016	27,137
2017	24,348
2018	68,965
2019	27,093
2020	28,774
2021	35,000

Source: author's estimates-based Costa Rican government data on entry and exit of Nicaraguans, on survey to migrants, of which 1.6 are irregular migrants relative to those with regular entry visas. It does not include legalized migrants.

This desire to migrate is shaped by their views of Nicaraguan politics and the continued deterioration of the economy. Nicaraguans' personal income stays at 2017 levels, representing a loss of more than four years moving forward. Looking at survey data from April 2021, the intention to migrate increases among those who are unemployed, working in the informal economy, think the economic crisis is the main problem in the country and can't make ends meet.²³ But also, those who think there will be fraud in the elections, and believe that human rights violations and bad government are the main problem in the country, are more likely to migrate.²⁴

Nicaraguan Economic Indicators

	2017	2018	2019	2020	Trend 2020	Trend 2021	2021
Exports	3,305	3301	3366	3206	-5%	10%	3527
Tourism	841	544	515	181	-65%	10%	135
Remittances	1,301	1501	1682	1800	7%	13%	1900
External sector	5,447	5346	5563	5187	-7%	11%	5552
Percent Share of GDP	39.5	41	44.4	44			
Remittances as share of GDP (%)	9	11	13	15			
GDP (US\$,000,000)	13,786	13,064	12,535	11,850	-5%	1%	12012
Domestic consumption	61%	59%	56%	56%			
Per capita annual income (US\$)	2,159	2,022	1,915	1,789			1,850
Per capita monthly income (C\$)	5578		5,426	5,217			5,800

²² With 1.6 million households, there are 500,000 households with an intention to migrate, and at least 15% of those already on the move.

²³ The odd of migrating increase 2, 1.5, 1.2, and 6 times over these respective economic issues.

²⁴ The odds of migrating among them are 1.5, 2 and 1.4 times over those who think otherwise.

<i>Household income among those informal economy (C\$)</i>	7,500			6,500		7,050
<i>State revenue (% PIB)</i>	19%	18%	20%	18%		19%
<i>State expenditure (% PIB)</i>	20%	21%	20%	23%		24%

Source: IMF data and author's estimates.

D. What's next? Aligning national and international political will: International pressure for Political change

Conditions for elections under these circumstances are not at all present unless Nicaraguans turn into the streets to reject abstention and vote null, turning the political process into a de facto referendum. Currently civic engagement through the ballot is only possible by nullifying their own vote, rather than lending themselves to the trap of abstention or fraud. By enabling the null vote, the government counting of votes will inevitably face it harder to turn those ballots for FSLN's favors, unless the government produces its own prefabricated votes.

However, the coming wave of intimidation will be too strong for the opposition to resist even to attempt to go to vote. Unless the civic opposition is led by religious authorities, whom many Nicaraguans trust, and provided they are willing to take the risk of jailing, harassment and killing, the country can have some mild hope for change. More than half of Nicaraguans value the political opinions of the national and local religious leaders.²⁵ However, religious authorities, as much as the private sector, youth, and other civil society, have already been accused of political transgressions.

The church leadership is much needed and would motivate followers from the remaining leaders and private sector individuals. It is also important for the leadership to seek out support of dissidents from within the ranks of the regime, particularly some in the army and government autonomous agencies. Not all pro-government forces are condoning the wave of attacks against the opposition.

