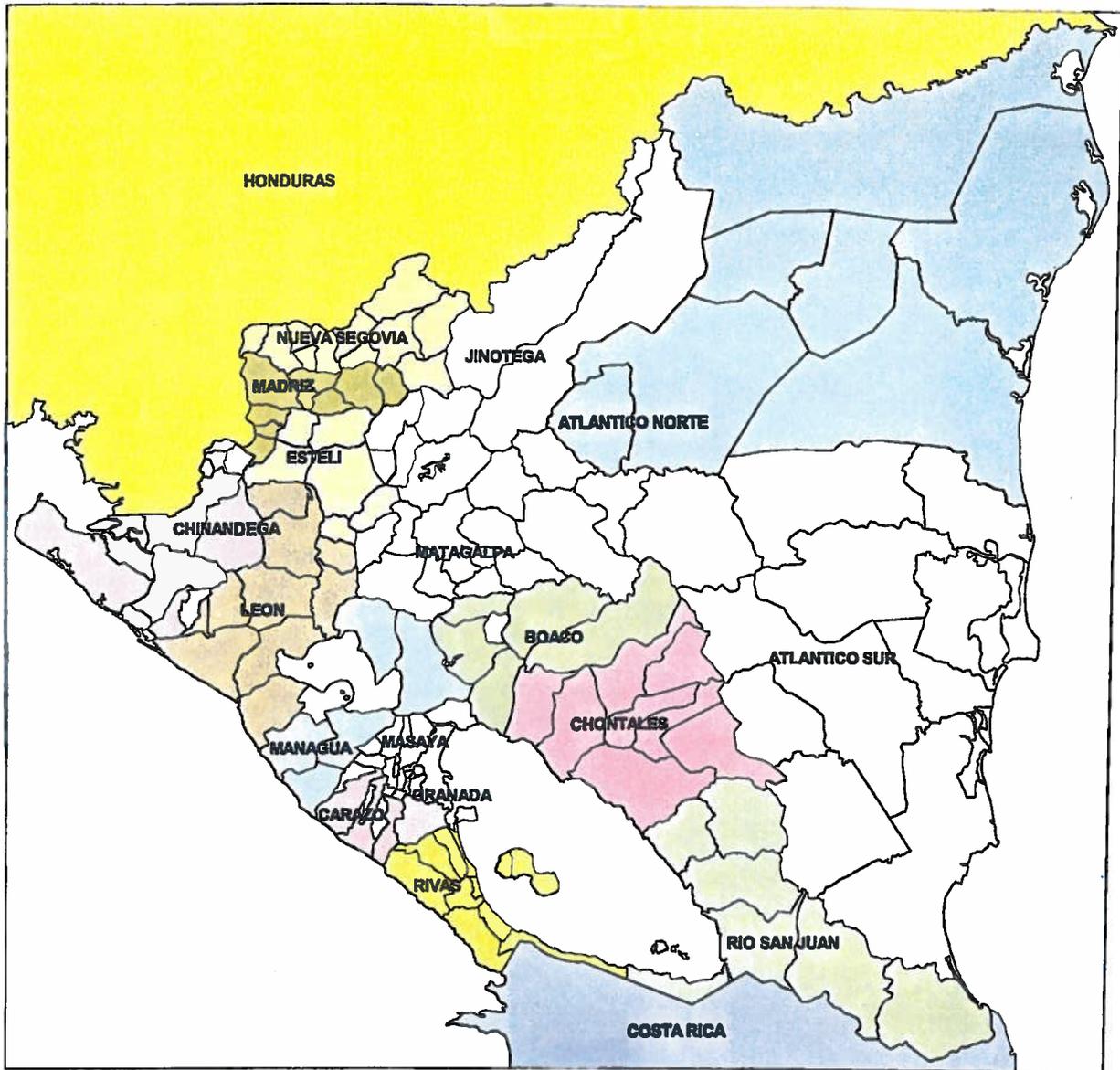


USAID



Briefing Book

U.S. Congressional Delegation



Nicaraguan National Elections
November 4, 2001

Briefing Book
U.S. Congressional Delegation – 2001 Nicaraguan Elections

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Schedule for the Visit of the U.S. Congressional Delegation
November 2-5, 2001
(as of 11/2/01)

Participants in CODEL Ballenger

Rep. Cass Ballenger (R-NC)
Rep. David Dreier (R-CA)
Rep. Bill Delahunt (D-MA)
Mrs. Donna Ballenger

Mr. Caleb McCarry, Staff Director, HIRC, WHEM
Mr. Ted Brennan, Pro Staff, WHEM
Mr. Paul Oostburg, HIRC, (DEM)
Mr. Brad Smith
Ms. Kirsten Madison

Major James Brennan, USMC
Captain Jason Star, USMC
Master Sgt. Harry Jenkins, USMC

Sgt. Alex Reyes, USMC

Attending Physician- Cmdr John Chandler, USN

Translators: Adele Irene Monje, Melba Ruiz

Phone Numbers:

Embassy Emergency (Post One): 266-6038
Embassy Main: 266-6010
Political Section: 266-6035

Embassy Elections Operations Center: 268-1299; 268-1399
266-6010, x 4557, 4564, 4569, 4571, 4577, 4578, 4579
Fax: 266-3865

State Department Operations Center: 202-647-1512

Control Officer David Brooks: 088-60041, 276-2129 (h)

Control Room in Hotel Intercontinental Metrocentro: 278-4545, room 816

Saturday, November 3

8:00 am – Depart Andrews AFB

1:00 pm - Arrive Managua International Airport at Gate 9.

1:15 – Depart for Hotel Intercontinental Metrocentro.

1:45 pm – Arrive Hotel.

Greet Ambassador Garza and Nicaraguan Foreign Minister Aguirre Sacasa
Take digital photos for CSE credentials

2:00-2:30 - Country Team Briefing

Hotel Intercontinental Metrocentro, Presidential Suite.

*Ambassador Garza, DCM Paul Saxton, USAID Director Marilyn Zak,
Political Counselor Robin Meyer, Econ Counselor Tim Stater, Public Affairs Mike
Stevens, Political Counselor Dereck Hogan, Regional Security Officer Jim Schnaible*

2:40 – Depart for Supreme Electoral Council (CSE)

3:00 – Visit Olof Palme Convention Center, site of National Computing Center for elections
Meet CSE President Roberto Rivas and receive credentials. Press will be present.

3: 45 –Return to Hotel Intercontinental Metrocentro

4:00 – Meet with FSLN Candidate Daniel Ortega
Hotel Intercontinental Metrocentro, Presidential Suite.

[5:00 – Carter Center Press Conference, Holiday Inn.]

5:15 – Meet with PC candidate Alberto Saborio
Hotel Intercontinental Metrocentro, Presidential Suite.

6:00 – 6:35 – Meet with PLC candidate Enrique Bolanos (confirmed).
In attendance: Campaign Manager Eduardo Montealegre,
Jorge Bolanos and Enrique Bolanos (the candidate's son),
and Economic Advisor Mario de Franco.
Hotel Intercontinental Metrocentro, Presidential Suite.

6:45 – Depart for Etica and Transparencia Quick Count Center in Holiday Inn.
Meet executive director Gabriel Solorzano and statistician Neil Nevitte

7:20 – Depart for Ambassador's Reception at the Official Residence

Sunday, November 4

Manuela Knapp de Aguilar will meet Observer Delegation at Hotel Intercontinental Metrocentro at 7:30 AM.

8:00 am – Depart Hotel for Airport. Proceed to Gate 4 for Helicopter departure

9:00 – Depart Managua for Jinotega.

9:40 - Arrive in Jinotega. (Nicaraguan Military Base for the First Infantry Battalion (Apana))
Greet Mayor Jairo Fajardo Lopez and CEM President Jesus Bartolome Chavarria

10:00 - Visit JRV at Escuela Alfredo Alegria in Llano de la Cruz

10: 40 Depart for Jinotega City.

11:00 Visit JRV in Main Library in Central Square.

11:45 – Depart for Military Base Apanas.

12:00 noon – Box lunch

12:15 – Depart for La Dalia via helicopter.

12:45 pm – Arrive in La Dalia

Greet Mayor Manuel R. Zuniga, CEM President Francisco Sanchez,
Hagamos Democracia representative Roxana Santa Maria, and Katie Uhre of IRI
(Assistant to George Folson).

Meet Araceli Hernandez Martinez, Maria Eugenia Estrada, Jose Aquiles Obregon of
CODIAL-Matagalpa (local NGO).

Visit JRV at Escuela 14.

1:30 pm – Depart La Dalia by helicopter for Matagalpa.

2:00 – Arrive Nicaraguan Army 6th Regional Command HQ.
Greet Mayor Sadrach Zeledon

2:15 - Proceed to JRV at Waswali Arriba, rural voting.

3:00 – Depart Waswali Arriba for Matagalpa City.

3:15 –Visit JRV in Guanuca Barrio in Manuel Mongalo Elementary School.
Greeted by CED President Lic. Noel Escobar
Alternate JRV in Matagalpa City: Instituto Autonomo Eliseo Picado

4:00 – Depart for Nicaraguan Army 6th Regional Command HQ.

4:25 - Depart Matagalpa by helicopter to Managua. Arrive at Gate 4.

5:15 – Return to Hotel Intercontinental Metrocentro.

7:00 – Possible press availability at Hotel Intercontinental Metrocentro.

Dinner

9:00 - Proceed to Olof Palme to observe the vote count.

[9:00-10:00 – OAS to hold press conference at Olof Palme (tentative).]

Return to Hotel Intercontinental Metrocentro from Olof Palme.

Monday, November 5

10:00 am - Embassy Debrief in Presidential Suite, Hotel Inter Metrocentro

11:00 – 4: 00 – Meetings being sought with presidential candidates Bolanos, Ortega and Saborio.
Optional meetings with OAS, European Union and Carter Center observers.

[3:00 – Carter Center Press Conference, Holiday Inn.]

[4:00 – IRI Press Briefing. Congressman Dreier to participate.
Hotel Intercontinental Metrocentro.]

Tuesday, November 6

5:00 am – Baggage call

5:45 – Congressman and Mrs. Ballenger Depart Ambassador’s Residence for Hotel Intercontinental Metrocentro.

6:00 – Entire delegation departs for Managua International Airport, Gate 4.

7: 00 Depart Managua by Military Air for MacDill AFB.

11:05 Arrive MacDill AFB (refuel).

1:50 pm - Arrive Andrews AFB.

**Alternative Schedule for the U.S. Congressional Delegation
Sunday, November 4, 2001**

- 8:00 Depart Hotel Intercontinental Metrocentro
Visit JRV in Escuela Wilfredo Lopez (Managua)
- 8:40 Visit JRV in Asociación Boy Scouts de Nicaragua
- 9:20 Visit JRV in INTA
- 9:50 Depart for Esquipulas
- 10:10 Visit JRV at Colegio Autonomo Esquipulas
- 10:40 Depart Esquipulas for Masaya
- 11:05 Visit JRV in Escuela Hogar del Nino John Douglas
- 11:40 Visit Escuela Salesiano and Escuela San Juan Bosco
- 12:05 Depart for Catarina
- 12:30 Box Lunch at Mirador de Catarina
- 1:30 Depart Catarina for Comarca
- 1:40 Visit Escuela Nueva Pio XII.
- 2:10 Arrive in Masatepe. Visit Escuela Calixto Moya.
- 2:30 Depart Masatepe
- 3:10 Visit Escuela Santa Clara de Asis
- 3:35 Visit Escuela Parroquial Monte Tabor
- 4:00 Depart Monte Tabor for Managua
- 4:30 Arrive Hotel Intercontinental Metrocentro

***Optional for those who want to watch vote count in Managua:
Visit Escuela Wilfredo Lopez, Boy Scouts of Nicaragua, or INTA.***



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Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs
April 2001



People

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Government

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U.S. Relations

Travel/Business

Background Notes A-Z

Background Note: Nicaragua

PROFILE

Official Name:
 Republic of Nicaragua

Geography

Area: 130,688 sq. km. (50,446 sq. mi.); slightly larger than New York State. **Cities:**
Capital--Managua (pop. 1 million). *Other cities*--Leon, Granada, Jinotega, Matagalpa,
 Chinandega, Masaya.

Terrain: Extensive Atlantic coastal plains rising to central interior mountains; narrow Pacific coastal plain interrupted by volcanoes.

Climate: Tropical in lowlands; cooler in highlands.

People

Nationality: *Noun and adjective*--Nicaraguan(s).

Population (1999 est.): 4.91 million.

Annual growth rate (1999 est.): 2.9%. **Density**--33 per sq. km.

Ethnic groups: Mestizo (mixed European and indigenous) 69%, white 17%, black (Jamaican origin) 9%, indigenous 5%.

Religion: Roman Catholic 95%.

Languages: Spanish (official), English and indigenous languages on Caribbean coast.

Education: *Years compulsory*--none enforced (28% first graders eventually finish sixth grade).

Literacy--75%.

Health: *Life expectancy*--62 yrs. *Infant mortality rate*--50/1,000.

Work force (1996): 1.7 million. *Unemployed*--14%; *underemployed*--36%.

Government

Type: Republic.

Independence: 1821.

Constitution: The 1987 Sandinista-era Constitution was changed in 1995 to provide for a more even distribution of power among the four branches of government and again in 2000 to increase the Supreme Court and the Controller General's Office and to make changes to the electoral laws.

Branches: *Executive*--president and vice president. *Legislative*--National Assembly (unicameral). *Judicial*--Supreme Court; subordinate appeals, district and local courts;

separate labor and administrative tribunals. **Electoral**--Supreme Electoral Council, responsible for organizing and holding elections.

Administrative subdivisions: 15 departments and two autonomous regions on the Atlantic coast; 151 municipalities.

Major political parties: Liberal Constitutionalist Party (PLC); Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN); National Conservative Party (PCN); Nicaraguan Christian Path (CCN); National Resistance Party (PRN).

Suffrage: Universal at 16.

Economy

GDP (2000): \$2.3 billion.

Annual growth rate (2000 est.): 5.0%.

Per capita GDP (2000 est.): \$495.

Inflation rate (2000 est.): 10%.

Natural resources: Arable land, livestock, fisheries, gold, timber.

Agriculture (32% of GDP): *Products*--corn, coffee, sugar, meat, rice, beans, bananas.

Industry (24% of GDP): *Types*--processed food, beverages, textiles, petroleum, and metal products.

Services (44% of GDP): *Types*--commerce, construction, government, banking, transportation, and energy.

Trade (1997): *Exports*--\$704 million (f.o.b.): coffee, seafood, beef, sugar, industrial goods, gold, bananas, sesame. *Markets*--U.S. 43%, European Union 33%, Central American

Common Market (CACM) 17%, Mexico 2%. *Imports*--\$1.45 billion (FOB 1997): petroleum, agricultural supplies, manufactured goods. *Suppliers*--U.S. 32%, CACM 21%, Venezuela 11%, European Union 9%.

PEOPLE

Most Nicaraguans have both European and Indian ancestry, and the culture of the country reflects the Ibero-European and Indian heritage of its people. Only the Indians of the eastern half of the country remain ethnically distinct and retain tribal customs and languages. A large black minority, of Jamaican origin, is concentrated on the Caribbean coast. In the mid-1980s, the central government divided the eastern half of the country--the former department of Zelaya--into two autonomous regions and granted the people of the region limited self-rule.

The 1995 constitutional reform guaranteed the integrity of the regions' several unique cultures and gave the inhabitants a say in the use of the area's natural resources. Roman Catholicism is the major religion, but Evangelical Protestant groups have grown recently, and there are strong Anglican and Moravian communities on the Caribbean coast. Most Nicaraguans live in the Pacific lowlands and the adjacent interior highlands. The population is 54% urban.

HISTORY

Nicaragua takes its name from Nicarao, chief of the indigenous tribe then living around present-day Lake Nicaragua. In 1524, Hernandez de Cordoba founded the first Spanish permanent settlements in the region, including two of Nicaragua's two principal towns: Granada on Lake Nicaragua and Leon east of Lake Managua. Nicaragua gained independence from Spain in 1821, briefly becoming a part of the Mexican Empire and then a member of a federation of independent Central American provinces. In 1838, Nicaragua became an independent republic.

Much of Nicaragua's politics since independence has been characterized by the rivalry between the Liberal elite of Leon and the Conservative elite of Granada, which often spilled into civil war. Initially invited by the Liberals in 1855 to join their struggle against the Conservatives, an American named William Walker and his "filibusters" seized the presidency in 1856. The Liberals and Conservatives united to drive him out of office in 1857, after which a period of three decades of Conservative rule ensued.

Taking advantage of divisions within the Conservative ranks, Jose Santos Zelaya led a Liberal revolt that brought him to power in 1893. Zelaya ended the longstanding dispute with Britain over the Atlantic Coast in 1894, and reincorporated that region into Nicaragua. However, due to differences over an isthmian canal and concessions to Americans in Nicaragua as well as a concern for what was perceived as Nicaragua's destabilizing influence in the region, in 1909 the United States provided political support to Conservative-led forces rebelling against President Zelaya and intervened militarily to protect American lives and property. Zelaya resigned later that year. With the exception of a 9-month period in 1925-26, the United States maintained troops in Nicaragua from 1912 until 1933. From 1927 until 1933, U.S. Marines stationed in Nicaragua engaged in a running battle with rebel forces led by renegade Liberal Gen. Augusto Sandino, who rejected a 1927 negotiated agreement brokered by the United States to end the latest round of fighting between Liberals and Conservatives.

