

Forum: The Security Council

Issue: The situation in Nicaragua

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Position: President

Introduction

The situation in Nicaragua for the past year has suffered from lack of attention considering the degree of violence and repression reached between the government led by the president Daniel Ortega, paramilitary forces and civilians. Tension had been building up in the last years, and the civilians needed the last drop to tip the glass, which presented in the form of a pension system reform leading to an uprising by the people, mostly university students. Even though the change in pension system was reverted, the people did not stop as they were fighting for a cause greater than that, as if that was just the spark to lit the already prepared bonfire of a revolution.

Nowadays the thousands of university students live in fear of the military and government supportive paramilitary forces, hoping to make a breakthrough in the conflict, and call for help using social media to spread awareness to the world.

Many believe that Daniel Ortega, the current president of the conflicting nation, went from being a fighter for freedom from oppression and democracy and the liberator of Nicaragua, to become what he had sworn to destroy, a dictator.

Definition of Key Terms

Riot

1. A noisy, violent public disorder caused by a group or crowd of persons, as by a crowd protesting against another group, a government policy, etc., in the streets.
2. Law . a disturbance of the public peace by three or more persons acting together in a disrupting and tumultuous manner in carrying out their private purposes. (Dictionary.com, n/d)

Peaceful protest

The act of objecting or a gesture of disapproval, resigned in protest, a usually organized public demonstration of disapproval (Merriam-webster, n/d) A nonviolent resistance or nonviolent action, is the act of expressing disapproval through a statement or action without the use of violence. (Teasley, n/d)

Paramilitary

Of, relating to, being, or characteristic of a force formed on a military pattern especially as a potential auxiliary military force. (Merriam-webster, n/d)

Dictator

One holding complete autocratic control : a person with unlimited governmental power. (Merriam-webster, n/d)

President

1. The chief officer of an organization (such as a corporation or institution) usually entrusted with the direction and administration of its policies.
2. an elected official serving as both chief of state and chief political executive in a republic having a presidential government.
3. An elected official having the position of chief of state but usually only minimal political powers in a republic having a parliamentary government. (Merriam-webster, n/d)

Authoritarian

Demanding that people obey completely and refusing to allow them freedom to act as they wish. (Cambridge Dictionary, n/d)

Background Information

The Somoza Dynasty

Anastasio Somoza García was born the 1st February 1896 son of a wealthy coffee planter. Due to this, he was sent to live with relatives in Philadelphia where he was educated in what is known today as Peirce College. In his years in the United States of America, he met his future wife, Salvadorita Debayle Sacasa, daughter in a very prestigious and wealthy family in Nicaragua, granddaughter of the Roberto Sacasa Sarria, who had been president twice.(Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2018)

When Anastasio Somoza García returned to Nicaragua inside this family, he had secured himself of a successful political career. Then, in 1933 he managed to hold the position of head of the National Guard, giving him a lot of political power, and after that, with the backing of the military, in 1936 he overthrew Juan Bautista Sacasa from the government and stepped up as president by a fraud election on the 1st January 1937. (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2018)

During his presidency, Anastasio Somoza García reformed the constitution, allowing him to centralize power onto his and to his family's hands. He also drove the Nicaraguan economy out of the dependency on the banana income created by the Banana Wars, and to his concern, he also kept his

position safe by deporting or exiling his opposition. Later on, he also started to gain a fortune by seizing companies and land to use for his personal business.(Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2018)

Even though his presidency lasted until 1947, he was not removed from power as he appointed himself as commander in chief, allowing him to continue with his businesses and his control over the Central American country. Anastasio Somoza García was to be presented as the candidate for the Nationalist Liberal Party (PLN from “Partido Liberal Nacionalista”), but was shot by Rigoberto López Pérez on the 21st of September 1956, which caused his death in a US military hospital after being transported by a US aircraft sent by D.D. Eisenhower the then president of the United States of America, a few days later on the 29th September 1956.(Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2018)

This meant that his power was to be passed onto his son Luis Somoza Debayle, who became president from 1956 until 1963. Luis instated different reforms, put a ban on consecutive reelections, a ban on relative successors to power and had an overall liberal administration, and remained as a senator since the end of his presidency until his death in 1967.(Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2018)

Not being able to rise to power directly after his brother, Anastasio Somoza Debayle remained as the head of the National Guard, in which he took part previously of the failed Bay of Pigs invasion in Cuba alongside US troops in 1961 and also in the Dominican Republic invasion in 1965. Later, in the 1967 elections, won the election against his opponent from the Conservative Party: Fernando Aguero, probably as a result of another fraud election. During his first term in power, as all of his family before him, he continued with the corrupt family business taking advantage of his power in order to make a profit on their personal business and increase the fortune they had. A very significant action that he took during his first term in the presidency was when in 1971 he reformed the constitution with the acceptance of the “Asamblea Constituyente” formed by the Conservative Party and Nationalist Liberal Party, such so that it lifted all restriction on re-elections.(Vianica.com, n/d)