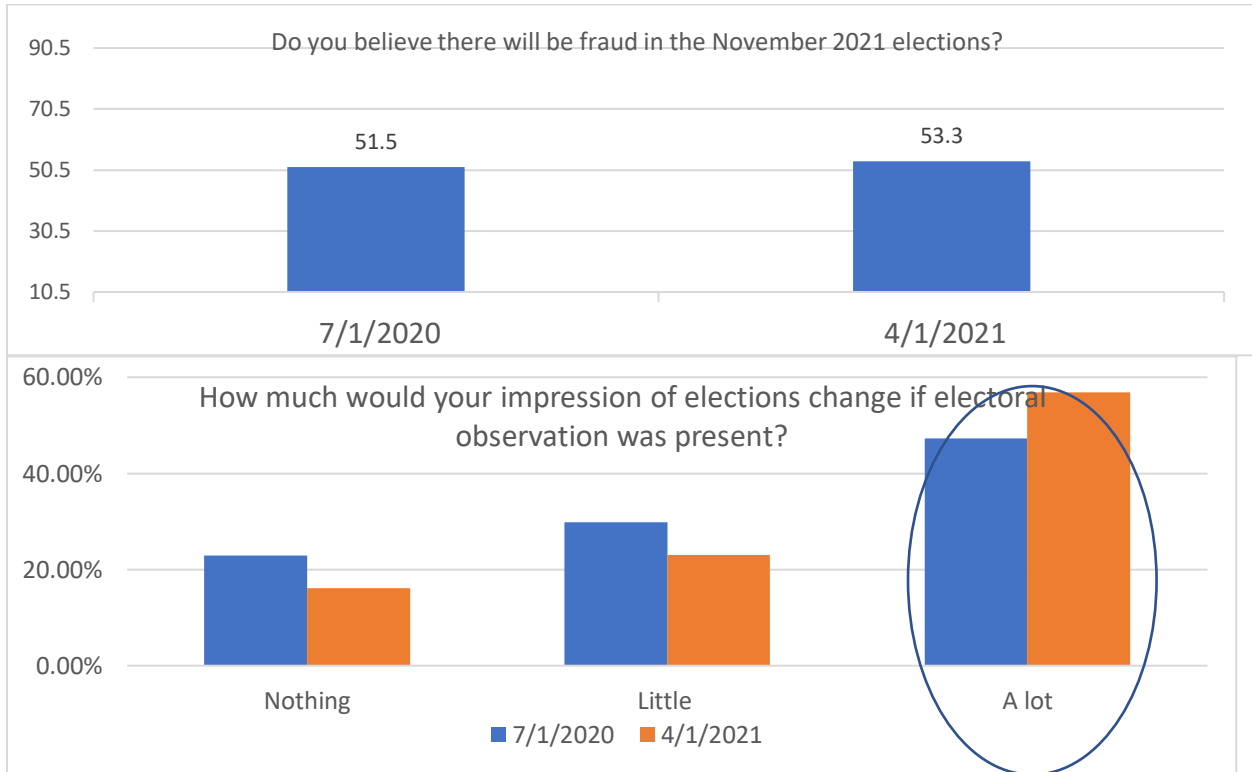
Under this weak situation, the most relevant player right now is the international community. **The international community will only be effective if it provides proportional responses to the level of repression and the people's desires for change.** It means that the international community shows political will to execute its pressure in all its means: condemnation, intermediation, and economic pressure.

It has successfully guaranteed democratic transition before²⁶ and has its opportunity again today. This means sanctions, to recall the existing treaties and agreements that Nicaragua is part and is violating (like the Democratic Charter, SICA's treaty of democratic defense, CAFTA's labor side agreement), that the US government applies the "Nica Act" and exercises its authority to suspend the IMF, World Bank and IADB's nearly \$300 million in contracts. To have Central American neighbors nudge Honduras to join the pressure on Nicaragua, to suspend more than \$200 million in loans from CABEL. It requires diplomatic activism to have a special UN envoy to increase pressure.

²⁵ Orozco, Manuel. <https://www.confidencial.com.ni/opinion/las-elecciones-en-nicaragua-entre-la-fe-la-confianza-en-el-cambio-y-el-temor-al-fraude/>

²⁶ Orozco, Manuel. *International Norms and Mobilization for Democracy: Nicaragua in the World*, Ashgate, 2002; Routledge 2018

Although many Nicaraguans believe there will be fraud in this election, two thirds of Nicaraguans want international observation and free and fair elections.²⁷



Because the Ortega dictatorship is using non-democratic tactics of the cold war, while the world is trying to play by the rules of modern democracies, the changes of political reform are minimal. If international reciprocal measures are not proportionally met with the regime’s level of repression, Nicaragua will slide down into its own Rwandarization.