After the departure of U.S. troops, National Guard Cmdr. Anastasio Somoza Garcia outmaneuvered his political opponents, including Sandino who was assassinated by National Guard officers, and took over the presidency in 1936. Somoza, and two sons who succeeded him, maintained close ties with the U.S. The Somoza dynasty ended in 1979 with a massive uprising led by the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN), which, since the early 1960s, had conducted a low-scale guerrilla war against the Somoza regime.

The FSLN established an authoritarian dictatorship soon after taking power. U.S.-Nicaraguan relations deteriorated rapidly as the regime nationalized many private industries, confiscated private property, supported Central American guerrilla movements, and maintained links to international terrorists. The United States suspended aid to Nicaragua in 1981. The Reagan administration provided assistance to the Nicaraguan Resistance and in 1985 imposed an embargo on U.S.-Nicaraguan trade.

In response to both domestic and international pressure, the Sandinista regime entered into negotiations with the Nicaraguan Resistance and agreed to nationwide elections in February 1990. In these elections, which were proclaimed free and fair by international observers, Nicaraguan voters elected as their president the candidate of the National Opposition Union, Violeta Barrios de Chamorro.

During President Chamorro's nearly 7 years in office, her government achieved major progress toward consolidating democratic institutions, advancing national reconciliation, stabilizing the economy, privatizing state-owned enterprises, and reducing human rights violations. In February 1995, Sandinista Popular Army Cmdr. Gen. Humberto Ortega was replaced, in accordance with a new military code enacted in 1994 by Gen. Joaquin Cuadra, who has espoused a policy of greater professionalism in the renamed Army of Nicaragua. A new police organization law, passed by the National Assembly and signed into law in August 1996, further codified both civilian control of the police and the professionalization of that law.

enforcement agency.

The October 20, 1996 presidential, legislative, and mayoral elections also were judged free and fair by international observers and by the groundbreaking national electoral observer group *Etica y Transparencia* (Ethics and Transparency) despite a number of irregularities, due largely to logistical difficulties and a baroque complicated electoral law. This time Nicaraguans elected former-Managua Mayor Arnoldo Aleman, leader of the center-right Liberal Alliance. The first transfer of power in recent Nicaraguan history from one democratically elected president to another took place on January 10, 1997, when the Aleman government was inaugurated.

In November 2000, Nicaragua held municipal elections--the country's third free and fair election since 1990. President Aleman's Liberal Constitutionalist Party (PLC) won a majority of the overall mayoral races, but the FSLN fared considerably better in larger urban areas, winning a significant number of departmental capitals, including Managua. Presidential and legislative elections will follow in November 2001.

GOVERNMENT AND POLITICAL CONDITIONS

Nicaragua is a constitutional democracy with executive, legislative, judicial, and electoral branches of government. In 1995, the executive and legislative branches negotiated a reform of the 1987 Sandinista constitution which gave impressive new powers and independence to the legislature--the National Assembly--including permitting the Assembly to override a presidential veto with a simple majority vote and eliminating the president's ability to pocket veto a bill. Both the president and the members of the unicameral National Assembly are elected to concurrent 5-year terms. The National Assembly consists of 90 deputies elected from party lists drawn at the department and national level, plus the defeated presidential candidates who obtained a minimal quotient of votes. In the 1996 elections, the Liberal Alliance won a plurality of 42 seats, the FSLN won 36 seats, and nine other political parties and alliances won the remaining 15 seats.

The Supreme Court supervises the functioning of the still largely ineffective and overburdened judicial system. As part of the 1995 constitutional reforms, the independence of the Supreme Court was strengthened by increasing the number of magistrates from 9 to 12. Supreme Court justices are elected to 7-year terms by the National Assembly.

Led by a council of seven magistrates, the Supreme Electoral Council (CSE) is the co-equal branch of government responsible for organizing and conducting elections, plebiscites, and referendums. The magistrates and their alternates are elected to 5-year terms by the National Assembly. Constitutional changes in 2000 expanded the number of CSE magistrates from five to seven and gave the PLC and the FSLN a freer hand to name party activists to the Council, prompting allegations of an effort by both parties to over-politicize electoral institutions and processes.

Freedom of speech is a right guaranteed by the Nicaraguan constitution and vigorously exercised by its people. Diverse viewpoints are freely and openly discussed in the media and in academia. There is no state censorship in Nicaragua. Other constitutional freedoms include peaceful assembly and association, freedom of religion, and freedom of movement within the country, as well as foreign travel, emigration, and repatriation. The government also permits domestic and international human rights monitors to operate freely in Nicaragua. The constitution prohibits discrimination based on birth, nationality, political belief, race, gender, language, religion, opinion, national origin, economic or social condition. All public and private sector workers, except the military and the police, are entitled to form and join unions of their own choosing, and they exercise this right extensively. Nearly half of Nicaragua's work force, including agricultural workers, is unionized. Workers have the right to strike. Collective bargaining is becoming more common in the private sector.

Political Parties

In all, 35 political parties participated in the 1996 elections, independently or as part of one of five electoral coalitions. With nearly 52% of the vote, the Liberal Alliance, a coalition of five political parties and sectors of another two, won the presidency, a plurality in the national legislature, and a large majority of the mayoral races. The FSLN ended in second place with 38%. Most other parties fared poorly. A new political party, the Nicaraguan Christian Path, ended a distant third with 4% of the vote and four seats in the 93-member National Assembly. The traditional alternative to the Liberals, the National Conservative Party, ended in fourth place with slightly over 2% of the vote and three seats in the National Assembly. The remaining 24 parties and alliances together obtained less than 5% of the vote. Seven of these smaller parties control eight seats in the National Assembly. Five of 153 mayors are Conservatives; all others are FSLN or PLC.

According to now-defunct Nicaraguan law, those political parties that did not win at least one seat in the National Legislature automatically lose their legal status and must repay government campaign financing. There are 19 parties represented in the National Assembly independently or as part of an alliance. However, under new, more restrictive electoral laws passed in 2000, only three parties--the FSLN, the PLC and the CCN--have obtained legal status and the authorization to participate in 2001's national elections from the CSE.

Principal Government Officials

President--Arnoldo Aleman
 Vice President--Leopoldo Navarro
 Foreign Affairs Minister--Francisco Aguirre Sacasa
 Finance Minister--Esteban Duque Estrada
 Trade Minister--Norman Caldera
 Central Bank Director--Noel Ramirez
 Government Minister--Jose Marengo
 Agriculture Minister--Jose Augusto Navarro
 Defense Minister--Jose Adan Guerra
 Construction and Transportation Minister--Edgard Bohorquez
 Health Minister--Maria de los Angeles Arguello
 Education Minister--Fernando Robleto Lang
 Attorney General--Procurator General Julio Centano
 Labor Minister--Manuel Martinez
 Ambassador to the United States--Alfonso Ortega Urbina
 Ambassador to the United Nations--(vacant)
 Ambassador to the Organization of American States--Felipe Rodriguez

Nicaragua maintains an embassy in the United States at 1627 New Hampshire Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20009 (tel. 202-387-4371).

ECONOMY

Nicaragua began free market reforms in 1991 after 12 years of economic free-fall under the Sandinista regime. Despite some setbacks, it has made dramatic progress: privatizing 351 state enterprises, reducing inflation from 13,500% to 12%, and cutting the foreign debt in half. The economy began expanding in 1994 and grew a strong 5% in 2000, with overall GDP reaching 2.3 million in 2000.

Despite this growing economy, Nicaragua remains the second-poorest nation in the hemisphere with a per capita GDP of \$495--below where it stood before the Sandinista takeover in 1979. Unemployment, while falling, is 16%, and another 36% are underemployed. Nicaragua suffers from persistent trade and budget deficits and a high debt-service burden, leaving it highly dependent on foreign assistance--as much as 45% of GDP in 2000.

One of the key engines of economic growth has been production for export. Exports rose to \$735 million in 1999. Although traditional products such as coffee, meat, and sugar continued to lead the list of Nicaraguan exports, the fastest growth now comes in nontraditional exports: maquila goods (apparel); bananas; gold; seafood; and new agricultural products such as sesame, melons, and onions.

Nicaragua is primarily an agricultural country, but construction, mining, fisheries, and general commerce also have been expanding strongly during the last few years. Foreign private capital inflows topped \$300 million in 1999 but, due to economic uncertainty, fell to \$150,000 in 2000.

Rapid expansion of the tourist industry has made it the nation's third-largest source of foreign exchange. Some 60,000 Americans visit Nicaragua yearly--primarily business people, tourists, and those visiting relatives. An estimated 5,300 U.S. citizens reside in the country. The U.S. embassy's consular section provides a full range of consular services--from passport replacement and veteran's assistance to prison visitation and repatriation assistance.

Nicaragua now appears poised for rapid economic growth. However, long-term success at attracting investment, creating jobs, and reducing poverty depend on its ability to comply with an International Monetary Fund (IMF) program, resolve the thousands of Sandinista-era property confiscation cases, and open its economy to foreign trade. This process was boosted in late 2000 when Nicaragua reached the decision point under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) debt relief initiative. However, HIPC benefits will be delayed because Nicaragua subsequently fell "off track" from its IMF program.

The U.S. is the country's largest trading partner by far--the source of 25% of Nicaragua's imports and the destination of 59% of its exports. About 25 wholly or partly owned subsidiaries of U.S. companies operate in Nicaragua. The largest of those investments are in the energy, communications, manufacturing, fisheries, and shrimp farming sectors. Good opportunities exist for further investments in those same sectors, as well as in tourism, mining, franchising, and the distribution of imported consumer, manufacturing, and agricultural goods.

The U.S. embassy's Economic/Commercial Section advances American economic and business interests by briefing U.S. firms on opportunities and stumbling blocks to trade and investment in Nicaragua; encouraging key Nicaraguan decisionmakers to work with American firms; helping to resolve problems that affect U.S. commercial interests; and working to change local economic and trade ground rules in order to afford U.S. firms a level playing field on which to compete. U.S. businesses may access key embassy economic reports via the mission's Internet home page at <http://www.usia.gov/posts/managua.html>.

FOREIGN RELATIONS

The 1990 election victory of President Violeta Chamorro placed Nicaragua in the ranks of Latin American democracies. Nicaragua pursues an independent foreign policy. President Chamorro was instrumental in obtaining considerable international assistance for her government's efforts to improve living conditions for Nicaraguans--the country is the second-poorest in the Western Hemisphere after Haiti. Her administration also negotiated substantial reductions in the country's foreign debt burden. A participant of the Central American Security Commission (CASC), Nicaragua also has taken a leading role in pressing for regional demilitarization and peaceful settlement of disputes within states in the region.

The Aleman administration has expressed a commitment to follow the major tenets of its predecessor's foreign policy, to promote Central American political and economic integration, and to resolve outstanding boundary disputes peacefully. At the 1994 Summit of the Americas, Nicaragua joined six Central American neighbors in signing the Alliance for Sustainable Development, known as the Conjunta Centroamerica-USA or CONCAUSA, to promote sustainable economic development in the region.

In Costa Rica in May 1997, President Aleman met with President Clinton, his Central American counterparts, and the president of the Dominican Republic to celebrate the remarkable democratic transformation in the region and reaffirm support for strengthening democracy, good governance, and promoting prosperity through economic integration, free trade, and investment. The leaders also expressed their commitment to the continued development of just and equitable societies and responsible environmental policies as an integral element of sustainable development. President Clinton subsequently visited Nicaragua in early 1999, following Hurricane Mitch.

Nicaragua belongs to the UN and several specialized and related agencies, including the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Trade Organization (WTO), UN Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), World Health Organization (WHO), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), International Labor Organization (ILO), and the UN Human Rights Commission (UNHRC). Nicaragua also is a member of the Organization of American States (OAS), the Non-aligned Movement (NAM), International Atomic Energy Commission (IAEA), the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the Central American Common Market (CACM), and the Central America Bank for Economic Integration (CABEI).

U.S.-NICARAGUAN RELATIONS

U.S. policy aims to support the consolidation of the democratic process initiated in Nicaragua with the 1990 election of President Chamorro. The U.S. has promoted national reconciliation, encouraging Nicaraguans to resolve their problems through dialogue and compromise. It recognizes as legitimate all political forces that abide by the democratic process and eschew violence. U.S. assistance is focused on strengthening democratic institutions, stimulating sustainable economic growth, and supporting the health and basic education sectors.

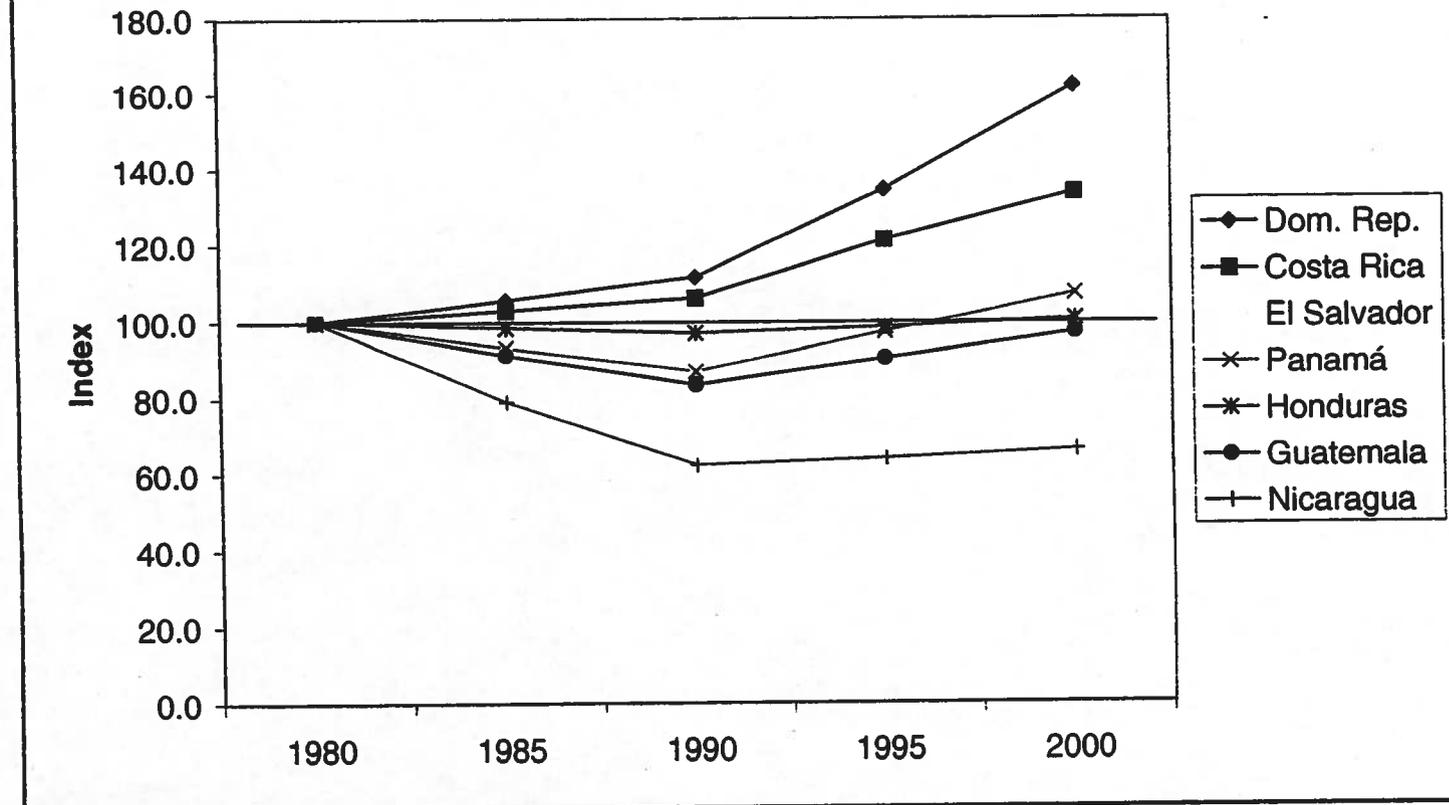
The resolution of U.S. citizen claims arising from Sandinista-era confiscations and expropriations still figure prominently in bilateral policy concerns. Section 527 of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act (1994) prohibits certain U.S. assistance and support for a government of a country that has confiscated U.S. citizen property, unless the government has taken certain remedial steps. In July 1997, the Secretary of State issued a fourth annual national interest waiver of the Section 527 prohibition because of Nicaragua's record in resolving U.S. citizen claims as well as its overall progress in implementing political and economic reforms.

Other key U.S. policy goals for Nicaragua are:

- Improving respect for human rights and resolving outstanding high-profile human rights cases;
- Developing a free market economy with respect for property and intellectual property rights;
- Ensuring effective civilian control over defense and security policy;
- Increasing the effectiveness of Nicaragua's efforts to combat narcotics trafficking, illegal alien smuggling, international terrorist and criminal organizations; and
- Reforming the judicial system.

Since 1990, the U.S. has provided \$1.2 billion in assistance to Nicaragua. About \$260 million of that was for debt relief, and another \$450 million was for balance-of-payments support. The U.S. also provided \$93 million in 1999, 2000, and 2001 as part of our overall response to Hurricane Mitch. Aside from funding for Mitch reconstruction, the levels of assistance have fallen incrementally to reflect the improvements in Nicaragua, and FY 2000 assistance will be about \$25 million. This assistance was focused on promoting more citizen political participation, compromise, and government transparency; stimulating sustainable growth and income; and fostering better educated, healthier, and smaller families.

