



OHCHR Press Conference: Launch of the First Report of the Group of Human Rights Experts on Nicaragua 02MAR2023

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Shotlist

STORY: Nicaragua Crimes Against Humanity – Rights Experts

TRT: 2 mins 35s

SOURCE: UNTV CH

RESTRICTIONS: NONE

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH / SPANISH / NATS

ASPECT RATIO: 16:9

DATELINE: 2 March 2023 GENEVA, SWITZERLAND

SHOTLIST

1. Exterior wide shot, Palais des Nations flag alley, nations' flags flying, a bright day.

2. Wide shot, press conference, podium speakers to rear, journalists seated.
3. **SOUNDBITE (English) — Jan Simon, Chair of the Group of Human Rights Experts on Nicaragua: “Based on this investigation, we can conclude that widespread and systematic human rights violations that amount to crimes against humanity - and are motivated by political reasons - have been committed against civilians by the Nicaraguan Government since 2018.”**
4. Wide, view of press conference from podium.
5. **SOUNDBITE (English) — Jan Simon, Chair of the Group of Human Rights Experts on Nicaragua: “They have been weaponizing the justice system, weaponizing the legislative function, weaponizing the executive function of the State against the population.”**
6. Medium, press room, journalists and podium speakers.
7. **SOUNDBITE (Spanish) — Ángela María Buitrago, member of the Group of Human Rights Experts on Nicaragua: « En términos concretos, s?í hay, digamos, una aproximación a cifras que han sido también aumentadas o, particularmente corroboradas con otros elementos y digamos que en ejecuciones extrajudiciales, en torturas , en detenciones preventivas hay un sin número de elementos que permite dar el informe en su contenido sobre las personas que han sido objeto de estos actos » (“In concrete terms, it is possible to have approximate numbers, that have been calculated and corroborated by a number of other elements, and these other elements are extrajudicial execution, torture and preventive detentions. There is an unlimited number of elements that allow us to compile this report and its contents about the people who have been threatened.”)**
8. Medium-wide, press room journalists, TV camera operator.
9. **SOUNDBITE (English) — Jan Simon, Chair of the Group of Human Rights Experts on Nicaragua: “These violations continue to be committed today. The violations include extrajudicial executions, arbitrary detentions, torture, arbitrary deprivation of nationality and violations of the right to remain in one’s own country.”**
10. Wide, press conference room.
11. **SOUNDBITE (English) — Jan Simon, Chair of the Group of Human Rights Experts on Nicaragua: “They are not isolated incidents, but the product of the deliberate dismantling of democratic institutions and destruction of civic and democratic space.”**
12. Medium-wide, press room, journalist standing to take photo with mobile.
13. **SOUNDBITE (English) — Jan Simon, Chair of the Group of Human Rights Experts on Nicaragua: “These violations and abuses are being perpetrated in a widespread and systematic manner for political reasons, constituting the crimes against humanity of murder, imprisonment, torture, including sexual violence, deportation and persecution on political grounds.”**
14. Medium-wide, journalists following proceedings, seated.
15. Medium-wide, journalists following proceedings, seated in front of interpreters’ booths.
16. Medium, TV cameras and technician in foreground, screen featuring rights expert to rear.

Story

Crimes against humanity likely committed in Nicaragua, says independent rights probe

Crimes against humanity in Nicaragua that have held the population “hostage” have likely been committed by pro-Government groups and sanctioned at the highest level since 2018, UN-appointed independent rights investigators said on Thursday.

Unveiling their findings which are to be delivered to the Human Rights Council on Friday, the Group of Human Rights Experts on Nicaragua urged the international community to impose sanctions on those responsible.

The experts concluded that President Daniel Ortega and Vice President Rosario Murillo “put into practice these crimes” which continue today.

“Based on this investigation, we can conclude that widespread and systematic human rights violations that amount to crimes against humanity - and are motivated by political reasons - have been committed against civilians by the Nicaraguan Government since 2018,” said Jan Simon, Chair of the Group of Human Rights Experts on Nicaragua.

He told journalists: “They have been weaponizing the justice system, weaponizing the legislative function, weaponizing the executive function of the State against the population.”

From testimonies gathered, the expert report identified a pattern of extrajudicial executions carried out by agents of the National Police and members of pro-government armed groups.

It is believed that they acted “in a joint and coordinated manner” during anti-government protests between April and September 2018.

“These violations continue to be committed today,” Mr. Simon continued, who noted that the result was Nicaraguans “living in fear” of the Government.

“The scale you’re looking at is in terms of executions... is more than 100; if it comes to torture, we would come to several hundred (or) even more and if it comes to arbitrary detentions, this goes well beyond this number. Given then the other violations under political persecution, (it comes to) several thousand.”

Asked to confirm the scope of the investigation, co-author Ángela María Buitrago explained that information had been calculated and corroborated on extrajudicial executions, torture and preventive detentions. “There is an unlimited number of elements that allow us to compile this report and its contents about the people who have been threatened,” she said.

The report - which called on the Government to release all persons arbitrarily deprived of their liberty immediately, also indicated that agents of the National Police and the National Penitentiary System and members of pro-government armed groups “committed acts of physical and psychological torture, including sexual and gender-based violence” during arrests, interrogation and detention of opponents.

Highlighting how the Nicaraguan authorities had managed to carry out its terrifying campaign of rights violations, Mr. Simon insisted that they were “not isolated incidents, but the product of the deliberate dismantling of democratic institutions and destruction of civic and democratic space”

He added: “These violations and abuses are being perpetrated in a widespread and systematic manner for political reasons, constituting the crimes against humanity of murder, imprisonment, torture, including sexual violence, deportation and persecution on political grounds.”

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