



Vincentian International Network for
Justice Peace and Integrity of Creation
(VIN-JPIC)

PRESS RELEASE IN SOLIDARITY WITH NICARAGUA, VENEZUELA AND MIGRANTS IN THE UNITED STATES

"We look forward to a new heaven and a new earth" (1 Peter 3, 13-14)

1. Nicaragua:

While millions around the world were hooked on watching the soccer world cup on television, more than 300 people have been killed in Nicaragua and about 2,000 have been wounded during the protests against the government of President Daniel Ortega. These past weeks have been of great anguish for the Nicaraguan people due to the violence and anarchy that have taken the streets of the country. The government and the paramilitary groups have focused their attacks against the Civic Alliance, a coalition of students, workers, intellectuals, business groups, academics, and organizations of people living in poverty, who are protesting to demand a national dialogue that triggers a democratic change of political regime, since the current government has taken the cruel forms of a dictatorship. The government has grossly criminalized the protests, even though this is a political right defended by the constitution. More than 600 people have illegally been incarcerated. The Church, mediator of the dialogues, has also been persecuted. The civic alliance has asked President Ortega to advance the elections by March 2019 as a condition to resume these dialogues currently broken.

We join our voice to the prophetic voice of the Catholic Church (bishops, lay and consecrated men and women) that have been speaking loud and clear to protect the rights of all and to denounce such injustice. Many committed Christians have been victims of this systematic and absurd violence that only tries to sow fear so that injustice and repression follow its course. With the believers, the brothers and sisters of other churches and religions and also with the non-believers of Nicaragua, our voice is unanimous and committed to ask for the end of the repression that guarantees:

1. The immediate cessation of violence and the persecution of the political opposition.
2. The integral defense of the constitution and the respect of the political rights of association and protest.
3. The establishment of a broad table for national dialogue that will generate a democratic solution to the current social and political crisis.
4. The respect of due process to all those who have been unjustly imprisoned and the immediate release of political prisoners.

2. Reality of Migrants in the United States

While at the UN a [global agreement on migration](#) has been signed this month, in the United States, thousands of migrant children have been separated from their parents due to new immigration laws enforced by President Donald Trump. The Trump administration decided to exclude the

country from the Global compact on migration. We join our confreres of the Western Province of the United States who issued the following statement on behalf of the Congregation:

"The Western Province of the Congregation of the Mission supports the statements of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, the Sisters of Charity Federation and other groups that separating immigrant children from their parents at the United States / Mexico border is immoral.

We also oppose the recent decision of the U.S. administration that potentially strips asylum protections for women who are victims of domestic violence, and others fleeing violence in their homeland.

We urge the U.S. Attorney General, Congress, the courts and policy makers to protect the integrity of families and the dignity of every human person. We stand with our immigrant sisters and brothers in support of their human rights. "

3. Venezuela

The Venezuelan crisis continues to spread. In this nation, millions of people are forced every day to live in conditions of humiliation due to the scarcity of basic elements, the lack of medical care and medicines, institutional repression, insecurity, salaries of misery, institutional corruption, the collapse of transport, education, social security, etc. Recently, President Nicolas Maduro was elected in a clearly rigged election in favor of the regime. Most of the states and political and social organizations of the world have declared their concern for the humanitarian, political and institutional crisis of this South American country with the highest oil reserves in the world. The dramatic Venezuelan migration crisis is unprecedented and has all the characteristics of a growing humanitarian crisis in the entire region. We join the voice of the Venezuelan Church to ask the immediate restitution of the democratic order and the reestablishment of the conditions for people to be able to satisfy their basic needs, as well as the acceptance of the humanitarian help many countries and organizations are offering to the country.

In addition to raising our voice publicly in favor of the peoples of the earth, who seek their integral liberation, we also want to raise our voice to the God of Life, the God of justice and freedom, the God of peace, the God of Jesus, that came so that we could all have life in abundance. Today we do it in favor of our Nicaraguan and Venezuelan sisters and brothers and in favor of the migrants and refugees of the whole world in this night of anguish and terror. We ask all the Vincentians of the world to unite in a prayer of solidarity and commitment with them and all other peoples in social and political distress.

We thank the confreres and the members of the Vincentian Family who informed us of what is happening in these countries. Please keep us apprised of what is happening in your countries so that we can raise our voice in the United Nations and in other institutions of pressure and deliberation.

New York July 15 of 2018

