

54th session of the UN Human Rights Council

Oral Statement

Interactive dialogue with the Expert Mechanism on Indigenous Peoples

Mr. President,

Right Livelihood, CEJIL, and the Red de Defensoras Indígenas (RDI) thank the Expert Mechanism for their report and the attention given to the case of Nicaragua in their study on militarisation.

Indigenous Peoples living on the Caribbean Coast of Nicaragua continue to be subjected to genocidal practices by third parties/settlers, including armed attacks, rape and killings. As a result, numerous individuals have been forcibly displaced from their territories and are now facing a humanitarian crisis.

There is a continuing practice of impunity by the Nicaraguan state with regard to the unlawful acts denounced by the communities. On the contrary, the government has been promoting cohabitation with illegal settlers, as well as the sale of indigenous lands to third parties, violating its national and international obligations. In some cases, the state has adopted the practice of militarising indigenous territories, as in the case of the BOSAWAS Ecological Battalion, further deepening the humanitarian crisis.

Mr. President,

The authorities' assertion that massacres are "conflicts between individuals with equal rights" is unacceptable. The number of violent attacks against indigenous peoples on the Caribbean Coast has already quadrupled compared to last year. If impunity remains the norm, Nicaragua's indigenous communities will be wiped out.

We therefore reiterate our calls on the Council to urge the State of Nicaragua to guarantee the territorial rights of indigenous peoples in accordance with its national and international obligations; to immediately remove armed settlers from demarcated indigenous territories; and to carry out prompt, independent and impartial investigations into all violations committed.

Thank you.