

## **Statement of the Permanent Foreign Policy Forum on Nicaragua**

The Permanent Foreign Policy Forum rejects and condemns the measures taken by the Government of Nicaragua, under the protection of the judiciary controlled by the Government, against persons who oppose the regime headed by Daniel Ortega.

Following a profoundly anti-democratic strategy, 94 Nicaraguan citizens have now been deprived of their nationality, a few days after 222 opponents were expelled from their homeland from the detention centres where they were held, and also deprived of their nationality, for the sole "crime" of defending a political position different from that of the Ortega Murillo regime.

Among those suffering the measure are seven candidates who sought to challenge Ortega for power in the last elections in 2021 - denounced as illegitimate for having taken place in a context of acute repression - and which have enabled him to hold power for a fourth uninterrupted term since 2007.

In addition to imprisonment and banishment, the dictatorship in power in Nicaragua has added to the measure of depriving these 316 people of their nationality, stripping them of their political rights in perpetuity, arguing that they are traitors to the homeland. The latest list includes the writers Sergio Ramírez, winner of the Cervantes Prize, and Gioconda Belli, as well as well-known journalists, clergymen, and social and human rights leaders, who have also been stripped of their property. Among those convicted is also Bishop Rolando Álvarez, who opposed his expulsion from the country and was sentenced to more than 26 years in prison and deprived of his nationality. All this is an undeniable demonstration of an attempt to eliminate any dissidence capable of threatening the power exercised as a result of repression and violence.

This Forum, together with other Latin American and Ibero-American entities, will support any initiative that energetically rejects the conduct of those in power in Nicaragua and demands that democratic principles and human rights be restored in that country and that the persecution of those who dissent from the ruler be ended once and for all.