In the year 1972 Anastasio Somoza Debayle stepped down from the position of president of the republic, however retaining power as the head of the National Guard and as the leader of the PLN. Then later, to add to his power he became the director of the National Emergency Committee (“Comité de Emergencia Nacional”) after a massive earthquake that hit the capital city of Managua on the 23rd of December of the same year.(Vianica.com, n/d)

Later, on the year 1974, other elections were held in Nicaragua, and once again Anastasio Somoza Debayle won the popular vote with an approximate of 80% against his opponent from the Conservative Party Edmundo Panagua. He was set to govern from then until 1981, however, due to the

Nicaraguan revolution, his government was overthrown. (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2018)(Vianica.com, n/d)

Nicaraguan Revolution

In the year 1962, the “Sandinista National Liberation Front” (Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional in Spanish) or FSLN, a military movement founded by an educated group of young people lead by Carlos Fonseca with the intent of liberating the country from the Somoza dictatorship dynasty that had been ruling the country for over 20 years started by Anastasio Somoza García in 1937. This front had a socialist influence, therefore it would gain support from young students, working farmers and peasants through the years. The organization struggled through the first decade as it was severely overpowered by the National Guard in personnel and resources. (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2018)(Vianica.com, n/d)

In 1969, a group of the FSLN was found hidden inside a house in Managua, and Somoza with the full intent of eradicating this rebel group sent the National Guard to destroy them with all means possible, so he commanded troops tanks and planes to neutralize the guerrilla fighters, however, when the National Guard reached the house they only found one man fighting against all of the troops, Julio Buitrago while all of his companions had escaped. As an attempt to show the country of the length that he would go to defeat the rebels, he televised the whole event, but to his misfortune, his plan backfired as the people sympathized with Julio Buitrago and found inspiration in him rather than fear of the National Guard.(Vianica.com, n/d)

The next year, during 1970, the FSLN started a plan of accumulation of forces. This meant that they reduced their attacks to draw less attention and to reserve the forces that they had while looking for further allies.(Vianica.com, n/d)

A big stepping stone for the FSLN was four years later, when in 1974 they invaded an aristocrat home, during an elite party, taking hostage some diplomats and government officials together with Somozas personal friend: Jose María Castillo. With this they managed to negotiate with the Somoza’s government, making them comply with certain demands including monetary exchange, the publication of a public manifesto and the release of political prisoners. (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2018)

In November of 1976, the FSLN leader and founder Carlos Fonseca was killed by the National Guard, causing this Group to separate into 3 different factions or tendencies (“tendencias”) named: the Prolonged Popular War FSLN (“FSLN Guerra Popular Prolongada”), Insurrectionist

FSLN (“FSLN Insurreccional”), and the Proletarian FSLN (“FSLN Proletario”).(Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2018)

One of these, the Insurrectionist FSLN later started organized attacks on the National Guard’s barracks and was successful at first, but with the resources and organization of the National Guard, they managed to turn the situation around. (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2018)

Once again, in 1978, the Insurrectionist FSLN took initiative, but this time they managed to overtake the National Palace at the capital city, holding hostage many senators and congressmen, forcing Somoza to once again respond to the demands of the rebel group, once again liberate prisoners, and publish, this time, a rebel note. (Vianica.com, n/d)

Earlier that same year, a very influential death occurred. Pedro Joaquín Chamorro was the director of the newspaper by the name of La Prensa which was biased against the dictator Anastasio Somoza Debayle and was murdered on the 10th of January 1978. His killing was soon attributed to the dictatorship, which caused the population to manifest against Somoza and caused more people to join the anti-Somoza movement.(Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2018)(Vianica.com, n/d)

In the year 1979 things started to get even more out of hand as the attacks by the guerrilla fighting FSLN had increased, and the fighting back of the National Guard got even more violent as it affected civilians. Bombs dropped in civilian zones where FSLN members were hiding were thrown and detonated without caution. That same year, all of the three tendencies of the FSLN joined back together. The whole population, from peasant farmers to young students up to businessmen started revolutionizing and joining the FSLN in every city in the country by organizing a strike and joining the guerilla, and this finally started to overpower the National Guard. (Vianica.com, n/d)

