

NICARAGUA'S MESSAGE AT THE COP 25

December 11th 2019

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Madam President

Your Excellencies, Ministers

Special Guests

The President of the Republic of Nicaragua, Comandante Daniel Ortega Saavedra, and Vice President Compañera Rosario Murillo Zambrana, send their greetings and best wishes for the success of this COP, aimed at achieving a higher level of commitment and climate action.

Common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capacities are not political positions but objective historical and contemporary realities. To maintain that we are all historically responsible for climate change would be tantamount to saying that we all participated equally in the Industrial Revolution, as well as in the massive accumulation of capital resulting from it. This was when most of our countries suffered at that time the yoke of colonialism and neocolonialism, as well as the slave trade and the exploitation of slave labor, which also contributed to the historical accumulation of those responsible.

To maintain that we are all equally and universally responsible for greenhouse gas emissions today, is equivalent to saying that the 100 countries with the lowest emissions that account for 3% of the total, have the same responsibility as the ten countries with the highest emissions that account for 72% of the total. At the same time, it is equivalent to saying that most countries with less than one ton of CO₂ equivalent per capita have the same responsibility as countries with 18 tons or 16 tons per capita.

My country, Nicaragua, contributes 0.03% of total global emissions, with a per capita of 0.63 tons. Despite our negligible level of responsibility, we are actively working on mitigation and adaptation, as well as on loss and damage, because we love Mother Earth, and we are concerned about the future of our country and the world. Nicaragua has gone from 25% renewable energy in 2007 to 62% in 2018, while electricity coverage has expanded from 54% of households in 2007 to 95% in 2018. We are committed to the 30x30 initiative to restore 2.8 million hectares degraded due to a historic, active agricultural frontier. We have committed in the Forest Carbon Partnership to capture 11 million tons of CO₂(e) over the next 5 years. We are also adapting a dry corridor to the new reality of climate change.

This effort has been in the context of average annual growth of 4.7% between 2011 and 2017, the third highest rate among the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, accompanied by great social advances. These include the reduction of the maternal mortality rate from 92.8 per hundred thousand in 2007 to 34.1 today, and the reduction of the infant mortality rate from 29 to 12 per thousand children born. Chronic malnutrition in schools was reduced by 66%. General poverty was reduced from 47.9%



to 24.9%, and extreme poverty from 17.3% to 6.9%. Very important in this world, the GINI measure of inequality in consumption went from 0.41 to 0.33. Nicaragua. In 2007, Nicaragua ranked at 90 in the Gender Gap Index of the World Economic Forum in Davos, rising to the rank of number five in 2019, only below Nordic countries. The indigenous and Afro-descendant population of the Caribbean Coast and Upper Wanki River or Coco, received the delimitation and titling of 37,800 square kilometers of their ancestral lands, in 23 territories, each with its own territorial government and control of its own resources.

However, Nicaragua, like 35 other countries around the world, has seen its capacity to respond to climate change and to achieve sustainable development goals undermined by coercive, unilateral, extraterritorial and illegal measures, which even criminalize third parties that do not comply with the illegal measures. Only sanctions approved by the United Nations Security Council are legal in international law. The international system of bank transfers is key to the *de facto* imposition of these illegal, unilateral, coercive measures that violate the human and legal rights of individuals, organizations and entire countries. There are also covert actions of destabilization of governments and attempts at *coups d'état*, some successful and others not. In the Middle East, several countries have been invaded or bombed in wars of aggression. The Nuremberg court ruled that this type of war is the supreme violation of international law and human rights, because it contains within the sum of all the evils of the war. Even countries suffering the consequences of climate change see their ability to respond to the future shattered by catastrophic disasters and the lack of international compensation mechanisms. All these phenomena have affected the respective response capacity of developing countries.

Our Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement are incomplete, because they do not include an effective mechanism to finance the response and recovery of losses and damages. Mitigation, reduces the risk of loss and damage, adaptation reduces the impact of specific threats of loss and damage, loss and damage themselves, are the end result of the very climate change we are seeking to minimize. Thus, we propose that the concept of losses and damages be elevated to the same level as mitigation and adaptation, in order to receive resources.

The President of Nicaragua, Comandante Daniel Ortega Saavedra, in his message to the United Nations General Assembly in 2015, stated that the only equitable and effective way to finance losses and damages is for the countries and corporations that have caused the problem and benefited from the use of carbon to accumulate capital to compensate countries that suffer the consequences of climate change without having caused it, in the proportion of their responsibility. We have the data from 1880 to date, both for countries and for corporations. Some people think this is a very radical proposal, but it is not. The concept that whoever causes damage to another must then compensate the other for the damage caused is called tort in common law. It is also in the Napoleonic codes and in Sharia law. So too, all ethical systems, and all religions of the world, contain the concept. However, the term most despised and feared in these negotiations is the word "indemnity".

The year 2019 will be remembered like 1848, 1871, 1968 and 1989, as a year when the street became important in world politics. Climate change is one of the drivers of this phenomenon in many countries, with youth on the front line. The 16-year-olds marching in the streets today will be 18 years old in two more years, and no one will speak of that youth as passive, disinterested and apolitical. A highly motivated voting youth can change the correlation of political forces in many countries, being decisive in countries now evenly split between opposing forces.

The developing countries need enormous financial resources for the future, to face mitigation,

adaptation and losses and damages. In Copenhagen in 2009, funding of USD 100 billion per year starting in 2020 was proposed and reiterated in successive COPs. We should not accept as part of the US\$100 billion accounts of past expenses, we cannot finance our projects with them. Nor can we accept that the market mechanisms of Article 6 of the Paris Agreement replace the US\$100 billion annually. We must not accept the postponement of the date after having already waited 10 long years. What is needed from 2020 onwards are new, fresh, liquid resources with equal access for all developing countries. To guarantee these requisites, if these funds appear, they should be channeled through the financial mechanisms of the Convention, namely the Green Climate Fund, the GEF, the Adaptation Fund, and the Least Developed Countries Fund.

There is still a year before COP26 in 2020 but you see neither a working group advancing the US\$100 billion a year nor a road map. Only Secretary General Antonio Guterres has asked President Emanuel Macron of France and Prime Minister Andrew Holness of Jamaica to investigate the issue. If the US\$100 billion annual commitment in 2020 is broken, this could be termed the Fraud of the Century. In reality, much more is needed and US\$100 billion has to be just a starting point. The US\$100 billion myth has the aggravating factor that it reduced climate change spending and action in the critical decade of 2010 to date, and now we are suffering the consequences. What we cannot do at this time is to have another Lost Decade of finance and action on Climate Change.