

Oral statement to the 49th session of the UN Human Rights Council

Item 2: Interactive Dialogue on the High Commissioner for Human Rights' report on the human rights situation in Nicaragua

Speaker: Josefa Meza

Madam High Commissioner,

This statement is delivered jointly with the Mothers of April Association and the Collective 46/2.

My name is Josefa Meza. I am speaking today as the mother of Jonathan Morazán Meza, a young university student executed on May 30 during the March of Mothers Massacre, and in my capacity as representative of the Mothers of April Association, which brings together mothers and relatives of the lethal victims of the repressive escalation ordered by the Ortega-Murillo government since April 2018.

We welcome your report on the human rights situation in Nicaragua, and note the absence of specific mention of the impunity the deaths of our children still face.

My son was hit by a sniper's bullet in the skull. Jonathan is one of 355 victims executed by military, police and paramilitary forces in the midst of what the Interdisciplinary Group of Independent Experts (GIEI) of the IACHR characterized as a "widespread and systematic attack against the civilian population".

For seeking justice, we have suffered a campaign of defamation by the government. Many of us have had to go into exile to save our lives.

I am here today before this Human Rights Council, bringing the cry of us, victims, to ask for your strong support for the establishment of a mechanism to investigate and preserve the evidence of gross human rights violations, and to identify perpetrators, in order to lay the groundwork for a future process of justice that will guarantee our right to truth, justice and reparations.

We, mothers, do not give up, and we demand justice.