The international community, especially the previous ally to the Somoza family, the United States of America, started to doubt Somoza’s leadership, especially after the murder by the Somoza government of an American journalist was filmed by another journalist, contradicting the claims that the assassination was ordered by the guerrilla fighters. With this, the American government decided to suggest Somoza to step down from power trying to prevent a revolutionary taking his place, which would go against the American interests during the Cold War. (Vianica.com, n/d)

Instead of following the American advice, Anastacio decided to stand his ground against the revolution, but could not hold for long. He and multiple other leaders of the government and the

National Guard fled the country headed. After that, an associate of Anastasio took his place, Francisco Urcuyo, but the FSLN quickly made the National Guard surrender, cutting his leadership of the country short to only one day.(Vianica.com, n/d)

As for Anastasio, he first fled towards the United States of America, passed through the Bahamas, but finally settled for the South American country of Paraguay, where he lived until late 1980 where he was assassinated by the Argentine guerrilla commando by the name of "Motoneros" (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2018)(Vianica.com, n/d)

Ortega in power

On July 19th 1979, after the formerly American supported National Guard surrendered, the FSLN created the "Junta de Gobierno de Reconstrucción Nacional" or the "Government Junta of National Reconstruction", in the city of León, claiming it as the provisional capital of the country, and as so, being recognized by the international community as the official government of Nicaragua. This Junta was a five-person committee formed by Daniel Ortega, a very influential person in the FSLN, two left-wing representatives Alfonso Robelo, Violeta Chamorro and other two to represent the right wing: Sergio Ramírez Moisés and Hassan Morales. This "junta" was created with the purpose of organizing the country in order to bring economic, social and political stability to the country, and to reinstate a popular democracy.

At the time the party organized committees all across the country with the intent of gathering support from workers, young people and anybody that could join their forces against the US armed and backed forces resisting against the new Sandinista government, the "contras".

During the years 1979 and 1980, the newly instated government led by the Junta of National Reconstruction began a whole socialist restructuring of the nation, nationalizing some of the major industries in the countries such as banks, and also expropriated the vast amounts of land owned by the Somoza dictator family and their allies, which consisted of approximately of half of the land in the country (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2018).

In 1981, the current President of Nicaragua, Daniel Ortega was designated to be the coordinator of the said junta. In the year 1984, due to pressure from the international community as well as the civilians, the country held a democratic election, from which Ortega came out President. Later, when his term ended in 1990, he ran for reelection, however, Violeta Barrios de Chamorro came out on top as the candidate for the National Opposition Union, an alliance between opposition parties to the FSLN. (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2018).

1990-2006

During the '80s, Violeta Barrios de Chamorro had been critical of the Marxist ideals put in place and implemented by the Sandinista government led by Daniel Ortega, so when she took office on the 25th of April 1990, she started reverting some of the communist-inspired changes. She privatized certain companies and services that had been nationalized, got rid of the media censorship put on by the Sandinistas and reduced the size of the military. Given the consecutive term for presidency constitutional ban, after her term ended at the beginning of 1997, she was succeeded by Arnoldo Alemán Lacayo. (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2018).

José Arnoldo Alemán Lacayo had been an important person in some agricultural organizations such as "Asociación de Cafetaleros de Managua" and "Unión de Productores Agropecuarios de Nicaragua", and later became the Mayor of Managua, and was highly responsible for the renovation and reconstruction of the city parts that had been highly affected by the earthquake of 1972, two decades after it had occurred. Later, in the year 1995, he decided to run for president as the candidate from the Liberal Alliance but had to resign his charge as Mayor due to Nicaraguan law. During the elections, he beat Daniel Ortega, who once again presented himself as the candidate for the FSLN, but there have been claims that it was a rigged election. (The Famous People Editors, 2017)

During his term as president, he sought out to improve Nicaragua's economy mainly by inviting investors in foreign countries, as well as the countries themselves to invest in Nicaragua, managing to increase the GDP and reduce inflation. He also improved the transport infrastructure by repairing existing roads and building new ones, as well as presenting projects for public schools in impoverished areas in order to raise the education levels in low-income areas. His term ended in January 2002. After that, he was charged with corruption, but those were later acquitted. (The Famous People Editors, 2017)

Enrique Bolaños had had several important roles in some private companies and some linked to the government. At the age of 24, in the year 1952, he founded his own cotton producing company following the uprise of demand due to the Korean War. The company was named 'Industrial Agricultural Services of Masaya' (SAIMSA), and it later managed to one of the most powerful agricultural companies in the country. During the revolution and the rise of the FSLN government, Bolaños had always despised their leader Daniel Ortega since he gave his company to poor farmers and his installation of anti-capitalist ideals. He also acted as the president of the "Supreme Council for Private Enterprise" ('COSEP'), a council with the purpose of managing the amount of control that the government has over private enterprises and businesses. (The Famous People Editors, 2017)