Per-capita GDP Growth for Central America 1980-2000



Source: World Bank

Note: Chart uses 5-year averages; for each country index 1980 = 100

NICARAGUA 2001

A PRIMER ON NATIONAL ELECTIONS

On November 4, 2001, Nicaraguans will go to the polls to elect the President and Vice-President, 90 deputies for the National Assembly, and deputies for the Central American Parliament. The November elections will prove critical to Nicaragua's future political direction. Following the 2000 Municipal elections, the world was surprised to witness a comeback by the FSLN (Sandinista) party, which won several municipal seats including the powerful mayoral seat of Managua.

November 4 National Elections

The November 4 presidential ballot includes candidates from three parties: the FSLN (Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional—Sandinista Party); the PC (Partido Conservador de Nicaragua—Conservative Party); and the party of the current President, Arnoldo Alemán, the PLC (Partido Liberal Constitucionalista—Liberal Party). The candidates representing each party are as follows:

Political Party	Presidential Candidate	Vice-Presidential Candidate
PLC (<i>right</i>)	Enrique Bolaños	José Rizo
FSLN (<i>left</i>)	Daniel Ortega	Agustín Jarquín
PC (<i>center-left</i>)	Alberto Saborío	Consuelo Sequeira

Voters will elect deputies to the National Congress, 20 of which are elected at large, the remaining 70 of which are elected at the departmental level from party lists based on the proportion of the vote received by each party. The former president and the second- and third-place candidates for president in 2001 will also be awarded seats in the Congress. Twenty members of the Central American Parliament (known as Parlacen) will also be elected.

Political Division – Electoral Units

Nicaragua is divided into **15 departments and two autonomous regions**. These departments are further divided into the country's **151 *municipios*** (or sub-departmental units, loosely translated as municipalities), defined in the Constitution as the "basic unit" of the administrative political division of the country. The August 1988 Law on Municipalities established this division and the first municipal governments were elected in 1990. At the *municipio* level, mayoral, vice-mayoral, and municipal council elections are held every four years. The municipal level is also the unit of organization used for the tallying and transmission of national election results.

Each municipality is divided into units called ***juntas receptoras de votos (JRVs)***, or precincts, where the actual voting and tabulation takes place on Election Day. The law states that there must be a JRV for every 400 people and that no one should be more than 4.5 kilometers from their JRV to facilitate access. There will be **9,502 JRVs** set up for the national elections.

The Consejo Supremo Electoral

Elections are administered by the Electoral Branch (as designated by Article 7 of the Constitution), which consists of the **Supreme Electoral Council** (in Spanish, *Consejo Supremo Electoral* or CSE) and other, subordinate electoral bodies. The CSE is composed of seven magistrates and three alternates, elected by vote of at least 60 percent of deputies in the General Assembly. The magistrates serve a term of five years and elect a President and Vice-President among themselves that serve a one-year term and can be reelected. Currently the Chief Magistrate is Roberto Rivas.

The functions of the CSE are as follows:

- establish the electoral calendar
- appoint members of lower electoral bodies
- organize and direct elections, plebiscites, or referenda
- enforce applicable legal provisions and ensure that they are respected by the candidates
- hear and resolve complaints and challenges presented by political parties and appeals of lower electoral bodies
- issue provisions for ensuring that the electoral process takes place under conditions of full constitutional guarantee
- order the relevant government agencies to ensure conditions of security for political parties
- conduct the definitive tabulation of election results
- direct and organize the Central Civil Registry, the issuing of identity cards, and the voters' list
- grant or cancel legal status of political parties
- monitor and resolve conflicts and questions over the legitimacy of representatives and leaders

The CSE also staffs offices at the departmental (CED) and municipal levels (CEM), both of which are critical on Election Day in the transmission of results and resolution of electoral tabulation disputes.

KEY DATES IN THE 2001 ELECTORAL CALENDAR

May 23, 2001	Last day to register alliance of political parties
June 7, 2001	Registry of candidates for the offices of President and Vice-President
June 8, 2001	Publication of the registry by the CSE
June 15, 2001	Citizen verification
August 6, 2001	Last day to apply for an identity card in order to vote
August 18, 2001	Campaigns for office allowed to begin
October 31, 2001	Final day of campaigning
<i>November 4, 2001</i>	<i>Elections held</i>
November 30, 2001	Proclamation of elections by the CSE
January 9, 2002	Oath of Office of the Deputies before the National Assembly
January 15, 2002	Oath of Office of the Deputies to Central American Parliament

Voter Registration and Participation

Nicaraguans are eligible to vote beginning at the age of 16, provided they are registered and possess a national identification card (*cédula*), which is also used as a voter identification card. According to the CSE, approximately 2.8 million Nicaraguans are eligible to vote, of whom approximately 2.5 million have their *cédulas*. The CSE may also authorize the use of a temporary voting card (*documento supletorio*) for those citizens who have applied for a *cédula* but did not receive it with sufficient time before an election. Leading up to the November 2001 elections, with USG support, the CSE developed ambitious plans to register new voters and distribute new and previously undelivered *cédulas* and *documentos supletorios*. (See tab on USG support.)

Problems in issuing *cédulas* often arise due to discrepancies in the civil registry of births or the civil registry of deaths. Especially in the case of indigent citizens, birth certificates have often either not been issued or are inaccurate. There is also not of yet an efficient system for registering deaths. As such, the civil registry is often outdated.

Voter Participation of Nicaraguans residing in Costa Rica

In response to a request by the Government of Nicaragua, the Government of Costa Rica is granting relaxed border-crossing privileges for Nicaraguans who legally reside in Costa Rica, to travel to Nicaragua to vote in the November 4 elections. The Costa Rican migration authorities are allowing: 1) permission to exit and enter Nicaragua during a 72 hour period, starting on November 3, and 2) waiver of the US\$50.00 exit fee. To vote in Nicaragua, the Nicaraguan residents residing in Costa Rica must still have a *cédula* or *documento supletorio* and will vote in the JRVs in Nicaragua where they are registered.

Party "Pact," January 2000 Electoral Reforms, Party Re-Registration

In January 2000, the PLC and the FSLN formed a pact known as "*El Pacto*" that led to major changes in Nicaraguan electoral law, including several constitutional changes and the revision of Law 331 affecting political parties. The changes effectively made it extremely difficult to have more than a two-party system. Changes in the Constitution and electoral law included:

- reducing the percentage needed to win the presidency in the first round of elections from a simple majority to 40 percent (or 35 percent, with a five percent margin of victory),
- restricting the formation of new political parties, imposing rigid regulations for a political party to maintain its legal status,
- establishing strict requirements for a party's participation in an election, and
- prohibiting unaffiliated candidates from running for office.

The changes also require political parties that did not receive at least three percent of the vote in the 1996 election to collect signatures from three percent of voters registered in 1996 -- an increase from 500 signatures under the previous law to nearly 73,000 today. The law also requires potential parties to establish organized structures at all levels of government, forcing them to be highly organized before attempting to gain legal status.

The Pact and the resulting changes to the Electoral Law have also resulted in a sharp politicization of the CSE. The CSE consists of three FSLN magistrates, three PLC magistrates, and a nominally neutral President with PLC leanings. The CSE's decision-making process has resulted in critical delays in training and logistics, and the staff's division of party interests has impeded the CSE from functioning and carrying out coordinated duties. The division within the CSE can be especially volatile at the department and municipal offices (CEDs and CEMs), sometimes leading to threats of violence.

Challenges in the CSE and the 2001 Elections Process

Two key issues related to the CSE continue to be problematic. First, budget shortfalls have plagued the CSE, inhibiting the CSE from meeting its financial obligations in the electoral process, including payroll. The total budgeted by the Government of Nicaragua and approved by the National Assembly for the 2001 national elections was \$33 million. The actual cost of the elections is expected to be above \$42 million.

Additionally, late planning by the CSE concerning the transmission of results has led to some concerns about complete transmissions on Election Day. A simulation of voting data transmission took place on Sunday, October 28, during which 127 of the 151 municipal electoral centers (CEMs) participated. By late Sunday evening, 94 percent of the municipalities nationwide had been able to transmit successfully. In the Municipality of Managua, only 72 out of a total of 393 JRVs participated in the simulation and were successful in transmitting voting data. As of last week, the remaining 321 still lacked one or more fax machines, telephone lines, electricity, or access to enter the CEMs. The CSE is committed to resolving all logistical and technical problems nationwide. The sixth and final simulation will take place on Saturday, November 3 of all CEMs nationwide.

Recent Polls

Numerous polls by reputable organizations have been conducted since before the election campaign began. The latest Cid-Gallup poll conducted between October 19 and 25 indicates a statistical tie between the PLC and FSLN. Bolaños received 49.6 percent of the votes versus 46.4 percent for Ortega (Saborío received 3.9 percent) with a margin of error of 2.9 percent. The nationwide sample size was 1,439 voters, and results were reported in the October 31 issue of *La Prensa*

The October 24 issue of *La Prensa*, reported the results of an October 15 - 19 survey, with Bolaños receiving 38 percent of the votes versus 37 percent for Ortega. The nationwide sample size was 1,598 voters, with a margin of error of 2.5 percent. According to the Cid-Gallup analysis, undecided voters -- calculated at that time to be five percent -- will sway the election.

A nation-wide poll conducted by the firm M & R between October 12 and 19 of a sample of 4,242 voters showed an almost five-point difference between Ortega and Bolaños, with Ortega at 42.4 percent and Bolaños at 37.5 percent. The M & R poll, reported in the October 26 issue of *La Prensa*, showed undecided voters totaling 12.6 percent. They note that the undecided voters give no indication of which way they may vote.

Enrique Bolaños, Presidential Candidate of the PLC (Liberal Constitutionalist Party)

Phonetic: boh-LAH-nyos

Addressed as: Don Enrique

Vice President of Nicaragua (1996-present)

A leading member of his country's business community, Enrique Bolaños won election as vice president of Nicaragua on October 20, 1996, as part of the "Liberal Alliance" ticket. Headed by President Arnaldo Aleman, the ticket won with 51% of the vote. After Hurricane Mitch devastated Nicaragua on October 29-31, 1998, President Aleman appointed Bolaños the President of the National Emergency Committee (CNE). The CNE, which included representatives from every sector of society, was formed to take charge of the vast relief operation in an efficient and transparent manner, thanks in large part to Bolaños' leadership.

Bolaños hails from a prominent Masaya conservative family and formally joined the governing Liberal Constitutionalist Party (PLC) in April 2000. Bolaños was Aleman's first and only choice for a running mate in the 1996 elections. In selecting Bolaños, Aleman reached out beyond the traditional Liberal constituency to the tens of thousands of Nicaraguans who identify themselves as Conservatives. He also associated himself with Bolaños' reputation for moral rectitude and intolerance of corruption. In the 1980s, the two were activists in the business umbrella organization COSEP, both had properties taken over, and both were jailed by the Sandinista regime.

Bolaños played an active role in major policy decisions, particularly those regarding economic and property issues. He was the titular head of a GON commission that achieved a "bilateral" accord on property with the FSLN in 1997. He was also the head of governmental commission promoting higher ethical standards for public servants and greater transparency in government operations.

Bolaños was a multiple term president of the Superior Council of Private Enterprise (COSEP) in the 1980s and a defiant anti-Sandinista. He refused to leave the country despite confiscations, jailings, and Sandinista harassment. He was considered a likely candidate for president in 1990, before opposition to the Sandinistas coalesced around Violeta Barrios de Chamorro.

Bolaños was born May 13, 1928 in Masaya. He is married to the former Lila T. Abaunza. They have one daughter, Lucia, and three sons, Enrique, Jorge, and Javier. Bolaños has a degree in industrial engineering from St. Louis University and speaks excellent English.

**Daniel Ortega, Presidential Candidate for the FSLN
(Sandinista National Liberation Front)**

**Former President of Nicaragua
(1984-90)**

**Secretary General of the FSLN;
National Assembly Deputy
(1990 to present)**

Daniel Ortega served as president from 1984 until 1990, when his party lost the elections to the United Nicaraguan Opposition (UNO). In the 1996 presidential race, Arnaldo Aleman of the Liberal Constitutionalist Party (PLC) defeated Ortega by a margin of 51 percent to 38 percent. Despite the two electoral losses, Ortega has retained leadership of the FSLN. He has maintained party discipline in the face of several internal challenges, the most recent one by party members not in accord with FSLN/PLC negotiations known as "El Pacto." In 1998, Ortega suffered a public relations disaster when his step-daughter, Zoilamérica Narváez, publicly charged him with sexual abuse. Even with such setbacks, Ortega faces no real opposition to his leadership of the party.

Ortega was born on November 11, 1945. He studied law at the National Autonomous University of Nicaragua. While there, he joined the Revolutionary Student Front, an FSLN training unit and support organization. He joined the FSLN in 1963 and subsequently became involved in anti-Somoza activities. He was arrested for bank robbery in 1967 and served a seven-year term. After his release, Ortega sought exile in Cuba, where he worked with his younger brother, Humberto, as a strategist for the FSLN's Tercerista faction.

Ortega emerged from the Sandinista military victory in 1979 as a member of the governing junta, and he served as junta coordinator during 1981-84. In 1984, Ortega was elected president in a controversial election and served from 1985 to 1990, when he lost to Violeta Chamorro of the UNO coalition. In accordance with the 1987 Constitution, Ortega, as ex-President, automatically became a Deputy in the National Assembly and was also a representative to the Central American Parliament (PARLACEN). In 1991, he became Secretary General of the FSLN, a position he has held throughout the decade.

Ortega lives with his common-law wife and fellow revolutionary Rosario Murillo. The couple has at least seven children; Rosario has two from a previous marriage. Daniel reportedly seeks counsel from his brother Humberto, former Minister of Defense. Ortega speaks some English and has traveled to the United States on several occasions.

**Alberto Saborío, PC Presidential Candidate
(Conservative Party)**

Long-time Conservative Party Activist

Alberto Saborío stepped in as Conservative Party presidential candidate upon the resignation of Noel Vidaurre in June 2001. His running mate is businesswoman Consuelo Sequeira. He is running on a platform of institutional reform and adherence to the rule of law.

Saborío is a lawyer who graduated in Salamanca, Spain. His expertise is in constitutional law. He held a post as Conservative deputy in the pre-revolutionary congress. He opposed Somoza's regime and was also an outspoken Anti-Sandinista leader. During the 1995 constitutional reform process he was a candidate for Supreme Court magistrate and also a candidate to run the human rights ombudsman's office (he was not appointed to either office).

Saborío has a private law practice. He is also a popular law professor at the Catholic University (UNICA) and University of Central America (UCA).

Saborío is married to French-born Cristiane Coze and has three daughters.

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10-Ene-00
revised 10-26-2001

ROBERTO RIVAS REYES
PRESIDENT OF THE SUPREME ELECTORAL COUNCIL
(CONSEJO SUPREMO ELECTORAL, or CSE)

Name: Roberto Rivas Reyes

DOB: [REDACTED]

Education: MBA

Post-Graduate: Management and Finance

(Licenciatura en Administracion de Empresas)

Date	Position
Feb. 4, 2000	President of the CSE
1995 - 2000	Commissioner (Magistrado) in the CSE
1994 - 2000	Vice-Rector, Catholic University, Nicaragua
1981 - 2000	Executive Director of Coprosa Enterprise

Other Positions and Activities

Director and Representative of Cardenal Obando's Commission of Verification
(Comision de Verificacion)

Member of the Tripartite Commission of Nicaragua

Member of the Negotiating Team for the Disarmament of the Nicaraguan Resistance
(former Contras)

Among other activities, Mr. Rivas participated as a member of the Negotiating Team in Costa Rica in 1993; the 1995 conflict in Nicaragua between the General Assembly and the Presidency, as well as in other mediation activities. As a professional, Mr. Rivas has been a CEO and a consultant.

The Basics of Election Day Procedures

(Adapted from *Paso a Paso* (CSE) and *Manual de Capacitation* (Hagamos Democracia))

- On Election Day, 9,502 *juntas receptoras de votos* (or JRVs, the smallest legal political division) will be open for voters to cast their ballots. Each JRV includes a maximum of 400 voters. In some cases, multiple JRVs will be located in the same polling place.
- Each JRV is run by three officials: the JRV president (who must be a member of either the PLC or FSLN), the first member (who must be a member of the opposite party), and the second member (who must be a member of a registered party). These officials are paid by the CSE to administer all aspects of the election day set-up, voting, and transmission of results.
- The JRV receives a box of materials from the CSE (Supreme Electoral Council) for the polling place which includes ballots for all four offices to be elected, the voting roster, the forms for the Official Record (or *Actas*) of Opening, Closing and Vote Count, ballot boxes, and other materials.
- JRVs officials should arrive at 6:00 a.m. The JRV should open for voters at 7:00 a.m. on Election Day, November 4, 2001.
- One party pollwatcher (*fiscal*) from each party is permitted to observe the election. International and domestic observers with official credentials are also permitted to observe. Electoral police have responsibility for security around the JRV.
- Citizens who wish to vote must present a valid *cédula* (national identity card) or *documento supletorio* (temporary voting card) and their name must appear on the voting roster (*padrón electoral*). If they do not and still wish to vote, citizens can come forth with two witnesses over 21 years old with valid *cédulas* who are on the voting roster at that JRV.
- Citizens will receive four ballots, each signed by the members of the JRV. The colors of the ballots are as follows:
 - Blue: President and Vice-President
 - Purple: National Deputies of the General Assembly (at-large candidates)
 - Brown: Deputies for the Central American Parliament
 - Gray: Departmental Level Deputies of the General Assembly
- The president of the JRV explains the voting process to voters. Voters cast their ballots in privacy, and then deposit each ballot in the appropriate ballot box. Voters then return to the JRV voting table to have their right thumb marked with indelible ink, as proof of voting. Their *cédula* is punched with a small hole as proof of voting.

