

**Gobierno de Reconciliación y Unidad Nacional
Unida Nicaragua Triunfa**



NON-ALIGNED HEALTH MINSTERS MEETING

BAKU, AZERBAIJAN

20 MAY, 2020

**INTERVENTION OF THE
REPUBLIC OF NICARAGUA**

**Mr. President, Dear Non-Aligned Sisters and
Brothers**

Please receive a warm greeting from the people and government of Nicaragua, President Commandant Daniel Ortega and Vice President Rosario Murillo. We thank Azerbaijan for organizing this event.

Prior to 2007 three neo-liberal governments undertook processes of privatization of health. The first day of the Government of

Reconciliation and National Unity President Ortega made effective the constitutional principle of free, universal health care as a human right.

Since then a preventive, proactive Family and Community Health Care Model has been in implementation. The total expenditure in health has increased US\$111.9 million to US\$468.5 million and the number of health workers from 22,000 to 36,000 and medical doctors from 2,715 to 6,045. This transformation made us better able to confront COVID-19.

The preventive, proactive approach led to the first press conference with warnings and preventive measures 21 January and a full protocol with 19 hospital units being equipped and trained beginning 9 February,

while our first case arrived 18 March after two months of preparation. Nicaragua was ready for COVID-19.

We have undertaken over 4,600,000 house to house visits to inform the population of preventive measures, as well as media campaigns; the regular disinfection of public transport, schools, and markets; and, social distancing. All of this without shutting down our economy in accordance with our social structure (40% small farmers, 80% of urban workers informal) and the state of our economy, impacted by a violent failed coup in 2018, constant destabilization attacks by fake news and social media manipulation, and illegal, coercive measures imposed with extra territoriality and criminalization of third parties.

The new face of coercive, neo-colonial imposition against all those who defend their sovereignty, independence, and self-determination, is the dictatorship in international bank transfers and the fear of banks of losing access to it. The world urgently needs alternatives.

A long list of victims has sought humanitarian relief from the illegal coercive measures to better confront the COVID-19 Pandemic. All have been denied. The legal definition of crimes against humanity includes, "K) Other inhumane acts of a similar nature that intentionally cause great suffering or seriously undermine physical integrity or mental or physical health."

As countries come out of the lock-downs that have destroyed the world economy, we

must learn to fight the virus and function as societies at same time, avoiding increases in poverty and inequality. The current tendency is negative. While the principle owner of Amazon made US\$24 billion in just three months, a total of 36.5 million U.S. workers became unemployed in the same period.

Franklin D. Roosevelt famously said during the 1929 depression, "All we have to fear is fear itself". The Great Depression of 2020 has not been caused by a virus, but rather by viral fear.

We will not begin to recover until we can restore confidence in the future and hope. We can do this stimulating a green economy that constructs a zero emission society by 2050, sparing humanity the worst consequences of global warming. We can do this by achieving

the Sustainable Development Goals to reverse the hyper-concentration of the 1% and reduce poverty and inequality for a more just and healthier future of hope for all.

Thank you Mr. President.