In his political career, he had planned to run for president in the year 1990, but his colleague Violeta Barrios de Chamorro took the place for the candidate for the National Opposition Union. Later, in the next elections, he ran as vice president with José Arnoldo Alemán Lacayo for the 'Liberal Constitutional Party', winning the elections over the FSLN. As vice president, one of his most important jobs was to deal with the floods and destruction after hurricane "Misha" hit the country. (The Famous People Editors, 2017)

In the year 2001 Bolaños ran for president as the candidate from the 'Liberal Constitutional Party' and won against Daniel Ortega, who once again presented himself as the candidate for the FSLN, but in this case, Ortega managed to get 42% of the popular vote, showing a growing support towards an alternative in government, which Ortega seemed to be able to provide (The Famous People Editors, 2017)

During his campaign and later in office, Bolaños criticized government corruption and fraudulent activities. Merely days after getting into office Bolaños started taking action on eradicating the government corruption and fraudulent activities (The Famous People Editors, 2017). He wanted to make Arnoldo Alemán accountable for his corrupt actions, revoking his immunity, and so the National Assembly voted to have it revoked, leading to the arrest of Alemán and his conviction to 20 years in prison, later to be changed for house arrest. (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2018)

In terms of economics, Enrique Bolaños made efforts to make Nicaraguan economically independent with the help of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, as well as signing the "Central American Free Trade Agreement" (CAFTA), allowing for easier trade with signatory countries: United States, Honduras, Costa Rica, El Salvador and Guatemala in 2005. As president, he also created the "National Development Plan" promoting agriculture in hopes of reducing poverty. (The Famous People Editors, 2017)

Ortega's second rise to power

As Enrique Bolaño's term was going to end in 2007, Daniel Ortega stepped up once more as the presidential candidate for the FSLN in the 2006 elections, and this time he managed to win with 38% of the popular vote against Eduardo Montealegre which was the closest, with 29% of the popular vote. (Encyclopedia Britannica Editors, 2018)

In terms of economics, the Central America–Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA-DR) helped the Nicaraguan economy as it eased and attracted investors and trade partners to the country and its businesses. Apart from this, Nicaragua had a one billion dollar debt to the

Inter-American Development Bank that was pardoned in the year 2007. Another way Ortega used in order to get a hold on to big funds was the PetroCaribe initiative, that consisted of buying petrol from Venezuela at prices that were under the market price, and then resell it at the expected price and keeping the revenue made from the difference. Most of this money was implemented in social programs aimed at resolving the issues of poverty that the nation had, but it was later found that some of the money was used by Ortega to fund some of his personal businesses. (Encyclopedia Britannica Editors, 2018)

This was possible due to the fact that Daniel Ortega was known to align with the ideals of president Hugo Chavez, and later on to his successor Nicolás Maduro. With this people started to lose trust in their president, as well as starting to get suspicious when he began to censor media coverage on the government. (Encyclopedia Britannica Editors, 2018)

All in all, Ortega managed to accomplish some of his campaign promises, as poverty was reduced from 42% to around 30% from 2009 to 2014, and managed to drop unemployment rates to around 7%, and raise GDP growth to 6% in 2011, however it later dropped to about 4% in 2015. (Encyclopedia Britannica Editors, 2018)

With the 30 year anniversary of the FSLN triumph over the Somoza dynasty in 2009, Ortega presented his plan of removing the constitutional ban for presidents to not be eligible for consecutive terms, that was later approved, allowing him to run for president once more in the 2011 elections which he would end up winning with about 62% of the popular vote, together with winning 62 out of 90 seats of the National Assembly, making it a “supermajority” for the FSLN. This meant that it would be nearly impossible to go against proposals by the FSLN. Even though the election was won with the majority of the popular vote, there were allegations to it being fraudulent. (Encyclopedia Britannica Editors, 2018)

As his presidency continued, he lost a lot of support from the high and middle-income classes as they saw how the once liberator of the country turned his leadership of the nation into one of authoritarianism, oppression and censorship, starting to look like how the Somoza family ran the country less than half a century ago. (Encyclopedia Britannica Editors, 2018)

To further worsen the suspicions of authoritarianism, with the help of the FSLN “supermajority” in the National Assembly, Daniel Ortega lifted any constitutional ban for reelection, allowing him once more to present himself as a candidate for president in the next elections. Moreover, the National Assembly increased the amount of power that the president had. (Encyclopedia Britannica Editors, 2018)

Later in 2016, Daniel Ortega once again won the national general election, this time with around 72% of the popular vote with his wife SDGH as vice-president. However, this election was said to be rigged apart from being boycotted by the opposition and lacked foreign or external observation. (Encyclopedia Britannica Editors, 2018)