- JRVs should close at 6:00 p.m. The JRV president, in view of the party *fiscales*, completes and signs the Official Record of Closing the JRV (*Acta de Clausura*), with the time, number of ballots received, number of voters, number of ballots used and unused, and names and identification numbers of all the JRV members and *fiscales*.
- The ballot boxes should not be opened until the polling place is closed and the *Acta* of Closure completed.
- The JRV members complete the vote counting process in the following sequence: President and Vice-President, National Deputies, Deputies for the Central American Parliament, Departmental Level Deputies.
- Valid ballots, as well as null ballots, are counted and recorded for each party on the *Acta de Escrutinio* or Official Record of the Vote Tally. All members of the JRV sign the *Acta*, and present it to party pollwatchers for review and approval.
- Materials are repackaged in three packages:
 - 1) *Expediente Electoral*, the electoral file, comprised of the *Actas* of Opening, Closing and Vote Count, and the voter registry of the JRV.
 - 2) *Paquete Electoral*, the electoral package, comprised of the credentials of JRV members and pollwatchers, valid ballots for each party in each election, null ballots, and unused ballots.
 - 3) *Materiales auxiliares*, or additional voting materials.
- JRV members post a copy of the official Vote Tally form and the final tabulations on the exterior of the JRV. Materials will then be transported to the municipal computing center (*Centro de Computo Municipal, CCM*) for transmission of the results to the National Computing Center in Managua.
- The final vote tallying process takes two forms. The preliminary results are tabulated after the Vote Tally form is faxed to the National Computing Center in Managua to be announced by the CSE.
- The official results are tabulated at the departmental level based on the marked ballots, which are delivered in sealed bags for the departmental electoral offices (CEDs), along with the Vote Tally forms (*Actas*). The CEDs produce vote tally certificates of the departmental level results and send the departmental certificates to the CSE in Managua to total the national level results. The official results are announced on November 30.

Transmitting and Tabulating Election Day Results

(Prepared by The Carter Center)

Step 1: Once the vote has been counted in the *Junta Receptora del Voto* (JRV), the members of the JRV fill out an official tally sheet (*acta de escrutinio*). Copies are provided to the pollwatchers (*fiscales*). The JRV members must sign the tally sheets.

Step 2: A vehicle will pass by the JRV to collect the tally sheets. It will have an armed escort of soldiers and may be a military vehicle. The pollwatchers and members of the JRV are allowed to accompany the tally sheets en route to the Municipal Electoral Council (CEM), from where the *actas* will be faxed. In Managua, the *actas* will be faxed directly from the 393 *Centros de Votacion*, each of which groups together various JRVs.

Step 3: Outside Managua, the CEM separates out the tally sheets (*actas*) from JRVs where challenges were made of the tally. They will be sent to the *Consejo Electoral Departamental* (Departmental Electoral Council – CED) for a decision. In Managua, the *Centros de Votación* will do this separation and send the challenged *actas* to the Managua CED.

Step 4: The CEM, or in Managua the *Centro de Votación*, reviews all unchallenged tally sheets to detect mathematical errors. If there are none, the tally sheet is faxed to the National Counting Center at the Olof Palme Convention Center in Managua. If there are arithmetical errors, the CEM or the *Centro de Votación* corrects the math and then faxes the sheet to the CNC. If the math is irreconcilable, the tally sheet is sent to the CED for decision.

Step 5: For all *municipios* except Managua, the fax is received at the National Counting Center by HICOM, an “intelligent” phone plant that first verifies that the telephone number sending the fax is an authorized number. The faxes sent from the 393 *Centros de Votacion* in Managua are received by a separate apparatus called Rightfax, also located in the National Computing Center. HICOM and Rightfax then channel the faxes to a server bank from which they are distributed into 10 computers on which the tally sheets can be viewed. They are also channeled to one of two giant printers to be printed. Two copies will be generated.

Step 6: The printed fax of each tally sheet is also photocopied for the political party *fiscales*, or pollwatchers, who stamp a copy of the tally sheet to verify they have seen it. The CNC will supposedly provide the parties with 60 phone lines in the CNC from which to communicate with their parties in order to check the results against the copies of the *actas* that are in the hands of their local pollwatchers.

Step 7: The copies of the tally sheet that has been seen by the party pollwatchers is physically taken to two rooms for computer tabulation (one right near the printers, and the other across the hall), and it is entered for tabulation. The computer adds it to the national total. There is no computer connection between this tabulation computer and the

HICOM or Rightfax. The CSE is using a double entry system to ensure accuracy and validity in data entry, and to avoid any claims of fraud.

Step 8: Any JRV tally sheet that is not entered consistently in each of the two data entry systems is shunted by the computer to a holding place and is examined by a problem solving team. It is corrected and entered properly, so the problem is resolved and the computer then adds these numbers into its tabulation.

Step 9: From time to time, the CSE asks for a printout of the running totals. They read this as a press statement, department by department, and give national totals on the presidency and other national positions. They then post those results on the website so the press (allowed access to the lobby) can read them and use the data. Large screens will also be displayed in the entry hall of Olof Palme for the media, dignitaries and invited guests to see.

The public is not admitted to the site, but may have access to the web data over the internet <http://www.cse.gob.ni>. Totals are supposed to be posted on a JRV by JRV basis so that anyone can compare the results posted on the JRV door with the results recorded on election night.

GUIDELINES and CHECKLIST
for INTERNATIONAL ELECTION OBSERVERS

GUIDELINES:

- The overall objective of the electoral observation process is to help guarantee the integrity, credibility, and legitimacy of elections. Observers enhance public confidence and encourage participation in the political process.
- Observers are accredited individuals who *observe* electoral activities, evaluate the process and contribute to an independent reporting. However, observers should not interfere with the polling, even if serious problems are noted.
- Observers should give due respect to specific electoral laws and procedures adopted by the host country and should be objective and impartial in all his/her communications.
- Observers may monitor the JRVs (*juntas receptoras de votos*, or polling places) for the voting and tabulation process and the CEMs (municipal electoral councils). With proper credentials, they may also observe the transmission process at the CCMs, or municipal computing center, and the national tabulation process at the CNC (*Centro Nacional de Cómputo*) at Olof Palme.

CHECKLIST:

The Day before Elections: Preparations/Atmospherics

- Are electoral authorities prepared? Were all materials distributed, training completed, fax machines tested?
- How is the atmosphere? Are there concerns among NGOs, party activists, and the population in general about Election Day violence or potential fraud?

Election Day: Voting

- Did the JRVs open on time, and in accordance with regulations? Do they have all the materials they need? All there electoral workers present, and are they the original nominees or substitutes? Do they seem to know what they are doing?
- Are electoral police visible and following instructions of the President of the JRV? Are there other police or security forces present?
- Are citizens voting in an orderly fashion? Are there long lines? Are the voter lists posted in front of the voting center, or outside each JRV? Are voters confused about where to go? Are they being sent to other JRVs to vote?
- Do voters seem to know HOW to vote, using four ballots?
- Have there been any problems with “*cédulas*” (election ID cards) or “*documentos supletorios*” (substitute documents for those without a *cédula*)?

- Are *cédulas* being punched to indicate people voted? Are their right thumbs being dipped in ink according to established procedures? What other precautions are being taken to prevent fraud?
- Do all three parties have "*fiscales*" present? Have there been any complaints by the party *fiscales* about election procedures? Does there seem to be any campaign propaganda present near or in the voting center?
- Are domestic observers present? Have local observers noted any anomalies in the voting process?
- Have you observed any intimidation of voters? Are the processes and polling sites calm and orderly, or have there been arguments or incidents of violence?
- Is everyone who is in line by 6:00 P.M. allowed to vote?
- Is closing of the Polls orderly?
- Was there good voter turnout, or widespread abstention? (The JRV officials should be able to provide information about registered voters and how many turned out to vote.)

Election Day: Vote Counting

- Is the process of counting votes done in an orderly, transparent manner? Is there agreement among JRV members and *fiscales*, or are there many challenges? What types of legal challenges (*impugnaciones*), if any, are being made by the *fiscales*? Do there seem to be a large number of null or blank ballots?
- Is there noise or violence outside, which may be disrupting the vote tallying process?
- Do all JRV members and party *fiscales* sign the final *Acta de Escrutinio* (tally sheet)? Is it posted outside on the JRV wall? Does everyone receive a copy?

Election Day: Vote Transmission

- Is the transportation of the JRV officials and voting materials to the *Consejo Electoral Municipal* (CEM) smooth and without incident? Do all *fiscales* go along?
- Does the transmission process go smoothly? Are faxes working? Are there delays?
- Are any results challenged because they have arrived late?
- Once the fax is sent, what happens to the original "*Acta*" and the ballots? Are the CEM members and employees following proper procedures to safeguard election materials? Are all party *fiscales* present in the CEM?
- How is the atmosphere, both within the CEM and on the street? Are there any public disturbances?

Day after Elections: Following Up

- Visit the CEM once again. Is the transmission of results complete? Are final results in? Were there any problems?
- How is the atmosphere in the municipality/Department? Any violence or public disturbance?

UNDERSTANDING AND OBSERVING CHALLENGES

(Prepared by The Carter Center, October 2001)

Basis of the Challenge

The electoral law mentions 4 reasons that a party pollwatcher or "*fiscal*" may challenge the vote at a JRV (*junta receptora de votos*, or polling place). These are "*causales de nulidad*," or reasons for nullifying the entire vote of the JRV.

They are:

1. The location of the JRV has been changed
2. The JRV was illegally constituted
3. The JRV tally sheets arrive at the Municipal Counting Center (CMC) late
4. The materials or documents were altered

In addition, a regulation of the law was recently issued that indicates three additional "*causales de impugnación*" that are legally recognized as reasons for requesting rejection of individual votes or the cote count.

They are:

1. Illegal introduction of ballots
2. Removal of material
3. Filing of a claim to challenge a vote during the counting process, as in where someone disagrees with the classification of the vote as null, blank, or in favor of a particular party.

Only challenges filed for one of these reasons can receive consideration by the CED (Departmental Electoral Council). There are many gaps and contradictions in the law. Similarly, it is not clear which documents or materials must not be altered, and what counts as alteration.

Complaints that don't affect the results

Nicaraguan law prohibits certain activities. These include:

1. Entering the JRV with weapons
2. Introducing propaganda into the JRV
3. Arriving drunk at the JRV
4. Holding parties or other events near the JRV
5. Holding gatherings of groups around the JRV

These are but a few examples. Where these activities occur there is a violation of the electoral law, but not one that constitutes grounds for annulling any votes.

Processing complaints

The challenges must be written onto the tally sheets ("*actas*") when the JRV closes. The tally sheets are then carried to the CEM, and transmitted to Managua's National Counting Center (CNC) in the Olof Palme Convention Center. They also call the CNC, we are told, to draw their attention to the fact that the tally sheet is challenged. The CEM then separates out the challenged sheets for consideration, and sends them to the CED's "*area de recursos*." The CED will decide which ones are valid within 48 hours of receiving the challenge. The CED rules that the challenge is valid or not. For those which are valid, the

CED will either adjust the vote totals accordingly or conclude the incident did not change the outcome and no adjustment is needed. The CED then moves the resolved tally sheets to the “*area de procesamiento de datos*,” adds the corrected totals into the departmental summary and faxes it to Managua’s CNC. Theoretically a JRV cannot be annulled unless the problem that resulted in the challenge affected 50% or more of the votes. Those wishing to appeal the decision of the CED make their appeal to the Supreme Electoral Council, which acts as a court of “*segunda instancia*.”

Arithmetic Problems

Because Nicaragua has low levels of math literacy, and because the JRV members are often tired by the end of the day, mistakes are made in recording the accounting of the ballots (used plus unused should equal number issued, valid plus null should equal number used etc.). When the totals reported show arithmetical mistakes, the CEM’s “*area de revisión aritmética*” can recommend to the CED a correction of the math. These are typically sent to the CED in batches and rapidly approved.

What to Observe in the CEM (Municipal Electoral Council)

The CEM has six areas: transmission, reception, archives, arithmetic review, data processing, and legal complaints (*recursos*). Visit the CEM and get to know these areas within the building before election night. On election night, come back and watch the CEM work. You will see them receive *actas*, copy and store them in the archive, fax them to Managua in the transmission center, review the math and sometimes recommend changes, keep records of the totals at all the JRVs to eventually add them up, and classify the various recorded problems as simple complaints about electoral violations or challenges that must be resolved by the CED.

Many things that at first appear to be problems are not. Changes in math do not mean someone is stealing the election. It could be a simple correction that is very much needed. Without disturbing them too much, it is okay to ask the workers what they are doing and let them explain the process to you.

Clues to a problem might include the sudden cessation of sending of faxes, or the cut-off of electricity. Try to learn the cause of these things. Also, watch for people arguing with one another, and approach close enough to hear the discussion. Ask them to explain their differences, but don’t take sides. High volumes of challenged tally sheets is also an indicator.

In a CEM where something is wrong, others will frequently bring it to your attention, including party pollwatchers or domestic observers. Ask them to carefully explain the problem. Don’t try to solve it, just take note of it. Ask them what they plan to do about it.

Observing in the CED (Departmental Electoral Council)

You should have previously visited the CED and confirmed that they will allow you in to watch the decision-making concerning challenged votes. On election night, at the CEM try to determine when the first challenged tally sheets are sent to the CED, or the first set of tally sheets that had arithmetic problems. Go to the CED then and see if they are working to resolve problems. They may not begin until Monday morning at 8:00am. Using the contacts you have made, try to gain access to watch the CED make its decisions about the challenges. Ultimately they will have the final word, and if they will not let you observe their process, try to stay on good terms with them because you can learn from them how many challenged tally sheets came in, the nature of the complaint was, and their decision.



Resumen por Departamento

Centros de Votación y Juntas Rec

Departamento	Centros de Votación	Juntas Receptoras
BOACO	190	303
CARAZO	145	312
CHINANDEGA	349	750
CHONTALES	196	325
ESTELÍ	213	402
GRANADA	150	338
JINOTEGA	282	570
LEÓN	372	748
MADRIZ	135	243
MANAGUA	632	2.238
MASAYA	154	489
MATAGALPA	444	836
NUEVA SEGOVIA	197	362
R.A.A.N.	297	488
R.A.A.S.	353	599
RÍO SAN JUAN	79	166
RIVAS	165	333
Total de JRV	4.353	9.502



Resumen por Municipio

Centros de Votación y Juntas Receptoras

Departamento	Municipio	Centros de Votación	Juntas Receptoras	
BOACO	BOACO	58	98	
	CAMOAPA	38	68	
	SAN JOSÉ DE LOS REMATES	13	17	
	SAN LORENZO	33	49	
	SANTA LUCÍA	12	22	
	TEUSTEPE	36	49	
	Total por Departamento:	190	303	
	CARAZO	DIRIAMBÁ	47	104
DOLORES		2	11	
EL ROSARIO		6	10	
JINOTEPE		33	79	
LA CONQUISTA		6	10	
LA PAZ DE CARAZO		7	11	
SAN MARCOS		19	49	
SANTA TERESA		25	38	
Total por Departamento:		145	312	
CHINANDEGA		CHICHIGALPA	35	98
	CHINANDEGA	62	228	
	CINCO PINOS	9	14	
	CORINTO	32	42	
	EL REALEJO	10	18	
	EL VIEJO	77	154	
	POSOLTEGA	19	31	
	PUERTO MORAZÁN	19	25	
	SAN FRANCISCO DEL NORTE	10	12	
	SAN PEDRO DEL NORTE	7	9	
	SANTO TOMÁS DEL NORTE	9	14	
	SOMOTILLO	32	60	
	VILLANUEVA	28	45	
	Total por Departamento:	349	750	
	CHONTALES	ACOYAPA	23	40
		COMALAPA	19	24
EL CORAL		7	13	
JUIGALPA		62	109	
LA LIBERTAD		15	22	
SAN FRANCISCO DE CUAPA		7	11	
SAN PEDRO DE LÓVAGO		12	17	
SANTO DOMINGO		18	27	
SANTO TOMÁS		16	36	
VILLA SANDINO		17	26	
Total por Departamento:		196	325	



