Resolution on the situation in Nicaragua

2021/3000(RSP) - 16/12/2021 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 619 votes to 25, with 41 abstentions, a resolution on the situation in Nicaragua.

The text adopted in plenary was tabled by the EPP, S&D, Renew, Greens/EFA and the ECR groups.

On 7 November 2021 Ortega's regime orchestrated a farce to give the appearance of an electoral process in Nicaragua, which was neither free nor fair, totally undemocratic, illegitimate and marred by fraud. According to civil society organisations, 285 acts of political violence and acts of electoral coercion were registered on election day, including acts of intimidation, harassment, threats and blackmail which mainly targeted state workers, public sector employees, students and medical staff to force them to vote.

The Nicaraguan regime has adopted increasingly restrictive laws in the last few years, institutionalising repression and depriving the people of Nicaragua of their civil and political rights and the freedoms of expression, association and peaceful assembly. It has turned into a republic of fear, with more than 140 000 citizens obliged to seek refuge in exile and in very difficult socioeconomic living conditions.

The resolution condemned the electoral farce orchestrated by the Daniel Ortega and Rosario Murillo's regime on 7 November 2021, which violated all international democratic standards for credible, inclusive, fair and transparent elections. It rejects the legitimacy of the results of these fake elections, and therefore the democratic legitimacy of any institutional authorities emerging from this rigged vote. It supports the statements affirming that these elections complete the conversion of Nicaragua into an autocratic regime.

Members reaffirmed their solidarity with the Nicaraguan population and condemned the violence, the systematic crackdown on political opposition leaders, the suppression of civil society actors, human rights defenders and media. They recalled that these acts represent a clear breach of human rights, democracy and the rule of law and show the continued failure of President Daniel Ortega, Vice-President Rosario Murillo and Nicaraguan regime officials to defend those principles and values.

Parliament reiterated that the only solution to the deep political crisis in Nicaragua is an **inclusive and meaningful national dialogue** and regretted the repeated disengagement and unwillingness to do so on the part of the Nicaraguan regime. The holding of **free, fair and transparent elections**, the restoration of the rule of law and freedoms, the cessation of repression and fear, the release of arbitrarily detained political prisoners, the reestablishment of the legal status of the political parties that were arbitrarily cancelled, the return of exiles without exclusions and with full guarantees and the return of international human rights bodies to the country are *sine qua non* conditions for any dialogue with the Nicaraguan regime.

The Nicaraguan authorities are urged to:

- uphold and respect human rights and to allow the Nicaraguan people to exercise their civil and political rights;

- immediately and unconditionally release all arbitrarily detained political prisoners, opposition activists, human rights and environmental defenders, and journalists, and for the annulment of legal proceedings against them;

- put an end to repression and human rights violations and restore full respect for human rights;

The EU and its Member States should:

- maintain their humanitarian assistance to support the most vulnerable, while exploring alternative measures to tackle widespread corruption;

- support the creation of an investigation and accountability mechanism within the UN Human Rights Council;

- monitor that European funds allocated, including through multilateral and financial institutions, do not contribute to strengthening the corruption of the regime;

- closely monitor the situation on the ground through their representatives and embassies in Nicaragua, including through trial monitoring and by visiting critics and opposition leaders in prison or under house arrest, and to facilitate the issuance of emergency visas and provide temporary refuge for political reasons in the Member States.