2018 Uprising

First breakout

The crisis first broke out on April 18 2018, as many civilian protesters had reunited in the streets of the city of Managua to complain about some new pension system reformations announced on the same day. The trouble was not the protestors themselves, but the conflict brought by the pro-government “grupos de choque” (shock groups) who went to repress the manifestation. These pro-government groups had committed similar actions of repression against protests towards the current president Daniel Ortega, causing those against his ideas to be afraid to go onto the streets to show their discontent. However, this time videos of the violent repression were shared on social media and easily spread through Nicaragua, causing outrage and further discontent with the government. On that same protest, on the next day, April 19 2018, there was proof that the situation had escalated from the previous situations as there were three dead people, including a police officer and two protesters. (BBC, 2018)

The aim of the protests quickly shifted from the pension system reform to tackling the corruption and oppression built up in the country by demanding Ortega to step down.

Later that week, on the 22 of April, the president announces that the changes to the social reform would be reversed, given the obvious discontent from the civilians. Up to that point, twelve people were killed during the protests that had escalated to riots across the capital city of Managua. Even though the social reform that had started the protests was going to be reverted, the protests had already scaled up a lot and shifted focus from the actual pension system change to the oppression and corruption of the government. The atmosphere to a revolution was already set by the different corrupt and questionable actions that the president had taken in the last years including changes in the constitution in order to be re-eligible, probable tampering on the elections to get reelected, manipulating the Supreme Court and the National Assembly, the social reform was just a small spark that lit a fire that was ready to burn, and reverting that reform was not a way to put it out. (Robles, 2018)

At first, mainly students were the ones protesting against the government, the protest that had spread out from the capital city of Managua through the entirety of the country. Not much later,

bankers joined the movement, calling for a nationwide protest and dialogue with the government. After that, Cosep stepped in as well, claiming it would not deal with the government unless media censorship was lifted and freedom of speech was reinstated, police repression ended, and detained protesters were released. (Robles, 2018)

After that, two days later the police announced that 200 detainees had been released as the result from the request by the church and the businessmen that Ortega planned on negotiating peace with. However, as soon as the detained were liberated, their story of torture in prison was being told to the media. Some of them commented that they were lined up to be beaten up for hours at a time, but that did not discourage them from following the uprising as it further showed the intimidation tactics that the Ortega regime is using to try and avoid an uprising. This further developed the anger people had against their president. Moreover, the liberation was done a couple of kilometres away from the capital city of Managua, which meant that they were abandoned in the road and had to walk back to their homes. (Infobae, 2018)

The situation continued to escalate from then on. The protestors are mainly university students that have created what is called the “Coalición Nacional de Estudiantes Universitarios” or National Coalition of University Students, that is basically their way of organizing themselves into a group to somewhat plan their actions and choosing representatives for negotiations.(El Nuevo Diario, n/d)

The thing is that there is a main difference from this uprising with the Nicaraguan revolution, and that is the fact that this time, protestors do not have weaponry that matches that of the government. These university students mostly rely on homemade mortars that consist of tubes with one open end and handles to hold it. This is why the death toll has such unbalanced numbers with over 300 protestors dead and only 22 police deceased. On the other side, the pro-government “shock forces” have been seen armed with “AK-74, Dragunov sniper rifle, PKM machine gun, and M16 rifles (...) Remington 700 rifles, Jericho 941 pistols, and Soviet-style drum bullet cartridges with a capacity of up to 75 rounds.” (Aburto, 2019)

The US has called on president Ortega's administration to hold national general elections as early as possible as a possible solution to the nationwide riot that has been going on since April 2018. To this, the authoritarian leader responded that he planned to run the complete term until the start of 2021. Finally, the US Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control sanctioned Nicaragua's vice-president and Ortega's wife Rosario Murillo by blocking any access to her properties inside US oil as a method of prevention of any business in the US. (Markin, 2018) The US has also sanctioned three other Nicaraguan officials with ties to Ortega and the massive

repression of the protests. These three people sanctioned people were Francisco Días, deputy chief of the police, Fidel Antonio Moreno, secretary of the Managua Mayor's office, and Francisco López, vice-president of the Albanisa oil company and the FSLN's treasurer. Similarly to Murillo, under the Global Magnitsky Act, they would have any US asset frozen and would be prohibited to use any American financial service. (Edmondson, 2018)

Due to the increasingly dangerous situation in Nicaragua, more than 23,000 people had fled the country, mostly to the bordering nation of Costa Rica. This has caused families to get torn apart and separated. More than 300 people have been killed and more than 500 are imprisoned on charges of either murder or most commonly with charges of what the Nicaraguan authorities call terrorism. the situation has now turned international as now bordering countries to this nation are now starting to have effects by an increasing Nicaraguan migration. (Robles, 2019)

Major Countries and Organizations Involved

Nicaragua

The Republic of Nicaragua is obviously involved in the issue. the government has initially tried to alleviate the situation by reverting the pensions system reform, however, it was not successful. Daniel Ortega has been in power for the last 12 years, and has been accused of Human Rights violations on the protestors, and has failed to provide investigations on the issue. He has also been accused of winning in rigged elections and of corruption.