Resumen por Municipio

Centros de Votación y Juntas Receptoras

Departamento	Municipio	Centros de Votación	Juntas Receptoras
ESTELÍ	CONDEGA	36	60
	ESTELÍ	90	216
	LA TRINIDAD	27	41
	PUEBLO NUEVO	31	45
	SAN JUAN DE LIMAY	17	27
	SAN NICOLAS	12	13
	Total por Departamento:	213	402
GRANADA	DIRIA	10	17
	DIRIOMO	21	45
	GRANADA	82	204
	NANDAIME	37	72
	Total por Departamento:	150	338
JINOTEGA	EL CUA DE BOCA Y	63	140
	JINOTEGA	81	182
	LA CONCORDIA	10	15
	SAN RAFAEL DEL NORTE	20	33
	SAN SEBASTIAN DE YALÍ	28	48
	STA. MARÍA DE PANTASMA	33	59
	WIWILÍ DE JINOTEGA	47	93
	Total por Departamento:	282	570
LEÓN	ACHUAPA	22	26
	EL JICARAL	16	25
	EL SAUCE	42	63
	LA PAZ CENTRO	29	57
	LARREYNAGA	35	64
	LEÓN	136	358
	NAGAROTE	35	66
	QUEZALGUAQUE	12	18
	SANTA ROSA DEL PEÑÓN	15	18
	TELICA	30	53
Total por Departamento:	372	748	
MADRIZ	LAS SABANAS	5	9
	PALACAGUINA	12	27
	SAN JOSÉ DE CUSMAPA	9	11
	SAN JUAN DEL RÍO COCO	22	40
	SAN LUCAS	17	22
	SOMOTO	31	64
	TELPANECA	17	32
	TOTOGALPA	11	18
	YALAGÜINA	11	20
Total por Departamento:	135	243	



Resumen por Municipio

Centros de Votación y Juntas Receptoras

Departamento	Municipio	Centros de Votación	Juntas Receptoras
MANAGUA	CIUDAD SANDINO	39	125
	DISTRITO II	55	223
	DISTRITO III	99	342
	DISTRITO IV	60	303
	DISTRITO V	75	344
	DISTRITO VI	104	459
	EL CRUCERO	15	30
	MATEARE	19	39
	SAN FRANCISCO LIBRE	15	18
	SAN RAFAEL DEL SUR	44	84
	TICUANTEPE	20	46
	TIPITAPA	54	169
	VILLA CARLOS FONSECA	33	56
	Total por Departamento:	632	2.238
	MASAYA	CATARINA	7
LA CONCEPCIÓN		18	54
MASATEPE		15	54
MASAYA		61	234
NANDASMO		6	17
NINDIRÍ		21	61
NIQUINOHOMO		12	27
SAN JUAN DE ORIENTE		2	7
TISMA		12	22
Total por Departamento:		154	489
MATAGALPA	CIUDAD DARÍO	48	76
	ESQUIPULAS	21	35
	MATAGALPA	72	230
	MATIGUAS	58	84
	MUY MUY	17	30
	RANCHO GRANDE	26	37
	RÍO BLANCO	39	54
	SAN DIONISIO	19	31
	SAN ISIDRO	19	36
	SAN RAMÓN	24	50
	SÉBACO	25	54
	TERRABONA	18	28
	TUMA - LA DALIA	58	91
	Total por Departamento:	444	836



Resumen por Municipio

Centros de Votación y Juntas Receptoras

Departamento	Municipio	Centros de Votación	Juntas Receptoras
NUEVA SEGOVIA	CIUDAD ANTIGUA	5	8
	DIPILTO	6	10
	EL JÍCARO	29	46
	JALAPA	37	88
	MACUELIZO	10	11
	MOZONTE	7	11
	MURRA	20	28
	OCOTAL	25	62
	QUILALÍ	28	46
	SAN FERNANDO	9	15
	SANTA MARÍA	5	9
	WIWILÍ DE NUEVA SEGOVIA	16	28
	Total por Departamento:	197	362
	K.A.A.N.	BONANZA	19
PRINZAPOLKA		16	18
PUERTO CABEZAS		52	92
ROSITA		26	39
SIUNA		87	145
WASLALA		45	89
WASPÁN		52	74
Total por Departamento:		297	488
R.A.A.S.	BLUEFIELDS	39	94
	CORN ISLAND	6	12
	DESEMB. DE RÍO GRANDE	6	8
	EL AYOTE	15	24
	EL RAMA	61	88
	KUKRA HILL	12	19
	LA CRUZ DE RIO GRANDE	24	35
	LAGUNA DE PERLAS	14	18
	MUELLE DE LOS BUEYES	31	46
	NUEVA GUINEA	76	153
	PAIWAS	42	65
	TORTUGUERO	27	37
	Total por Departamento:	353	599
	RÍO SAN JUAN	EL ALMENDRO	18
EL CASTILLO		12	28
MORRITO		7	15
SAN CARLOS		27	70
SAN JUAN DEL NORTE		1	2
SAN MIGUELITO		14	26
Total por Departamento:		79	166

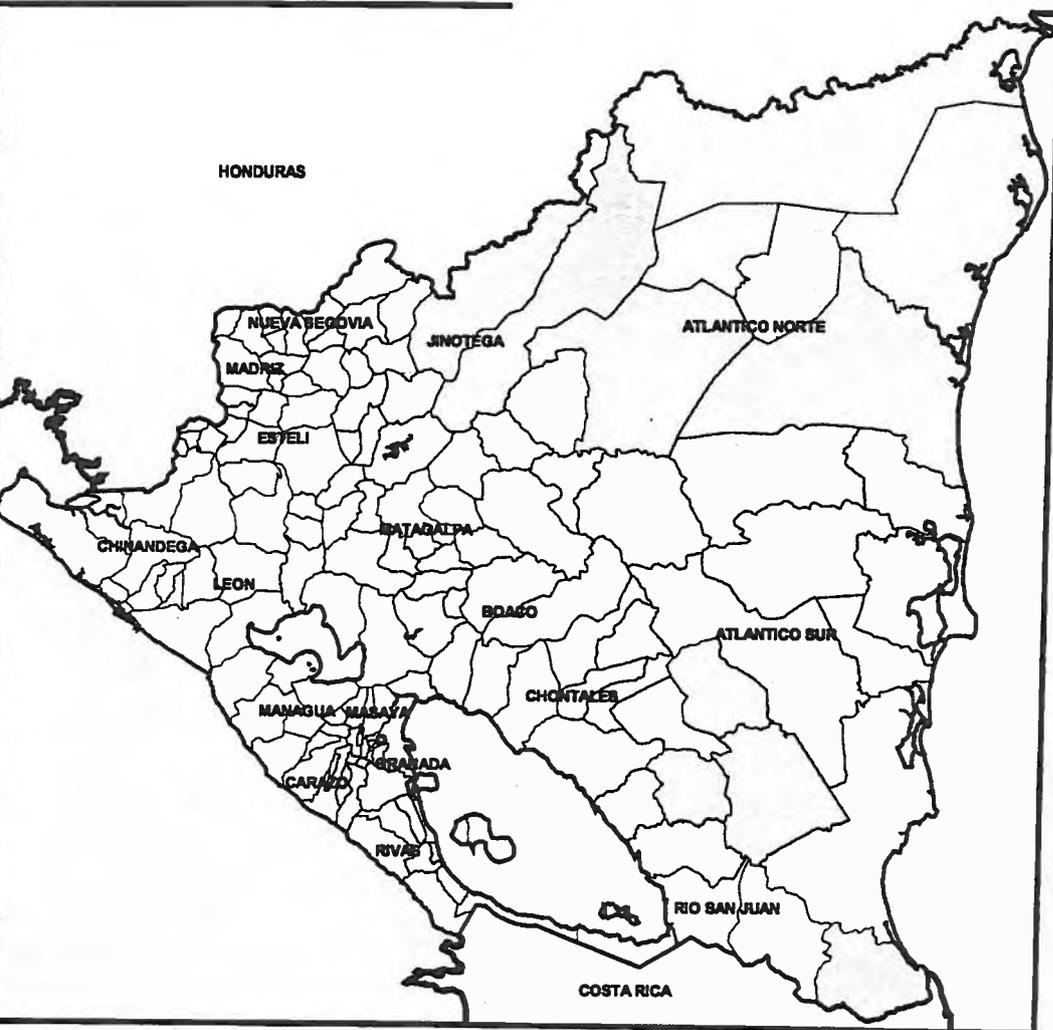


Resumen por Municipio

Centros de Votación y Juntas Receptoras

Departamento	Municipio	Centros de Votación	Juntas Receptoras
RIVAS	ALTAGRACIA	22	42
	BELÉN	20	34
	BUENOS AIRES	6	12
	CÁRDENAS	7	14
	MOYOGALPA	10	21
	POTOSÍ	10	25
	RIVAS	37	88
	SAN JORGE	5	18
	SAN JUAN DEL SUR	24	33
	TOLA	24	46
Total por Departamento:		165	333
Total Nacional:		4.353	9.502

MAP OF NICARAGUAN MUNICIPIOS BY POLITICAL PARTY
OF SITTING MAYOR



Light shading = FSLN mayor (52)
Dark shading = PLC mayor (94)



U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
FACT SHEET

USG ELECTION SUPPORT PROGRAM

The U.S. Government (USG) has provided support for several Nicaraguan elections beginning with the 1990 national elections. This support for free and fair elections is the most important U.S. national policy objective in Nicaragua and has four fundamental goals:

- 1) Every eligible Nicaraguan citizen can exercise the right to vote and possess proper identification documents to do so;
- 2) Every Nicaraguan citizen can participate in the election process and vote on election day;
- 3) The elections are monitored by independent international and domestic observers; and
- 4) The elections are administered well with a rapid and a credible conclusion.

To that end, the USG is providing a total of \$6.15 million in funding for the November 4 elections:

1. Voter Registration	\$1,306,000
2. Voter Participation	\$520,000
3. Election Observation	\$2,814,000
4. Election Administration Assistance	\$1,353,000
Total	\$6,150,000

Voter Registration: USAID has provided funding and technical assistance to the Supreme Electoral Council (Spanish acronym CSE) for providing voting documents to the more than 300,000 citizens who registered to vote but did not receive national identity cards (*cédulas*), which also serve as voter registration documents. Voters who have applied for *cédulas*, but have not received their cards, may vote with a temporary voting card (*documento supletorio*). Efforts include:

- Assisting the CSE in registering 60,000 voters through an intensive campaign carried out from July 21 through August 6 in target municipalities;
- Assisting the CSE and local NGOs in identifying and locating potential voters, many in remote communities, helping them submit applications for *cédulas*, and delivering both *cédulas* and *documentos supletorios*;
- Providing funding for an intense CSE door-to-door “Plan Mochilero” (or “backpack”) distribution campaign for voting documents in selected municipalities. According to the CSE, the total number of voting documents processed was 302,052. However, it was estimated that 117,000 could not be delivered, due to an inability to locate citizens – believed to be deceased or living out of the

country. The campaign, which ends on November 3, is proceeding successfully with over 73 percent of the documents distributed by Oct. 29.

Voter Participation: Through grants to local non-governmental organizations (NGOs), USAID is supporting non-partisan voter education programs, community participation, and advocacy activities that will cover the entire country. These activities are designed to increase citizens' awareness about the voter registration process and how to vote on Election Day, and are intended to help promote voter turnout on Election Day. Twelve local NGO partners are involved in the effort in a Civic Consortium. Activities include:

- Wide broadcasts of radio dialogues and celebrity endorsements encouraging voting.
- Roving loudspeaker broadcasts encouraging voting in remote areas.
- 142 "Get Out the Vote" spots on national television in the final phase up to Election Day.
- Electoral education workshops and a vote promotion civic campaign carried out by the NGO *Hagamos Democracia*. Over 9,000 students participated in the workshops, 14,362 radio spots were broadcast and 3,500 electoral manuals were printed and disseminated.

Election Observation: USAID is supporting independent international and domestic observation activities to monitor electoral and Election Day procedures and record any anomalies in the process. The presence of observers lends to a more transparent election process. USG funding supports:

- Approximately 6,079 domestic observers, out of a total of about 9,079 (66%). USAID has provided a grant to 12 Nicaraguan NGOs to train domestic observers, who will observe 58 percent of polling places nationwide in all 151 municipalities.
- The non-partisan citizen watchdog group *Ética y Transparencia (E & T)* to train about 1,200 domestic observers. *E & T* will receive a total of \$823,000 from international donors to support a total of 4,500 observers and to carry out a parallel *quick count* of the Election Day returns.
- The USG funded international observers, over 150, include representatives from the Organization of American States (60), the Carter Center (42), the International Republican Institute (40), and the National Democratic Institute (10). In addition to USG support, the European Union plans to fund 100 observers (about 60 international ones).

Other support includes:

- The National Democratic Institute (NDI) is training train political party poll-watchers, including those who will be deployed at the computing centers where results will be transmitted to the CSE in Managua;
- The International Republican Institute (IRI) for international Election Day observers' mission and four pre-election delegations. IRI working with its partner *Hacemos Democracia*, has trained over 150 domestic observers who will be deployed nationwide;

- The Carter Center for two pre-election delegations and election day observers' delegation which will include President Carter, former president of Costa Rica, Oscar Arias, as well as citizens from the US, United Kingdom, France, Spain, Japan, New Zealand, Canada, Venezuela, Colombia, Brazil, Costa Rica and El Salvador.
- The Organization of American States (OAS) to monitor the application and administration of electoral law, and track progress on production and distribution of election materials during Election Day and pre-election processes.
- The OAS-affiliated Peace Commissions to perform electoral observation in a remote part of north-central Nicaragua, and to facilitate the delivery of voting documents to this region.
- E &T's quick count, which will sample 10 percent of the polling places in the country with the goal of obtaining a count within three hours after the official closing of the polls. Although by Nicaraguan law the results cannot be released prior to the preliminary results of the CSE, an independent quick count helps minimize potential fraud and institutional crisis in a close election.

Election Administration: USAID efforts are designed to help the CSE develop its capacity to administer the November 4 elections, including elections planning, training of staff and poll workers, and logistics. Technical assistance has been provided by CAPEL, the elections unit of the Inter-American Institute of Human Rights. The USG has also purchased various equipment needed for successful transmission of results on Election Day. Support includes:

- Technical assistance, training, and maintenance contracts for the CSE.
- Communication equipment, computer hardware and software, and back-up server capacity to protect all relevant data, including the voter list (*padrón electoral*) and other essential data.
- Assistance in the purchase of equipment for successful data transmission from the municipalities to the National Center of Computation (Spanish acronym CNC), including 428 fax machines, 38 PCs, and numerous other transmission-related equipment.
- Additional advisors, such as observers with the Carter Center, who will focus on departmental and national election administration, data transmission, and post-elections dispute resolution.

Attachment B - USG Assistance in Past Nicaraguan Elections

U.S. Government assistance in the most recent past Nicaraguan elections has included the following:

2000 Municipal Elections

Domestic Observation	\$537,000
International Observation	
Carter Center	99,000
OAS (AID/W-funded)	<u>95,000</u>
Total	\$731,000

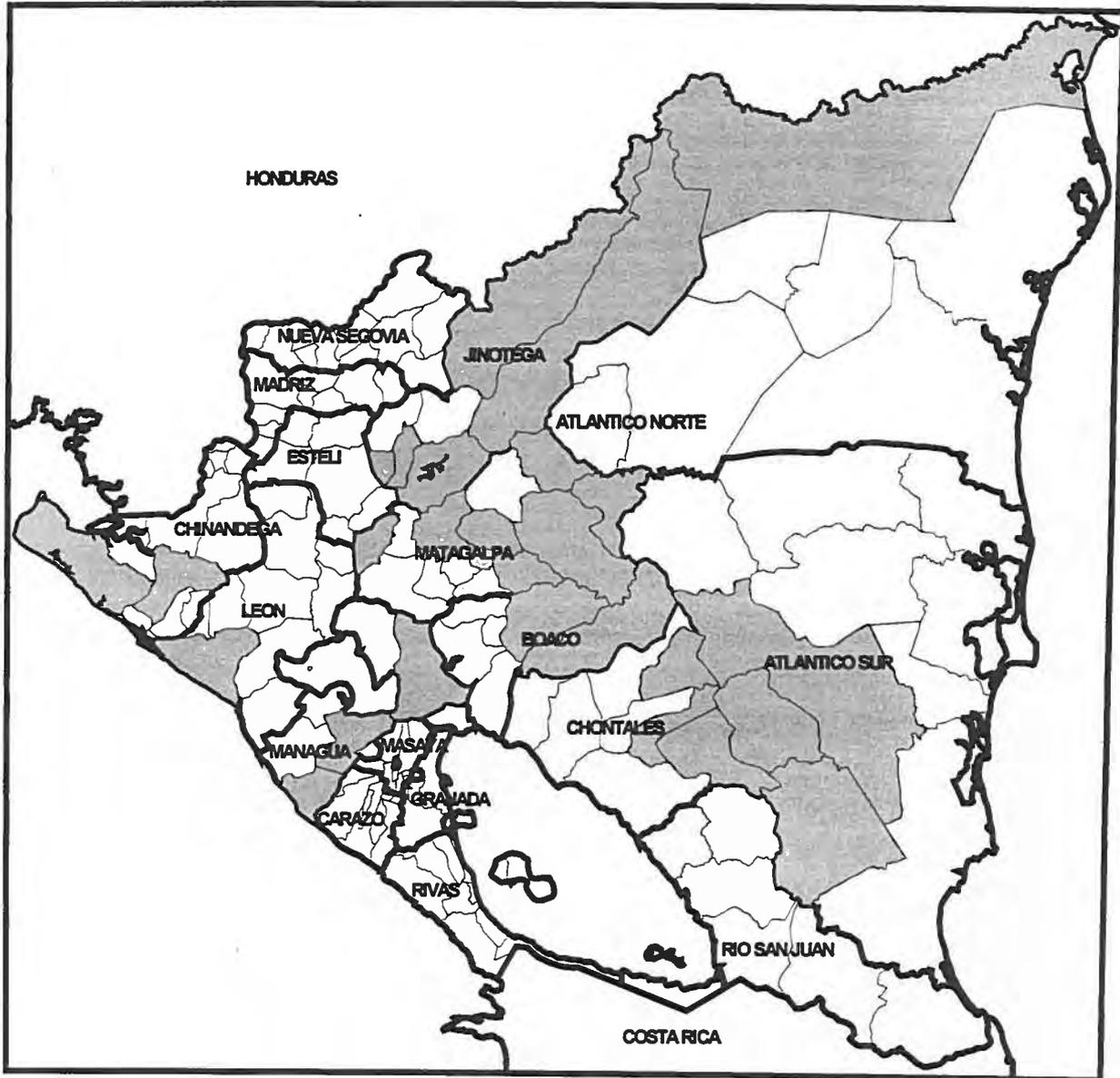
1998 Atlantic Coast Elections

Domestic Observation	\$182,000
Technical Assistance to CSE	217,000
Direct Grant to CSE for voter/ Registration/cedulization	300,000
Technical Support Contracts	<u>163,000</u>
Total	\$862,000

1996 National Elections

Domestic Observation	\$53,500
Voter/Civic Education, Mobilization, etc.(Nicaraguan NGOs)	1,169,027
International Observation (and training of domestic observers)	
NDI	285,412
IRI	374,555
IFES	298,916
Center for Democracy	372,580
The Carter Center	327,340
OAS (Washington-funded)	1,200,000
Technical Assistance to CSE	3,500,000
Technical Support Contracts	<u>286,191</u>
Total	\$7,867,521

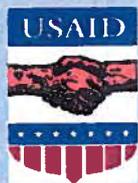
TARGET MUNICIPALITIES FOR VOTER REGISTRATION EFFORTS (USG FUNDED)



Municipalities were targeted based on analysis by the CSE (Supreme Electoral Council) of those areas where more than 1,000 eligible (estimated) had not yet applied for their *cédula*, needed to vote in the November election. This list included those “ad hoc” municipalities from 1996 where the *cédula* application process was not complete.

