Information about the caravan of international solidarity

Nicaragua is currently facing its worst political crisis in recent decades. This crisis includes violent days of repression in which there were numerous violations of human rights and freedom of the press coming from the State, either through the police forces or from shock groups related to the ruling party. As of May 4th, the Nicaraguan Center for Human Rights (CENIDH for its acronym in Spanish) had confirmed 45 deaths (there are no official figures from the government), including 4 people under 18, 24 university students, 18 protests’ supporters, 1 journalist and 2 police officers. Moreover, several weeks after the start of this crisis, repression has not stopped, rights violations continue and the death toll rises every day. The severity of these events has led the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights to request a visit to the country. The government, through its media, has criminalized the protests of the students and the people in general. At the same time, the media related to the government have instituted a psychological war that promotes disinformation. This in order to delegitimize civic and peaceful protests. International opinion is divided between the position of the protesters and that of the Nicaraguan government. This difficult situation requires understanding from the voices of its protagonists and people who have analysed this issue from a critical perspective.

For this reason, different youth groups, students and citizens have decided to hold a solidarity caravan to report on the current situation in Nicaragua. This caravan will travel through different countries of the European Union and consists of a delegation of 3 people:

1- A young feminist activist, environmentalist and university student. She belongs to one of the student organizations that have emerged in the context of recent civic protests, which is made up of students from the main public and private universities in the country.

2- A young activist who fights for the inclusion and citizen participation of young people in different social spheres in Nicaragua. She is part of the founding team of a grassroots youth organization whose objective is to promote changes in society and a critical citizenship from its different environments. Some members of this organization have actively participated in the recent protests on an individual basis.

3- A young sociologist, teacher and social researcher who has dedicated herself to the study of the memories of the Nicaraguan Revolution and gender issues. She is an activist for women’s rights and the political left. She has supported the current protest movement in different ways.

This informative caravan of solidarity is intended to communicate to the international community, governmental actors, NGOs, political parties, civil society groups, human rights organizations and others about the context and the reasons for these civic protests, its participants and their demands. In this sense, the caravan is first thought of as a space for discussion and exchange with actors interested in the current situation in Nicaragua. But this caravan also aims to denounce the serious violations of human rights that are taking place in Nicaragua (right to life, right to physical integrity, right to individual freedom, right to freedom of expression, right to defend rights). This caravan responds to the need and demand of Nicaraguan citizens and other people living in Europe who have followed the situation in Nicaragua with concern. They are the solidarity contributors that have made possible the realization of this trip. We emphasize the fact that the participants in the caravan do not respond to the interests of any party, internal, or external political institution. We are moved by the same solidarity that has been the driving force of the social awakening that Nicaragua is experiencing today.
In Belgium, the visit of this caravan is organized between May 31 and June 6, 2018. The planned activities include exchanges with Belgian youth, information activities in universities, activities with journalists, information meeting with NGOs and an office with departments of the European Parliament.