The country has been in economically standby since the crisis began in April, yet the president claims that it is due to a conspiracy against his presidency (Luzi, 2018). The crisis has escalated a lot since the peaceful protests in the first day, since "A wide range of human rights violations are being committed including extrajudicial killings, torture, arbitrary detentions, and denying people the right to freedom of expression,", as stated by a United Nations Office on Human Rights spokesman on 16 July 2018. (BBC, 2018)

Daniel Ortega has no intention to step down from his charge or to hold early elections, and believes has stated that the current crisis is the fault of the opposition who have "specific political agendas", even claiming that the killings have been between themselves with the intent of hurting his reputation. (Nugent, 2018)

Russia

Nicaragua and Russian relations go back to the Nicaraguan revolution as Russia's predecessor, the Soviet Union, supported the socialist government set up by the FSLN in the 80s, and helped them in

military terms to combat the American backed “contra” groups. with this, they have partnered once again with the Central American country after Daniel Ortega rose to power once again in 2007. Both countries have shown similar attitudes and stances on international issues and have been growing deeper relationships. Russia has provided aid to Nicaragua after the 2008 hurricanes and donated more than 200 thousand dollars worth of technology for hospitals and other public facilities in a warship visit in 2008 (Rfe/rl, 2008). They have also conducted several bilateral agreements in the years that followed, concerning their agricultural ministries and the Russian Federal Space Agency. (Sputnik, 2008)

Russia, in this case, has a deep relationship with the Sandinista government and has shown that it believed that the issue did not have to be brought up to the UN Security Council.

China

China's relationship with Nicaragua has not been successful since the latter has decided to be one of the few countries to maintain diplomatic relations with Taiwan or the “Republic of China”. Daniel Ortega has stated in various occasions that he believes that it should be possible to hold relation with both Taiwan and the People's Republic of China, and his associates have stated that the latter should not be sabotaging their relationship because of their other relationships.

Taiwan has been aiding Nicaragua through the years as a show of gratitude for keeping the relationship with them, however the current situation has put Taiwan in a difficult position, either they side by default with the government that has been oppressing the people, or they condemn them and risk losing another ally from the few they have left. (Peralta, 2018)

The People's Republic of China is one of the countries that previously opposed bringing the Nicaraguan issue to the Security Council, yet, in comparison to Russia, it does not have any strong relationship with its government.

UK

The British government has stated that it has a mission to improve their relationship with Nicaragua, their commerce and the human rights situation, and was one of the countries to support the US into bringing the issue to the Security Council, considering the Human Rights violations (GOV.UK, n.d.). In the SC meeting in September 2018, Karen Pierce, UK Permanent Representative to the United Nations gave a speech in which she stated that they needed to bring stability to the country, and encouraged the Nicaraguan government to start investigating the Human rights violations and to start stabilizing the situation. (Pierce, 2018)

France

Since the rise to power from the FSLN, France has not had good relations with the party as it sided with the US-backed “contras” in the 1980s. It has little economic partnerships and has had few political visits in the past few years, however in December 2018, the French government decided to condemn the actions taken by the Nicaraguan parliament to cancel the legal status of various humanitarian organizations within Nicaragua. (Ministère de l'Europe et des Affaires étrangères, 2018)

United States of America

The US has lately been present in the issue of the situation in Nicaragua as they believe that there are Human rights violations occurring in the country in question. Their UN ambassador brought up the issue during a Security Council meeting and have imposed various sanctions to some high powered authority Nicaraguan figures such as the vice president. They have asked Ortega to entertain fair national general elections with no response, and finally have passed the Nicaraguan Investment Conditionality Act, which imposes sanctions on the country until Ortega's government is held accountable for all the human rights violations and corrupt system. (Ted Cruz Editors, 2018)

Costa Rica

The Republic of Costa Rica is a nation that is located to the south of Nicaragua in Central America, that shares borders with the country in question. Costa Rica is deeply involved and affected by the current issue in the Nicaraguan Republic, as more than 23000 civilians have fled the country into the Costa Rican borders seeking asylum. (Robles, 2019)

Both of the bordering nations had a close encounter with armed conflict over the 5 year dispute over the sovereignty of the Portillos Island, that was ultimately terminated by the verdict of the International Court of Justice, stating that it was of Costa Rica’s sovereignty.