TARGET MUNICIPALITIES FOR CEDULIZATION PLAN

<u>DEPARTMENT</u>	<u>MUNICIPALITIES</u>
CHINANDEGA	CHINANDEGA EL VIEJO
LEON	LEON
MANAGUA	MANAGUA DISTRITO II DISTRITO III DISTRITO IV DISTRITO V DISTRITO VI TIPITAPA SAN RAFAEL DEL SUR
BOACO	BOACO CAMOAPA
CHONTALES	MUELLE DE LOS BUEYES NUEVA GUINEA EL RAMA EL ALMENDRO VILLA SANDINO SANTO DOMINGO SANTO TOMAS
MATAGALPA	MATAGALPA EL TUMA-LA DALIA SAN ISIDRO RIO BLANCO MATIGUAS RANCHO GRANDE MUY MUY WASLALA SAN RAMON
JINOTEGA	JINOTEGA PANTASMA EL CUA BOCAY LA CONCORDIA SAN RAFAEL DEL NORTE YALI WIWILI
RAAS	PAIWAS
RAAN	WASPAN



PROGRAM NEWS

United States Agency for International Development

Volume 1, Issue 2

October 2001

USAID/Nicaragua
Development Program
1998-2003
(U.S. Millions of Dollars)

<i>Rule of Law and Good Governance</i>	43.6
<i>Small Producers</i>	47.0
<i>Natural Resources</i>	14.0
<i>Healthy Families</i>	35.0
<i>Primary Education</i>	17.5
TOTAL	US\$ 157.1
<i>Food Aid</i>	13.1



USAID Helping to “Get Out the Vote” in Nicaragua’s Upcoming Elections

Chinandega, Nicaragua—Eva Maria Espinal and Norma Elena Talavera began walking house to house delivering voter identity cards in the Calvario neighborhood of this city at about 7:30 a.m. They carried a navy blue backpack filled with voter registration cards, address lists, signature papers, and—lunch.

“Lunch time is a good time to find people at home,” says Espinal. “So we don’t stop for lunch. We eat as we keep walking.”

Espinal and Talavera are one of 15 teams hired by the Chinandega municipal electoral council to deliver identity cards to the 9,699 remaining eligible voters of this municipality who for one reason or another had not received the cards earlier.



Teenager Yuriel Alexander Paz receiving an identity card that will allow him to vote for the first time.



USAID finances “backpack teams”, like Eva Maria Espinal and Norma Elena Talavera, to deliver the remaining 244,000 identity cards to eligible voters before the November 4th national elections

Racing against time, in an effort to deliver an identity card to eligible voters before Nicaragua’s November 4th national elections, the Supreme Electoral Council launched a nationwide distribution campaign on October 6, 2001, called the “Backpack Plan” (team members carry documents in navy blue backpacks).

The “Backpack Plan” is supported by USAID using part of a \$6 million allocation by the U.S. government to support Nicaragua’s national elections. The purpose of USAID’s activities is to strengthen democracy in Nicaragua by

(Continued on page 2)

USAID Helping to "Get Out the Vote"...

(Continued from page 1)

supporting broad citizen participation in the electoral process and help insure fair and transparent elections. USAID is financing equipment for election support including computers and software for accurate data processing and voting results. International and national election observers, including the Carter Center, the International Republican Institute, the Organization of American States (OAS) and a number of Nicaraguan organizations, receive funding from the USAID election program. In addition, under a \$480,000 grant, the National Democratic Institute (NDI) is training poll watchers from the three contending political parties.

One of the most important activities financed by USAID is the effort to "get out the vote". Through radio and television spots, roving vehicle-mounted loud speakers, election T-shirts and the distribution of message-inscribed rulers, Nicaragua's 2,997,228 eligible voters are being encouraged to go to the polls on November 4th.

Through the "Backpack Plan" an extraordinary effort is being made to deliver the remaining 133,000 identity cards and 111,000 temporary voting cards so that all Nicaraguans who want to vote will possess the necessary documents on election day. Traveling on bicycles, motorcycles, public buses, on horseback and on foot, the backpack teams go door to door in both urban areas and in



After the first round of door to door voting card deliveries in a rural community, a backpack team gives out the documents at a centrally located residence.

remote rural communities. Working up to 12 hours a day, the backpackers will make three visits, if necessary, to the same house in order to personally deliver voting documents.

By noon, Espinal and Talavera were already on their second delivery attempt in the Calvario neighborhood. This time, having lunch after school, they found Claudia Mendoza at home. After getting her signature, the backpack team gave the 18-year-old student the new identity card that will allow Mendoza to vote for the first time.

When Yuriel Alexander Paz came home and found out from his mother that the "backpackers" had come by to deliver his voting card, the 16-year-old teenager didn't wait for them to come back. Taking his bicycle, he went out to look for them. After finding the two women, easily identified by their white T-shirts emblazoned with the initials of the Supreme Electoral Council, the smiling teenager received his identity card. Now, Yuriel Alexander Paz is an official, voting-eligible, Nicaraguan citizen.



Election observers receiving training, financed by USAID, at the Leon municipal electoral council office.

U.S. Government Support to Nicaraguan National Elections

**Voter
Registration
\$1.3 million**

**Citizen
Participation,
Voter turnout
\$520,000**

**Election
Observation
\$2.6 million**

**Election
Administration
\$1.6 million**

**Total
\$6 million**



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ELECTIONS 2001/NICARAGUA
ELECTORAL OBSERVERS

USG Support for Electoral Observers

	ORGANIZATION	INTL. OBSERVERS	DOMESTIC OBSERVERS
1	CARTER CENTER	42*	
2	NDI	7**	
3	IRI / HAGAMOS DEMOCRACIA	45	150
4	OAS	60	220***
5	CEDEHCA (Center for Human Rights, Citizens and Autonomy)		733
6	Peace Commission – ESTELI		650
7	Peace Commission – CHONTALES/RIO SAN JUAN		310
8	Peace Commission – LEON/CHINANDEGA		750
9	CODIAL		880
10	IPADE (Institute for Development and Democracy)		748
11	ETICA Y TRANSPARENCIA (Ethics and Transparency)		1,200****
12	ANPDH (Nicaraguan Association for Human Rights)		100
13	DESAFIOS (Foundation for Youth Development)		100
14	COLECTIVO GAVIOTA		95
15	FUNDACION NICARAGUA NUESTRA (Our Nicaragua Foundation)		93
16	APC (Association of Promoters of Culture)		200
	TOTAL	154	6,299

* USAID is funding 42 of the Carter Center's 51 international observers.

** NDI proposes to bring 11 international observers from Washington and from the *Acuerdos de Lima* network. NDI Nicaragua will also mobilize domestic observers and international and local staff (approximately 22 persons) to observe on election day, who are not included in this table.

*** Proposed number of domestic observers.

**** Of Etica y Transparencia's 4,500 observers, 1,200 observers will be funded by USAID.

II. ¿QUE ES EL CONSORCIO CÍVICO ELECTORAL?

El Consorcio Cívico Electoral, CCE, es una agrupación que contribuye al fortalecimiento de la democracia en el país mediante la participación ciudadana y la observación electoral. Tiene el propósito de promover un clima de confianza, tolerancia y respeto al voto popular e incidir en la educación cívica.

Lo componen doce Organismos No Gubernamentales que se han unido para trabajar con un enfoque apartidista y profesional. Tienen presencia en todo el país y se encuentran vinculados de manera permanente con actores municipales, departamentales y regionales. Trabajan con múltiples comunidades mediante acciones de promotoría dirigidas al fortalecimiento de la participación.

Este esfuerzo colectivo y diverso de Observación Electoral Nacional ha permitido:

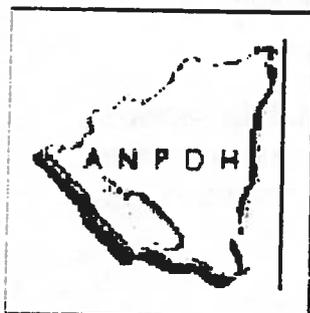
Organizar el proceso de observación nacional de las elecciones del 4 de noviembre y dar cobertura con una meta aproximada de 89% de observadores en el territorio nacional.

Compartir información que permita realizar análisis globales del proceso electoral y con estándares internacionales.
Realizar coordinaciones de capacitación y logística que redunden en una observación electoral eficaz y eficiente.
Promover mensajes de tolerancia dirigidos a mantener un clima electoral de paz y de respeto a la voluntad colectiva.

Para las elecciones nacionales del 4 de noviembre, el Consorcio ha reunido un número aproximado de 8,200 voluntarios que actuarán en todo el territorio nacional como observadores de las Juntas Receptoras de Votos, JRV. Cerca de 400 observadores cubrirán los Consejos Electorales Regionales, CER, los Consejos Electorales Departamentales, CED y los Consejos Electorales Municipales, CEM, en un verdadero esfuerzo por fortalecer la democracia nicaragüense.

III. ¿QUIENES CONFORMAN EL CONSORCIO CÍVICO ELECTORAL?

El trabajo diverso y plural que los organismos realizan de manera permanente en los distintos departamentos y regiones de Nicaragua con amplio reconocimiento de la población, es una fortaleza adicional que aporta una visión amplia a la observación electoral del Consorcio y agrega confiabilidad y calidad a los informes de los observadores participantes.



Asociación Nicaragüense Pro Derechos Humanos (ANPDH)

Realiza promoción y con mayor énfasis, actividades de defensa y protección a los Derechos Humanos en el país. Aportará voluntarios para observar las elecciones en cuatro departamentos del país: Managua, Carazo, Estelí y Matagalpa.

Asociación de Promotores de la Cultura (APC)

Su actividad se centra en la promoción del acto del sufragio en la que utilizan el arte como instrumento didáctico, recreativo y formativo. Realizan obras de teatro, y espectáculos de danza y música que invitan a los ciudadanos a ejercer su derecho al voto. Observará el acto del sufragio en 9 municipios del país.



Asociación por la Humanización de la vida (Colectivo Gaviota)

Promueve la cultura de Derechos Humanos y realiza actividades de defensa y protección de sectores vulnerables, mujeres y niños especialmente, en el municipio de Nueva Guinea y garantizará la observación electoral en este municipio.



Cáritas Diocesanas

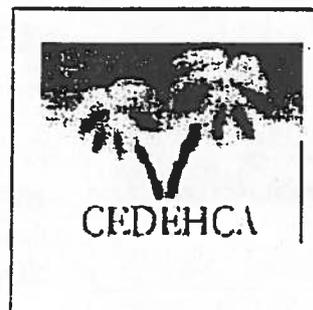
(Comisión Diocesana de Asesoría Legal)

Basado en la mística de la Iglesia Católica, realiza pastoral social en el marco de la defensa, protección, promoción y educación de los derechos humanos, civiles y políticos, sin discriminación alguna y en pro del bien común. Hace énfasis en los sectores más desprotegidos y vulnerables de nuestra sociedad.



Centro de Derechos Humanos, Ciudadanos y Autonómicos (CEDEHCA)

En la RAAN se enfoca en la defensa de las violaciones a los Derechos Humanos y Autonómicos. En la RAAS, centra su actividad en la observación electoral de los 7 municipios de esa Región. La capacitación a líderes comunitarios para incidir en políticas públicas, ha sido un eje fundamental del Proyecto de CEDEHCA.





Comisiones de Justicia y Paz de Estelí (CJP Estelí)

Promueve y defiende los derechos humanos de la población a través de educación, la participación ciudadana, la resolución pacífica de los conflictos, la verificación de la violación de los derechos humanos y la observación electoral.

Aportará observadores electorales en 25 municipios de Estelí, Nueva Segovia y Madriz.



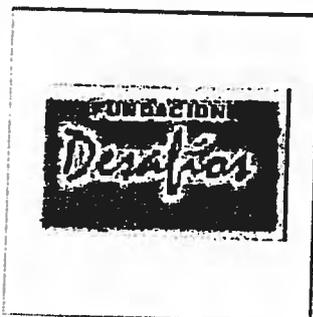
Comisiones de Justicia y Paz de León (CJP - León)

Promueve y defiende los derechos humanos de la población a través de educación, la participación ciudadana, la resolución pacífica de los conflictos, la verificación de la violación de los derechos humanos y la observación electoral en los departamentos de León y Chinandega. Sus observadores estarán cubriendo 22 municipios de estos dos departamentos.



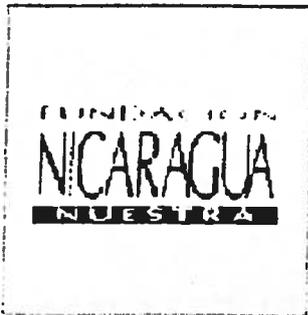
Comisiones de Justicia y Paz de Juigalpa (CJP - Chontales)

Promueve y defiende los derechos humanos de la población a través de educación, la participación ciudadana, la resolución pacífica de los conflictos, la verificación de la violación de los derechos humanos y la observación electoral de Chontales y Río San Juan. Tendrá observadores distribuidos en 12 municipios.



Fundación para el Desarrollo de la Juventud (DESAFÍOS)

Contribuye al proceso de democratización y construcción de una nueva cultura política en el país mediante la promoción de la participación conciente y el protagonismo de los jóvenes en las elecciones nacionales. Harán observación en 27 municipios de Estelí, Nueva Segovia y Somoto.



Fundación Nicaragua Nuestra (FNN)

Contribuye y apoya la participación y seguridad ciudadana a favor del desarrollo del Municipio de Ciudad Sandino y la reinserción integral de los pobladores a una vida digna. Realizará observación electoral en 13 municipios del Departamento de Managua.



Instituto Para el Desarrollo y la Democracia (IPADE)

Contribuye al desarrollo de la democracia en todo el país desde 1990, mediante el ejercicio de la ciudadanía y la participación ciudadana promoviendo una cultura democrática. Realiza observación electoral, educación ciudadana, capacitación sobre democracia a Autoridades Municipales, líderes de la sociedad civil y Juntas Directivas de los partidos políticos promoviendo la gestión transparente y el buen gobierno municipal.

Realiza observación electoral a gran escala en todos los departamentos del país.



Grupo Cívico de Ética y Transparencia

Participa en el proceso electoral involucrando a ciudadanos que sean garantes de la transparencia y la administración de las elecciones que hace el Consejo Supremo Electoral; realizará un Conteo Rápido de los resultados electorales. Tiene observadores electorales en todo el país.

V. ACCIONES DEL CONSORCIO CÍVICO ELECTORAL

Observación Electoral

La actividad principal del Consorcio se centra en la Observación Electoral, en todo el territorio nacional a través de las siguientes acciones:

- Selección de observadores electorales.
- Planificación de logística para la observación electoral.
- Acreditación de observadores.
- Capacitación de observadores.
- Observación previa al acto del sufragio.
- Observación el día de la votación.
- Observación de la transmisión y cómputo de los resultados.
- Análisis y divulgación de la observación electoral

Análisis de la Información Electoral

Con el auspicio de USAID, y la coordinación de CREA Internacional de Nicaragua, el CCE desarrolló un Sistema de Procesamiento de Resultados de Observación denominado Sistema CREA Elecciones Nicaragua 2001. Este facilitará el manejo de la información recopilada por los observadores electorales con miras a informar al público en general sobre los resultados de observación hechos por los miembros del Consorcio.

Esta herramienta permitirá: consolidar los resultados electorales del día de los comicios y realizar un análisis de conjunto del desarrollo del proceso electoral en el país a fin de tener una visión integral del mismo.