The mobilization of the international community is much needed to balance the playing field against an old fashion way of doing politics through repression and violence. The world has been successful at preventing further violence in Nicaragua before.²⁸

The US government should immediately enforce its legislation regarding the Nicaragua Human Rights and Anticorruption Act of 2018 (Nica Act). Sections 4 and 5 must be set in motion as per the law. Multilateral organisms should the International Monetary Fund and the Inter-American Development Bank should suspend financial support to the Nicaraguan government.²⁹ The State Department consistent with the legislation established in the Nica Act, must fully report on conditions in Nicaragua and determine immediate actions concerning this country and the US national interest. More than US\$400 million in assistance has been awarded by these institutions under the sight of the Nica Act;

²⁷ Survey of Nicaraguans in June 2020 and April 2021.

²⁸ Orozco, Manuel. *International Norms and Mobilization for Democracy*, London: Ashgate Publishers, 2002.

²⁹ <https://www.imf.org/en/News/Articles/2020/11/20/pr20349-nicaragua-imf-executive-board-approves-us-185-3m-emergency-support-to-address-covid19>;

Consistent with the legislation stipulated in the Nica Act, the United States should continue to issue sanctions and condemn the legal frameworks designed to eliminate dissent, legitimate opposition and constitutional rights. The sanctions component needs to be swift and directed at

- the members of the elections commission that inhibit electoral participation,
- the police in charge of authorizing arbitrary and false judicial investigations,
- court officials that participate in framing dissidents and perform false investigations;
- key pro-government legislators who issued laws such as the foreign agents legislation, the law on protection of sovereignty designed to forcibly and arbitrarily eliminate dissent
- Supreme court judges validating the elections commission and legislators arbitrary laws.

Using its diplomatic efforts, the United States should work with and encourage the Central American counterparts to put pressure on Nicaragua to denounce the abuses of authority and extent of repression, to demand immediate release of those currently arbitrarily detained, and eliminate the legal frameworks designed to delegitimize (even criminalize) political participation and constitutional rights.

The United States must work with the Central American counterparts to ensure that the Central American Bank of Economic Integration stop financing the regime. Some of the loans are designated to support only pro government Sandinista owned businesses. Such foreign assistance is political and economic oxygen for repression in their neighboring region. Is important that Central American leaders convince President Juan Orlando Hernandez to shift sides to at least suspend the existing loans through BCIE.³⁰

Working through multilateral channels, and through the Organization of American States, the United States must urge an immediate Permanent Council meeting of the OAS before August 2021 and invoke the Democratic Charter's article 21 to suspend Nicaragua from the organization until it complies with the previous resolutions as well as to put a stop to violations to Constitutional rights of Nicaraguans. The OAS needs to exert that under these circumstances any electoral façade carried out by the Nicaraguan government will not be recognized as free and fair by this body.

The United States together with the OAS, European Union, the United Nations, and other countries must delegate a Special Envoy on Nicaragua to immediately engage the international community and Nicaragua to stop of repression. Members of the North American community should designate mediating efforts in Nicaragua. Fostering a frank negotiated engagement with North American intermediation these countries should encourage Nicaragua to rescind its escalating repression and allow for competitive elections for the better of the country's welfare and the Inter-American System.

Provide humanitarian and economic integration assistance to migrants from Nicaragua going to Costa Rica, Panama and the United States in particular. Specifically, diaspora engagement is much needed under these circumstances as Nicaraguans living abroad are a few of the standing opposition led groups. US foreign cooperation could revisit its current strategy and approach the problem from a fragile and conflict state perspective as it works in countries like Cuba, Syria, or Afghanistan, for example.

It is important the world to consider the different political and economic angles that pressure can contribute to mitigate the political crisis and further a path for political transition.

³⁰ JOH's logic of loyalty to Ortega is based on his fear of having to seek exile in Nicaragua after the Honduran presidential elections and his handover of the presidency and loss of immunity.