The government of Costa Rica has brought the Nicaraguan crisis to the OAS (Organization of American States), stating that it roots for the democratic values and states that it was the first to bring up the issue. (El Nuevo Diario, n.d.)

Timeline of Events

Date	Event
1937	General Somoza elected president, heralding the start of a 44-year-long dictatorship by his family.

- 1956** General Somoza assassinated, but is succeeded as president by his son, Luis Somoza Debayle.
- 1961** Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) founded.
- 1967** Luis Somoza dies and is succeeded as president by his brother, Anastasio Somoza.
- 1972** Managua is devastated by an earthquake that kills between 5,000 and 10,000 people.
- 1978** Assassination of the leader of the opposition Democratic Liberation Union, Pedro Joaquin Chamorro, triggers general strike and brings together moderates and the FSLN in a united front to oust Somoza.
- 1980** Somoza assassinated in Paraguay.
- 1980** Somoza assassinated in Paraguay.
- FSLN government led by Daniel Ortega nationalises land held by the Somoza family and turns it into cooperatives.
- 1982** US-sponsored attacks by Contra rebels based in Honduras begin; state of emergency declared.
- 1984** Daniel Ortega elected president; US mines Nicaraguan harbours and is condemned by the World Court for doing so.
- 1987-88** Nicaraguan leadership signs peace agreement and subsequently holds talks with Contras.

1988	Hurricane leaves 180,000 people homeless.
1990	US-backed centre-right National Opposition Union defeats FSLN in elections; Violeta Chamorro becomes president.
1992	Earthquake renders 16,000 people homeless.
1996	Arnoldo Aleman elected president.
1998	Hurricane Mitch causes massive devastation. Some 3,000 people are killed and hundreds of thousands are left homeless.
2000	FSLN win Managua municipal elections.
2001 November	Liberal party candidate Enrique Bolanos beats his Sandinista rival Daniel Ortega, in presidential election.
2003 December	Former president Arnoldo Aleman jailed for 20 years for corruption. A year later he is transferred to house arrest. He is freed in 2009 amid controversy.
2004 January	World Bank cancels 80% of Nicaragua's debt to that institution.
2004 July	Agreement with Russia writes off Nicaragua's multi-billion-dollar Soviet-era debt.
2005 April	Rises in fuel prices and the cost of living trigger weeks of sometimes violent street protests.
2005 June	The government and an opposition alliance, which controls Congress, become embroiled in a power struggle. OAS head Jose Miguel Insulza tries to mediate, without success.

- 2005 October** Political crisis eases as Congress agrees to delay constitutional reforms, which will weaken the powers of the president, until President Bolanos leaves office in 2007.
- 2006 April** Free trade deal with the US comes into effect. Congress approves the Central American Free Trade Agreement (Cafta) in October 2005.
- 2006 October** President Bolanos unveils plans to build a new ship canal linking the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.
MPs approve a tough new bill that bans abortions, including in cases where the mother's life is at risk.
- 2006 November** Ex-president Daniel Ortega is returned to power in elections.
- 2007 October** The International Court of Justice in the Hague settles a long-running territorial dispute between Honduras and Nicaragua.
- 2009 October** Constitutional Court lifts ban on president seeking re-election.
- 2011 November** President Ortega is re-elected for another five-year term with a landslide victory.
- 2012 September** The government evacuates about 3,000 people from areas near the San Cristobal volcano, which suddenly began erupting.
- 2012 November** International Court of Justice in the Hague rules on a group of disputed Caribbean islands, confirming that they belong to Colombia, not Nicaragua. But it expands a disputed maritime-border in favour of Nicaragua.
- 2013 June** Congress approves a proposal for a canal linking the Pacific and the Atlantic Oceans which would rival the Panama Canal. Environmentalists oppose the idea.