Divulgación

Interesados en tener una presencia visible y posicionar su actuación ante la opinión pública, el CCE divulga sus actividades en los medios masivos y locales de comunicación nacionales e internacionales e informa a las autoridades locales, los observadores nacionales e internacionales, los partidos políticos, las entidades nacionales e internacionales y a la opinión pública en general, sobre el proceso de observación desarrollado por el Consorcio.

Para este efecto, CREA Internacional de Nicaragua puso a su disposición un equipo de consultoras en comunicación y periodismo que llevó a cabo la labor de informar y difundir el proceso de observación electoral del Consorcio.

Campaña Cívica

Para exhortar un comportamiento pacífico frente a la decisión del electorado, el CCE hizo a la ciudadanía un llamado de tolerancia y respeto. Con ayuda de los medios de comunicación lanzó la Campaña Cívica que lleva por lema: "Por la Paz de Nicaragua, Ondeada una Bandera Azul y Blanco". Cada organismo ha desarrollado actividades de promoción en su localidad, con sus observadores como voceros principales. Se ha motivado a la población a izar la bandera en todas las formas y lugares visibles y a que utilice el color blanco y azul como alusión al mensaje de paz de la campaña. También se han distribuido banderas en lugares y ámbitos claves.

GLOSARIO ELECTORAL

ESPAÑOL

INGLES

<p>A Abiertas (elecciones) Abstención: Abstencionista: Acta de Escrutinio: Acta de Constitución y Apertura de JRV Acta de Cierre: Asamblea Constituyente: Asamblea Nacional:</p>	<p>Open (elections) abstention non-voter Vote count record, voter tally sheets JRV set-up and opening record Record of closing Constitutional Convention National Assembly</p>
<p>B Brazalete de identificación: Boleta electoral:</p>	<p>ID armband Ballot</p>
<p>C campaña electoral: Casa de campaña: Cédula: cedulación: Centro Nacional de Cómputo: Centro Departamental de Cómputo: Centro Municipal de Cómputo, que incluye: Transmisión Recepción –de paquete y expediente Archivo Revisión Aritmética –de acta de escrutinio Recursos Procesamiento de Datos –consolidado municipal Circunscripción electoral: Código de ética electoral: Colores de franjas (para las boletas electorales): Azul- Presidente y vicepresidente Morado- Diputados Nacionales Café- Parlamento Centroamericano Gris- Diputados Departamentales Comarca: Comicios Consejo Supremo Electoral (CSE) Consejo Electoral Departamental (CED) Consejo Electoral Regional (CER) Consejo Electoral Municipal (CEM) Conteo rápido: Credencial:</p>	<p>electoral campaign Campaign Headquarters voter registration card, identification card citizen identification registration National Vote Count Center Departmental Vote Count Center Municipal Vote Count Center, which includes several steps: Transmission Reception – of electoral package and file File Mathematical Review – of vote count cert. Remedies Data Processing – data of entire municipality Electoral district Electoral Ethics Code Colored Stripes (for ballots) Blue- President and Vice-Presidente Purple- National Deputies Brown – Central American Parliament Grey – Departmental Deputies Rural district Elections Supreme Electoral Council Departmental Electoral Council Regional Electoral Council (for the Atlantic Municipal Electoral Council Quick Count Credential</p>

<p>D Delito electoral Derrota electoral: Derecho al voto: día de las elecciones: diputados departamentales: Documento supletorio:</p>	<p>Electoral crime Electoral defeat Right to vote Election day Provincial/departmental deputies Substitute voter identification card, temporary voting card</p>
<p>E educación cívica: electorado: elecciones legislativas: empate: escaño: escrutinio: esquela de respaldo: Expediente electoral (al final de la votación) consta de: Actas de apertura y constitución: Acta de escrutinio: Acta de cierre: Padrón electoral: Anexos al padrón electoral: Actas de inscripción de votantes que no están en padrón de la junta pero viven en la circunscripción</p>	<p>Civic education Electorate Legislative elections Tie Seat Vote count Proof of cedula application Electoral file (at the end of the voting), is made up of: Opening and Set -up record Vote Count Record Closing of Voting Process Certificate Voter registry (for that JRV) Attachments to voter registry Voter registry certificate of voters that aren't registered in the voter registry for the JRV but live in that area</p>
<p>F Fiscales: Fiscales suplentes: Foco Formulario de impugnación Formulario para quejas y reclamos Fraude electoral Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional (FSLN) Funcionario Electoral Principal:</p>	<p>(accredited) party pollwatchers alternate party pollwatchers special flashlight to verify whether the cedula is original or falsified Form for filing challenges Form for complaints Electoral fraud National Sandinista Liberation Front Chief Electoral Officer</p>
<p>G La Gaceta: Grupos rearmados “granja” de servidor</p>	<p>Government's official gazette Armed groups Server “farm”</p>

H	
I Imparcialidad: Impugnar: Impugnación: Inclusivas (elecciones) Inhibir: Integrar (la JRV estará integrada por un Presidente y dos Miembros...) Instalación de JRV: Irregularidades electorales:	Impartiality To challenge, to object Challenge, objection Inclusive (election) bar from seeking/banned from ballot/ disqualify from running for make up (JRVs will be made up of a Presidente and two Members...) Set-up of JRV Electoral irregularities
J Junta Receptora de Votos (JRV): JRVs están constituidas por: Presidente de JRV: Primer miembro de JRV: Segundo miembro de JRV: Justas (elections)	Polling place, polling station, ballot receiving board JRVs are formed by: JRV president JRV First member JRV Second member Fair (elections)
K	
L La Gaceta: Labor de fiscalía: Lapiceros: Ley Electoral: líderes comunitarios:	Government's official gazette Election observation by party pollwatchers Pens Electoral Law Community leaders
M Magistrados Magistrados suplentes Manual electoral Manual de fiscales Manifestaciones de campaña: -Material auxiliar (reglas, tinta, borrador, perforadora, hojas, etc.) Mayoría absoluta, relativa: Mesa Electoral (JRV) Miembros propietarios de JRV Misión de observación electoral: Municipios	Magistrates Deputy magistrates Electoral manual Party pollwatchers manual Campaign rallies Auxiliary voting supplies (ruler, ink, eraser, puncher, paper, etc.) Absolute of simple, relative majority Ballot receiving board JRV Principal Memembers election observation missions Municipalities
N Nombramiento de fiscales Número de control de seguridad	Appointment of party pollwatchers Security control number
O observadores electorales: Oficiales de JRV:	Election observers poll works, polling officials

<p>P Padrón electoral: Papeleta de votación: -Paquete electoral:</p> <p>Partida de nacimiento: Partidario militante: Partido Conservador de Nicaragua (PCN) Partido Liberal Constitucionalista (PLC) Partido opositor, de oposición: Perforadora: (para perforar agujero en forma de rombo en parte superior izquierda de cédula) Personal electoral: Plan mochilero: Poderes del Estado: Poder Ejecutivo Poder Electoral Poder Judicial Poder Legislativo</p> <p>Policía electoral: Postularse (ser candidato) a un cargo público: Proceso de escrutinio: Proceso de transmisión de resultados:</p>	<p>(National) Voter registry, voter list ballot, voting slip electoral package, includes ballots, ballot box, voting booth birth certificate campaigner, active party member Nicaraguan Conservative Party Constitutionalist Liberal Party Opposition party Hole-Punch (will be used to punch a diamond shaped hole in the left-hand corner of the cedula) Pollworkers Backpack Plan Branches of Government Executive Branch Electoral Branch Judiciary Branch Legislative Branch</p> <p>Electoral Police</p> <p>To run for public office Vote count process Results Transmission Process</p>
<p>Q Quórum</p>	<p>Quorum</p>
<p>R Recinto de votación: Regla: Recursos, que incluye Quejas Impugnaciones -nulidad -apelación -revisión</p> <p>recuento de votos: Registro Civil: reglamento electoral: Resultados electorales oficiales:</p>	<p>Polling booth Rule Remedies, which include Complaints Challenges -nullity -appeal -review</p> <p>vote recount Civil Registry Election regulations Official electoral results</p>
<p>S Segunda convocatoria: Servidor: Simulacro: Sondeo electoral: Suplente:</p>	<p>Second electoral round Server Simulation Electoral opinion poll Alternate</p>
<p>T Testificar: Testigos idóneos: Tinta indeleble:</p>	<p>To attest Credible witness Indelible ink</p>

U Unidad móvil-para cédular: Urna electoral:	Mobile unit Ballot box
V Validez de la cédula Votantes registrados: votar: votos depositados: Voto en blanco, nulo: Voto secreto:	Validity of cedula Registered voters to vote, to cast a ballot votes casted blank, null and void or invalid ballot secret ballot
W	
X	
Y Yema del dedo	Finger tip
Z	

Prepared by Adela Irene Monge, USAID/ SMA
10/30/01

Briefing Memo
**CAMPAIGN 2001: HEALTH AND EDUCATION CONCERNS AND VOTER
AWARENESS OF THE NICARAGUA POPULATION**

Summary

Nicaragua's 2001 Presidential elections, scheduled to take place on November 4th, offer an exceptional opportunity for open discussion among Nicaraguan citizens about the directions that Nicaraguans want their government to take. This paper describes how USAID Nicaragua's Office of Human Investments (OHI), which oversees the Mission's population, health and nutrition (PHN) and education programs, is successfully using the election campaign as an opportunity to focus and stimulate public debate on health and education issues of greatest concern to Nicaraguans. Hagamos Democracia (HD), a local non-partisan civil society NGO, is playing a key role in this effort, through "Campaign 2001", a USAID-funded program to raise voter awareness and gauge public opinion on health and education priorities for Nicaragua. Through the program, all three Vice Presidential candidates have been forced to better define party positions on change and reform for the health and education sectors. Party platforms have been developed and articulated through the mass media, and will be included in an unprecedented Voter's Guide prior to the election and as policy guidance for newly elected officials.

Results to Date

HD has engaged the three principal political parties to develop and articulate their social sector platforms. This has resulted in these issues now figuring prominently in the campaign platforms of all major parties. The program is stimulating a broad-based public debate regarding the aspirations and needs of Nicaraguan citizens and competing visions for the health and education sector. It has led to multiple stories in local newspapers, TV and radio on key problems and alternative proposals for addressing them throughout the campaign. It has provided an impetus for Vice Presidential candidates to make commitments for their party platforms and describe their competing visions. HD will publish a Voter's Guide in key newspapers ten days before the November 4 election outlining the differences between the three competing party platforms. After the election, HD will publish non-partisan Policy White Papers developed and vetted for public consensus and deliver them to the newly elected Executive and legislators offering an impartial guide for the new government in charting key reforms to ensure future generations of well-educated and healthy citizens.

Background

The 2001 elections promise to be an especially important moment in Nicaragua's history. This will be the third Presidential election since the establishment of democratic government. Nicaraguans will choose who will govern for the next five years. The three competing

parties, the incumbent Liberal Party (PLC), the Sandinista Front (FSLN) operating under an alliance with several smaller parties described as the Convergencia Nacional (National Convergence), and the Conservative Party (PC), offer different visions for Nicaragua, each presented as a call for reform.

Nicaragua's Socio-Economic Status

The context for these efforts is a multi-dimensional Nicaragua. Nicaragua faces tremendous economic challenges. With a population of 5.5 million and a per capita income of only \$430, Nicaragua is recognized as the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere, according to World Bank data. Nevertheless, Nicaragua has committed proportionally higher levels of spending toward social sector issues of health and education. Literacy for those aged 10 and over is a high 81 percent according to the World Bank, and girls' completion and enrollment rates consistently outrank those of boys. Important progress has occurred in the health sector in the past ten years. From 1993 to 1998, infant mortality fell markedly from 58 to 40 per 1000 live births, use of modern methods of contraception rose from 48 percent to 60.3 percent and the rate of institutional births rose to 64.6 percent. At the same time, we recognize that serious problems remain. Nicaraguans aged 10 and above average just 4.9 years of schooling while the extremely poor only receive 2.1 years, due to significant economic barriers to universal education.

In the health sector, National Health Accounts show that pharmaceuticals account for 70 percent of out-of-pocket health expenditures. The Ministry of Health's pharmaceutical budget has dropped every year for five years, despite population growth; and while public hospitals and health centers provide free services, they often lack medicine, so the poor must buy products from private pharmacies or do without.

Hagamos Democracia (HD) Contract

The 2001 political campaign has offered a natural opportunity for citizens to reflect on these issues and how to improve the situation in the future. In order to support and encourage this process, USAID developed the Campaign 2001 Voter Awareness Initiative as part of its overall objective of ensuring free and fair elections with the participation of all Nicaraguans. USAID/Nicaragua's Office of Human Investment (OHI) awarded a \$187,330 competitive contract to HD, leading a consortium of three civil society organizations with expertise in health (ICAS - Central American Health Institute), education (EDUQUEMOS) and community mobilization (Fundacion Nicaragua Nuestra). Through the contract with HD, USAID/Nicaragua has sought to foster an informed public discussion of Nicaragua's priority health and education issues among citizens, professionals and policy-makers, including representatives from Nicaragua's political parties; to raise public awareness of the importance of social sector interventions to Nicaragua's economic development; to explore positive policy choices for the sector; and to prepare and disseminate publicly vetted policy guidance to officials of the newly elected government. We expect these activities to lead to a

strengthened social sector agenda and coordination with the donor community.

Health and Education Priorities Identified

HD carried out 15 focus groups, 8 forums and 15 town meetings throughout Nicaragua to identify and explore citizen concerns and priorities in health and education. With the help of expert advisory groups in health and education, HD and its consortium partners have gathered program and sector experience and used these to develop preliminary working hypotheses of the critical issue areas. HD then conducted a series of public seminars to discuss issues in depth, and formulate policy recommendations for a new government. This effort has also helped in fostering a non-partisan consensus over existing policy initiatives worth extending and deepening, and toward new policy formulations that need exploration.

Public Debate Fostered/Citizen Concerns Identified

HD has obtained the assistance of other USAID/Nicaragua partners, including the Center for Communications Programs of Johns Hopkins University, for filming and broadcasting television interviews with the vice-presidential candidates or delegates of the PLC, FSLN and PC parties. The initial round of interviews was broadcast on sequential Mondays during the weekly USAID-supported television show "Tu Salud" (Your Health). During the final two weeks of the campaign, additional live interviews with candidates are planned for regional television channels and radio stations. Interviewers have questioned candidates in order to obtain their reactions and comments to survey results. Participants also filmed segments on citizen reactions to the party positions. Public forums are scheduled to take place in the next ten days in Bluefields and Rivas, Leon and Chinandega, Nueva Segovia and Carazo. HD is organizing the public fora as town meetings during which invited party candidates will hear from Nicaraguans about what they want from their new government, using 10 minute videos to start discussion. Citizens will also be able to ask questions directly to the candidates regarding their positions on health and education issues.

What are the concerns of Nicaraguan voters? HD published a one page flyer summarizing findings from focus groups and town meetings, titled "Lo Que Dice la Gente" (what the people are saying). The summary reflects a perceptive and aware citizenry, focused on key problems that affect their lives, as well as on the quality of public services. Key concerns include:

- high cost of medicines -- people going to MINSA health centers only receive a doctor visit and a prescription they must purchase at a private pharmacy;
- access barriers to health services, especially the long waiting lines, and poor interpersonal skills of health staff with clients;
- economic and social barriers for children to attend primary school;
- extremely low teacher salaries (\$65 per month); shortage of learning materials, classrooms and teachers; and

-
- the need to strengthen basic education and expand technical education.

Findings on what Nicaraguans ask of a new government include:

- provide better quality health care for the urban and rural poor, including provision of medical and hospital care and emergency services;
- continue and expand preventive health services, such as immunization programs; the public recognizes and values the importance of these programs;
- make pre-school and primary education a priority and increase the education budget to allow building more schools, raising teachers' salaries, improving teacher training for classroom quality, and
- provide curricula on health, nutrition, and sexuality issues, as well as vocational training and civic values, including democracy, tolerance and human rights.

As a final activity before the election, HD will compile party positions and platforms and candidate promises and place these in paid non-partisan advertisements in the two newspapers of broadest circulation, LA PRENSA and EL NUEVO DIARIO, as a guide to voters. This unprecedented Voter's Guide will enable Nicaraguan citizens to gauge for themselves the responsiveness of each party and candidate to key voter concerns over problems in the health and education sectors.

USAID Initiative Launched with Donor Coordination

Many elements of this campaign are unprecedented for Nicaragua. USAID initially introduced the need for a voter awareness initiative on policy issues among major bilateral and multilateral donors in February 2001. Following positive responses from counterparts at PAHO, UNICEF, World Bank, Inter-American Development Bank, as well as bilateral missions from the UK, Sweden, Spain and Canada, inter alia, USAID rapidly developed a draft scope of work which we shared for comments and consensus with donors. While other donors deliberated similar initiatives, only USAID took action by competing and negotiating a contract to initiate this activity with HD by May.

The press has widely covered these USAID-funded seminars and town meetings in both newspapers and television; a USAID-funded study in late August gauging the opinion of clients at public and private sector health facilities made headlines in early September and led to several days of serialized articles addressing key findings. USAID specifically mandated that broad-based public consultations include both rural and urban Nicaragua, as well as the oft-neglected Atlantic Coast area of the country. USAID has supported public meetings in both Bluefields and Puerto Cabezas, which have opened the door to important contributions about the need for inter-cultural bilingual education and participation of indigenous peoples and black English speaking minority population of the Caribbean shore.

