

**MESSAGE TO THE NATION**

**WE CONDEMN THE REPRESSION AND DEMAND A NEW NATIONAL GOVERNMENT**

*“We do not assert ourselves through resignation, but rather through rebelling against injustices.”*

Paolo Freire

The Academy of Sciences of Nicaragua, out of concern for the grave situation facing our nation, is compelled to denounce the violent repression that the government has committed against the university community and the Nicaraguan people, and pronounce itself in favor of an expedited and urgently needed end to the current period of governance, given the State’s responsibility for the institutional, political, and social debacle currently underway.

The Academy of Sciences of Nicaragua is deeply concerned by the current crisis, which has been characterized by brutal repression against the university community, the assassination of more than 40 people, hundreds of wounded, the torture of those detained and imprisoned, and dozens of disappeared as a result of the repression; intimidation and reprisals against university students, medical students, families and the nation in general; the deplorable moral deterioration of institutions overseen and directed by the government, which have discredited the just struggle of the students; the cries of mothers and relatives of the victims, who demand justice; and an overriding lack of confidence in the current government and state institutions, which have lost all credibility.

Given this painful panorama, the Academy of Sciences of Nicaragua wishes to express the following:

1. We denounce and categorically repudiate the government’s violent repression against university students and the Nicaraguan people, as well as the violation and contempt for universal human rights, and those rights contained in our own Constitution, such as the right to life and integrity, the right to assemble, and the right to inform and be informed, among others.
2. We demand that the Government of the Republic of Nicaragua immediately stop the repression, threats, intimidation and reprisals directed at the university community and the Nicaraguan people in general; that it commit itself publicly to respecting human rights; and that it purge and professionalize the National Police, and prosecute and eliminate the paramilitary forces that have terrorized the population.
3. Lasting peace can only be achieved through justice, which is why we demand the creation of a credible truth commission that is supported by national and international human rights organizations such as the United Nations, which can determine those responsible in this case and will permit the fair and impartial application of the law, beginning at the highest level, to those who made the tragic decisions that led to the worst genocidal massacre of students in our history during peacetime.

4. We lament the fact that the murder of these students has cut short the potentially valuable careers of these lives, whose scientific, technical and innovative contributions are so needed by this country, which remains the most backward on this continent due to the failure to effectively promote science, and even worse, due to the repression of analytical, critical and creative thinking in this nation. We send our deepest condolences to the families of these murdered young people, and we vow to our Nicaraguan family that they will never again live through horrors like those of recent days.
5. We demand respect for and the reestablishment of University Autonomy, as well as the inviolability of university campuses, as specified in our Constitution, without any type of reservations or euphemisms. The university can only achieve its goals if it is possible to debate, dissent, and create space for all ideas in the classroom, with full freedom and without the fear of reprisals.
6. The Academy of Sciences of Nicaragua reaffirms its commitment to serve the nation, and its willingness to collaborate in orienting and helping resolve national problems, and in promoting a vision of our country that fosters progress and sustainable development.
7. We emphatically champion the return of ethics to politics, and especially among those who assume responsibility for leading the nation. At this crossroads in our history, we run the risk of once again missing the opportunity to opt for the path of respect for human rights, democracy, and sustainable development, if those entrusted by the people to lead us are not held accountable for their actions, beginning with respect and protection of life, if we cannot reestablish trust in our future based on truth, and if justice is tossed aside awaiting better times.
8. We support a broad-based and inclusive national dialogue, and unhesitatingly support the Episcopal Conference of Nicaragua in its effort to contribute to the search for just and long-lasting solutions to the current crisis. The necessary conditions for a successful dialogue must be created, such as changing the electoral authorities and reforming the Electoral Law. It is time to review everything with truth, courage and goodwill; it is also time to make proposals that will return the nation to democracy and sustainable development.
9. We propose that the reestablishment of the constitutional prohibition of presidential reelection—a historical cause of our problems—be considered as one of the points in the dialogue. We also propose an expedited and urgent end to the current period of governance, and the organization of free and transparent elections, with the presence of national and international observers, under conditions that guarantee that the will of the citizenry will be respected.

Managua, April 28, 2018

**Description of the ACN:** *The Academy of Sciences of Nicaragua, ACN, is an organization dedicated to the advancement of science and technology, with the goals of reaffirming the ethical and humanistic nature of both, its commitment to the highest values, and its contribution, through excellence, to the nation's human and sustainable development.*