- 2013 August** Nicaragua says it will begin drilling for oil and gas off its Caribbean coast in an area that belonged to Colombia until last year.
- 2013 November** The Colombian government recalls its ambassador to Nicaragua for consultations amid a worsening row over maritime borders in the Caribbean.
- 2014 February** Changes to Nicaragua's constitution come into effect, paving the way for President Ortega to run for a third consecutive term in 2016. The opposition argues the changes are a threat to democracy.
- 2014 November** Nicaraguan officials announce that construction of a new \$50bn canal linking the Atlantic and the Pacific oceans will start in December. The 278km (172 mile) waterway will be longer, deeper and wider than the Panama Canal. Opponents express alarm about the impact it may have on the environment and on poor communities.
- 2014 December** Work begins on canal project that will link the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. Thousands of people from villages along the proposed route stage protests.
- 2015 December** The International Court of Justice rules in favour of Costa Rica in its long standing border dispute with Nicaragua.
- 2016 February** The government frees 8,000 prisoners in an effort to ease overcrowding in Nicaragua's jails
- 2016 September** Nicaragua grants political asylum the former president of El Salvador, Mauricio Funes, who is facing allegations of corruption and money laundering at home, charges which he denies.
- 2016 November** Daniel Ortega wins a third consecutive presidential term. His wife Rosario Murillo becomes vice-president.
- 2018 April** President Ortega scraps proposed changes to social security after they spark nationwide protests with several deaths.

2018 June	A ceasefire was agreed by both the authorities and the protestors, mediated by the church, however, it was broken days after being signed
2018 September	Security Council meeting discussing the Nicaraguan issue
2019 February	More than 300 people have been killed in the conflict and more than 23000 Nicaraguans have fled the country

Relevant UN Treaties and Events

- “Human Rights Violations and Abuses in the contexts of Protests in Nicaragua”
 - A report by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) on the human rights abuses in Nicaragua by the authorities and their allies
- United Nations Security Council meeting, September 2018
 - Nikki Haley, the then president of the Security Council (SC) and US ambassador for the UN brought the issue up at a SC meeting, to discuss if it should be on the council's agenda.

Previous Attempts to solve the Issue

At first, just as the protest started rising up to complain about the new pension reform, president Daniel Ortega decided to revert the pension reform as an attempt to calming down the masses, as they had started the protest as a consequence of this reform. However, it did not do much as the situation had escalated and shifted focus on the oppressive characteristics of Ortega's presidency.

The UN ambassador Nikki Haley has tried to propose the issue of the situation in Nicaragua to the United Nations Security Council saying that “With each passing day Nicaragua travels further down a familiar path. It is a path that Syria has taken. It is a path that Venezuela has taken.” and getting support from countries like the United Kingdom and France who have also accused Nicaraguan authorities and paramilitary pro-government “shock forces” of Human Rights violations. However, countries such as China, Russia and Peru disagreed on the fact that the issue had to be taken to the UN SC as they believed it was not a threat to international security, which is the objective of said council. the issue has not yet been entertained by the Security Council. (Roth, 2018) Not only that but Antonio Guterres, the United Nations Secretary-General himself called on Daniel Ortega to cease the repression of the civilian protestors. (García & Murillo).

Lastly, on June 15 2018, bishops from the Nicaraguan Catholic church worked as mediators in a peace talk that managed to get a ceasefire signed by both the government and the opposition. However, just merely days later, by the 19th of the same month, at least 11 people had been killed, and the government failed to comply to their part of the deal as they did not bring an international organization to review the acts of violence and killings. this then caused the peace talks to be dropped by both parties. (CNA, 2018)

Possible Solutions

A good idea would be to demand another investigation by the OHCHR and/or other UN organization to review the alleged cases of human rights violations and to review the alleged corrupt system that the country is run on, in order to have a clear view of what the security and humanitarian situation really is. This would make future un resolution even more informed about the situation, being able to tackle it with more precision.

Moreover another possible option would be to suggest Daniel Ortega's government to rethink the possibility of holding early and fair general elections with the intent of stabilizing the country and the security situation. If possible, these elections should be held with the revision of the UN given the corruption and sabotaging claims over the past two general elections that Daniel Ortega has won.

In case of not having the desired response by pat from the Nicaraguan government, a good way to apply pressure onto the government in question would be to follow the steps that the United States have already started taking by imposing sanctions, economic or otherwise, on the country until it starts cooperating, perhaps by stopping the censorship that it has on all form of media on the protestors. this is also a risky way of approaching the issue as it may cause more harm than good, so the easues have to be deeply thought through to reach the purpose intended with as little collateral damage as possible.

Until the crisis is resolved, millions of nicaraguans are still living the situation day to day, and they are struggling to survive, so, it could also be a good idea to provide some supplies such as medical or food supplies to that who are in severe need of it.

A very extremist approach to the issue would be to send in UN Peacekeepers in order to control the situation between the pro-government paramilitary forces, the Nicaraguan police and the protestors in an attempt to prevent any more casualties or injured people until the issue is solved diplomatically.

It is important to point out that the solutions ultimately have to be with the purpose of bringing international security as it is the objective of the Security Council. Russia and China have stated before

that the issue should not be put into the Security Council's agenda as it did not present a threat to international peace. However, it is now going to be debated, but the solutions should be to solve any threat to international peace, as correctly stated by both countries mentioned.

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