Party Platforms Influenced

The USAID-funded "Tu Salud" television program and the Campaign 2001 segments have generated wide discussion and comments. Indeed, political advertising of the three main political parties has at least partially begun to address electorate concerns for health and education after a total absence at the commencement of the political campaign in July. While the incumbent government has presented a budget for fiscal year 2002 with cuts of 10.4 percent on social spending, both the PLC and FSLN presidential candidates, Enrique Bolaños and Daniel Ortega, have promised to make health and education top priorities and adjust the budgets accordingly. Finally, the plan to develop and present non-partisan Policy White Papers on health and education with USAID-funding for the newly elected legislators and executive branch is virtually unprecedented in Nicaragua and the LAC region. These White Papers will offer transition guides for the new government to assist with the drafting of key reforms to ensure future generations of well-educated and healthy citizens.

Notably, no one has challenged the non-partisan nature of these consciousness-raising voter awareness efforts, which enhances the credibility of the key messages delivered. With roughly one-fifth of the potential electorate still undecided, we believe this broad-based policy discussion that USAID is supporting has made an important contribution to Nicaragua's elections process.

Alonzo Wind
Danielle Roziewski
Katie McDonald
Office of Human Investments
USAID/Nicaragua
October 19, 2001

Nicaragua xsec with elections



U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
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PRESS OFFICE
(202) 712-4320
October 30, 2001
2001-103

**CENTRAL AMERICA DROUGHT
UPDATE #5**

Central America is an area prone to natural disasters, as evidenced in recent years by such devastating calamities as Hurricane Mitch and the earthquakes in El Salvador. In addition, nearly two years of unrelenting dry conditions affecting Honduras, Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Guatemala have reduced domestic food production, spurring an increase in internal and external migrations. Economic conditions have worsened at the same time, with low international coffee prices putting coffee farmers out of work and eliminating employment opportunities for many small farmers and landless poor. Evidence from Guatemala indicates that levels of under-nutrition among children under five – already among the highest in the Western Hemisphere – are increasing. Decreased tax revenues resulting from the decline in coffee prices, and the general economic deceleration, which is linked to the economic slowdown in the United States, have limited the ability of national and local governments to respond to these problems.

Summary of US Government Assistance

As a response to these development and relief problems, during 2001, Honduras, Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Guatemala will receive nearly \$90 million in food assistance from USAID and the US Department of Agriculture (USDA). This amount includes \$5.6 million in emergency food assistance to help the four nations cope with the effects of the drought, \$5.3 million diverted from non-emergency food programs for that purpose, and \$1.1 million in non-food disaster relief aid. Some food from both the regular and the emergency programs will also go to poor rural families that are suffering from the drop in coffee prices. Total U.S. government (USG) emergency drought assistance, which includes food aid, agricultural inputs, nutritional supplements, and construction tools, now totals nearly \$12 million for the region (See table below). In addition to the emergency effort, USAID provided these four countries with over \$168 million in reconstruction and regular development assistance in 2001. Approximately \$28.7 million in Title II non-emergency development resources are currently programmed for Nicaragua, Honduras, and Guatemala in 2002.

USG DROUGHT EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE
USG Disaster Assistance, Diversions From Non-emergency Food Program, and
Emergency Food Assistance, as of 10/26/01

Country	USG [OFDA, USDA] Disaster Assistance	USG Diverted from Non-emergency Food Program	USG Drought Emergency Food Assistance	Total USG Drought Emergency Assistance	Food (MT)
Honduras	\$175,000	\$668,753	\$1,506,100	\$2,349,853	6,504 MT
Nicaragua	\$875,000	\$4,332,000	\$3,032,700	\$8,239,700	18,031 MT
El Salvador			\$583,600	\$583,600	1,290 MT
Guatemala	\$25,000	\$270,000	\$520,200	\$815,200	1,441 MT
TOTAL	\$1,075,000	\$5,270,753	\$5,642,600	\$11,988,353	27,536 MT

Food Insecurity

Many families in El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua are chronically food insecure, and for this reason targeted, non-emergency food assistance programs in the latter three countries are a regular part of the USAID development effort. However, severe drought during the first crop cycle exacerbated this condition and caused severe transitory food insecurity in the region, starting in August. Although the rains did resume for the second crop cycle in many places, it is too early to generalize or to project crop yields in this cycle. If the second harvest in November through January is also below normal, additional food resources will be required for a longer period. In addition, more food aid will likely be needed to help poor households cope with the immediate effects of continuing low coffee prices. While the coffee problem is clearly not a short-term crisis, many families have lost a major source of income as a result and could go hungry unless steps are taken to help them in the short as well as the longer term. Chronically malnourished children under five years of age are especially vulnerable to reductions in an already precarious household food supply, and their nutritional status can deteriorate quite rapidly. During the upcoming critical period for assessing the food security, nutritional, and other social and economic aspects of the problem, USAID's Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) will provide a regional expert to assist the missions and advise on the situation. The table below provides estimates by USAID Missions of the number of people requiring short-term emergency food aid in the region. Assessments of longer-term needs are in progress and where available, are reported in the individual country reports below.

Country	Number of People Requiring Short-Term Emergency Food Assistance
Honduras	300,000
Nicaragua	303,000
El Salvador	50,000
Guatemala	76,290
Mexico	NA
Total	729,290

Coffee Crisis

Low coffee prices have had a devastating effect on the coffee-producing areas of the region, many of them also affected by the drought. [The attached map (Annex #1) indicates where coffee producing areas and drought areas intersect.] Coffee prices hit a new low of 40.5 cents per pound in the last week of September. The cost to produce coffee now exceeds the selling price in most places, making it uneconomical to harvest and putting many farmers who borrowed against their crops out of business. This aggravates the short-term problem of household food availability, since the lost wages from significantly reduced coffee season employment were likely to have been used to buy food for the family. As experts predict that prices will continue to be low for the next few years, this situation requires both interim support measures and longer-term change in household income and food strategies in coffee producing areas.

Because of the importance of coffee in the economies of all Central American nations, the impact on poor, rural families has been enormous. In Honduras, early survey results indicate that up to 40 percent of local coffee producers will not harvest this year's crops, causing layoffs of an estimated 50,000 permanent employees and leaving over 150,000 temporary seasonal pickers without employment. Therefore about 200,000 coffee workers and their families will experience food insecurity this year and next. In El Salvador, according to preliminary estimates, losses of coffee sector jobs combined with those resulting from the drought may approach 65,000 this year. In Guatemala, ANACAFE (The National Coffee Association) now estimates that only 50 percent of the estimated 500-600,000 rural coffee workers will find work on coffee farms and those that do will see their earnings halved this year. It warns that this situation may worsen in November if many farmers elect not to pick their coffee because of low prices. Nicaragua has some 200,000 employed in the coffee sector. In the two largest producing departments, as many as 24,000 permanent coffee workers, many of them landless, depend on coffee estates for livelihood, but will likely see earnings significantly reduced this year. USAID is financing an assessment of the coffee crisis and the ripple effects on the economy in Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica. The study begun a few days ago and the consultant will be spending six weeks in the affected countries.

USAID is working with local partners in the host governments, civil society, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to examine both immediate and longer-term ways of responding to this rural crisis. In the near term, the Agency is addressing hunger. The longer perspective is focused on broader challenges impeding growth in rural areas. The strategy emphasizes economic integration and trade, good governance, innovative uses of science and technology, and management of environmental and economic risks. It involves a mix of interventions including feeding and health/nutrition programs, works projects, income generation activities, education and retraining, crop diversification, and technical improvements in coffee production and marketing.

Internal and External Migration

Anecdotal reports from USAID Missions indicate that internal and external migration has been increasing over the past few months. Although seasonal migrations are common during the coffee harvesting seasons in Costa Rica, reports by the Costa Rican presidential spokesperson indicate that increased numbers of legal and illegal Nicaraguan immigrants have entered Costa

Rica this year in search of work and food. While El Salvador has not yet seen evidence of significant movement, Honduras and Guatemala report anecdotal examples of migrations of male labor force out of rural areas. Movement within countries to urban areas seems to be increasing, and there are indications that emigration to wealthier countries is on the rise. A September 23 article in the Washington Post reports that while the number of illegal entrants apprehended in the Tucson border area with Mexico declined by 26 percent last year, at the same time, the number of non-Mexican detentions grew by 42 percent. Most of the non-Mexican migrants are from Central America.

USG Emergency Food Strategy

USAID's Hurricane Mitch reconstruction and food assistance programs constituted an effective early warning system for the Central American drought. Since July, USAID has collaborated actively with US private voluntary organizations (PVOs) responsible for distributing PL480 Title II development food aid – Adventist Development Relief Agency (ADRA), CARE, Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Project Concern International (PCI), Save the Children, and SHARE – to transfer in-country P.L. 480 Title II commodities to drought emergency zones. Most emergency food aid is being distributed through food-for-work projects aimed at improving long-term food security and rehabilitating community infrastructure or through targeted feeding programs to malnourished children under the age of five. In addition to emergency and non-emergency food aid, the USG is supporting programs that also provide seeds and other agricultural inputs to farmers for the second planting season in August and September in these affected regions.

The World Food Program (WFP) emergency Central America Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation has requested 16,000 tons of food to address the drought in the region. In response, USAID's Office of Food for Peace has provided 4,800 metric tons of PL 480 Title II commodities to the WFP to assist drought-affected farmers and unemployed coffee plantation workers in Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala. The estimated value of the food aid, including ocean freight, internal transport, storage, and handling is \$2.1 million. USAID missions and their PVO partners in Central America are working in close cooperation with WFP, UNICEF, and local governments to coordinate all emergency operations.

The following presents an update on drought conditions in Honduras, Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Guatemala, and the USG response to these conditions.

HONDURAS

The Rural Crisis: Continued rainfall is needed over the next three weeks to ensure a good second harvest. Even with good rains, USAID anticipates that bean production from the second harvest will be below normal as only about 45 percent of the farmers who were hard hit by the drought received seeds. With the rural economy so dependent on coffee, it is no surprise that ripple effects have been felt in rural non-coffee enterprises. Local businesses report sales down 20-40 percent compared with last year. There will be little liquidity to pay coffee workers, and farmers may pay pickers in coffee. This will mean extreme subsistence living for workers and families who have relied on this source of income to supplement their crop production. USAID and PVO partner CARE are monitoring chronic malnutrition in children under five in Intibuca,

La Paz, and southern Lempira, which are among the poorest areas of Honduras. So far the system has not reflected changes suggesting an increase in malnutrition. The area of the CARE program, while somewhat affected by the drought, was not one of the worst affected. Data collection for the 2001 National Epidemiology and Family Health Survey is completed, and analysis over the next month should enable USAID to see if there are any major changes in nutritional status. WFP is proposing a one-month series of rapid rural appraisals to determine future needs, which might also yield useful information.

USG Response: The USAID/Honduras drought working-group continues to monitor the situation. USAID approved CARE's transfer of 217 metric tons of Title II food from its regular program to the drought emergency, and WFP diverted over \$600,000 of regular program food to the emergency. USAID also furnished WFP with an additional \$1,506,100 for emergency relief commodities. OFDA provided \$25,000 to purchase and distribute seeds and later granted an additional \$150,000 for seed purchase and distribution through Zamorano Agricultural School. Over the course of FY 2002, USAID's PVO partners in Honduras will receive \$3.6 million in non-emergency Title II commodities.

NICARAGUA

The Rural Crisis: After a month of good rains in September, precipitation in October has been much more sporadic. Very little or no rain was reported in the departments of Matagalpa, parts of Chinadega, Madriz, and Esteli from October 4 through 19. However, since that time, rains have resumed. WFP and USAID have just completed their joint crop assessment to estimate which geographic areas may require food assistance beyond December 2001. From this assessment, they will put together over the course of the next week a national crop monitoring map to show areas with a high potential for a good second harvest (green), those with significant stress but subject to recovery with adequate rain (yellow), and those that are already lost or with little potential for recovery (red). USAID is working with local NGOs and the government to monitor the yellow zones particularly, where crops are still at risk through the harvest period. Initial reports from the team suggest that, with the exception of a few pockets with serious crop losses, the rains have been adequate. Farmers expressed gratitude to USG for providing seeds and fertilizer on a timely basis, allowing them to take advantage of early rains. Corn, sorghum, and sesame will need approximately three more weeks of rain for ideal harvests.

USG Response: USAID is coordinating its efforts closely with the WFP. As an immediate USG response to the drought, up to \$2 million of PL 480 Title II food stocks (8,000 MT) that arrived in Nicaragua at the end of July were distributed to drought victims beginning on August 2. For the medium term USG assistance, a total of \$3,125,900 (13,613 MT) in 416b food commodities and \$2,206,000 in Title II food (4,366 MT) began to arrive in Nicaragua in early October for immediate distribution. PVO activities already underway with Title II food will be extended and expanded to remote areas of Chinandega, Leon, Esteli, and Matagalpa departments. To meet emergency needs, OFDA provided a total of \$475,000 for local purchase of foods, seeds, tools, and fertilizer for the second planting season. USAID and USDA made available an additional \$432,000, also for tools and seeds for the second planting.

Beginning in January 2002, USAID intends to provide \$10 million in food resources per year over five years under its non-emergency Title II development program, subject to the availability of funds. A first increment of 3,715 MT of food (out of a total of 6,375 MT for the year) will arrive in December 2001 and be distributed over the next five months. The program will monetize an additional 32,000 MT of wheat to cover transport, administration, and project input costs, such as tools and other supplies.

With minor exceptions, the USG remains the primary donor responding to the drought crisis in Nicaragua. The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) provided \$300,000 for the purchase of seed and fertilizer, and the IDB provided approximately \$300,000 from its Poverty Reduction Project.

EL SALVADOR

The Rural Crisis: El Salvador is no longer experiencing drought conditions. The Ministry of Agriculture announced on October 8, 2001, that the 2.4 million quintales of corn (1 quintal=100 lbs.) that were lost to the drought will be recuperated at the national level in the second season harvest (late October). This does not necessarily mean that the farmers most affected by the drought would have additional food. The WFP continues to report approximately 50,000 drought victims will require longer-term food assistance until next year's harvest. The WFP is planning another assessment of the need in early November.

The USG Response: An integrated host-country led program continues. It includes foodstuffs distributed via the WFP, a Food-for-Work program providing for economic infrastructure in the areas of rural roads, irrigation, and reservoirs, and a credit program implemented through the country's *Banco de Fomento de Agropecuario*. USAID contributed \$583,600 of Title II commodities to this effort. A number of NGOs, including CARE, Catholic Relief Services, and the Lutheran World Federation have been working closely with the WFP to help get the food to the most needy.

GUATEMALA

The Rural Crisis: As noted in previous updates, drought conditions have severely affected Chiquimula Department, especially its two eastern municipalities of Camotán and Jocotán, which also rely heavily on seasonal migration to coffee and sugar areas to provide for family food needs. Other areas are now showing similar problems, with further reductions in household resources due to closure of some maquilas, low sugar prices, and a decline in income from remittances and tourism.

Based on more intensive field visits to examine malnutrition levels nationally, the Ambassador has extended her disaster declaration authority to include new areas suffering from acute child malnutrition. USAID has confirmed that the prevalence of wasting (acute malnutrition) among children is as much as three times higher than the national maternal child health survey of two years ago. The problem is concentrated in the poorer areas of the country such as El Quiche, Huehuetenango, Chiquimula, Chimaltenango, Baja Verapaz, and San Marcos whose large poor and indigenous populations rely on seasonal migration to coffee areas for income. More than

half of the children in these areas were already stunted (chronic malnutrition) and thus susceptible to becoming wasted with reductions in household food consumption or other stresses such as diseases. The vast majority of these wasted children do not get to hospitals because of remote distances, lack of financial resources, and negative cultural attitudes about hospitals. The urgent challenge is to find where they are and treat them. For example, the doctors in Jocotán are going door-to-door to survey the status of children who are not getting to the centers, but this is costly, time-consuming, and difficult work.

The Government has proposed a strategy combining food assistance, health interventions, and income generating activities, but the breadth of the problem is beyond its capacity to address, so it is seeking international help. Based on two recent site visits to the most severely affected areas, the USAID Mission has determined that additional assistance will be required, including reprogramming of some existing non-emergency resources. Along with its Title II food aid partners and health NGOs, USAID identified the hardest-hit communities and is developing a strategy involving early warning, feeding and referral of acutely malnourished children, improved health care, and public works employment for drought victims. It estimates that 100,000 to 125,000 families are seriously at risk nationwide. An assessment team is in Guatemala to examine the situation and options for dealing with these immediate effects of reduced rural income.

USG Response: USG drought emergency assistance to Guatemala currently totals \$815,200. OFDA is providing \$25,000 for health personnel training, water treatment, and micronutrient supplements for drought-affected people, especially acutely malnourished children in the Camotán and Jocotán municipalities in Chiquimula. USAID also authorized Catholic Relief Services to use PL480 Title II commodities, valued at \$270,000, to provide emergency rations in Zacapa and Chiquimula. In addition, the USG approved a food aid donation valued at \$520,200 to the WFP for use in Guatemala. In collaboration with its partners, USAID is examining the hardest hit communities to develop a strategy involving food aid, health care, and cash employment for the families most at-risk in the rural crisis.

Over the course of FY 2002, USAID will furnish its PVO partners \$15.1 million in PL480 Title II commodities for non-emergency development programs.



10.05.2001

DROUGHT AND COFFEE IN CENTRAL AMERICA (by departments)

-  Coffee departments not affected by drought
-  Coffee departments affected by drought
-  Non coffee departments affected by drought



