

Palestine – Nicaragua



SOLIDARITY IN ACTION

The solidarity between Nicaragua and Palestine is a powerful example of how two small nations, despite geographical distances, can unite in struggles against imperialism and colonialism.

Their relationship, founded on shared values of resistance and justice, continues to inspire global movements against oppression and for respect for international law.

Nicaragua – Palestine: enduring solidarity

The roots of solidarity between Nicaragua and Palestine extend back to the anti-imperialist struggle led by Augusto Sandino from 1927 to 1933. Sandino, considered a hero in Latin America, led a rebellion against the US occupation of Nicaragua.

A Colombian-born Palestinian named Ghadeer Abu Sneineh joined Sandino's guerilla army, seeing parallels between the impact of colonial powers in Latin America and Palestine. Following Sandino's assassination by the US-backed Somoza, Abu Sneineh travelled to Palestine to join the 1936 Arab revolt against British colonial rule.

Three years after the establishment of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) in 1961, the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) was founded. The FSLN sent combatants



to Lebanon to train alongside PLO fighters: one notable figure was Patricio Argüello, a Nicaraguan American, who

trained in Palestinian camps in Jordan and was killed during an internationalist mission to free Palestinian prisoners.

During the 1970s, the PLO supported the FSLN's struggle against the Somoza dictatorship, and many Nicaraguans of Palestinian heritage, with surnames such as Hassan, Halum, and Abdallah, joined the FSLN.

In 1980, a year after the FSLN overthrew Somoza, Nicaragua became the first Central American country to establish diplomatic relations with Palestine, continuing its solidarity throughout the 1980s. In 1988, Nicaragua was among the first countries to support the establishment of Palestine as an independent state.

Israel – US solidarity

By the 1970s Israel had cemented its reputation as a supplier of weaponry and training to repressive US backed states including the Somoza family dictatorship in Nicaragua. When the US escalated its attempts to overthrow the Sandinista government in the 1980s, Israel provided weapons and training to the US-backed contra forces based in Honduras.

Nicaragua-Palestine: solidarity through use of 'international legal weapons'

In the 1980s, the US waged a covert war against the Sandinista government through financing, training and politically supporting contra mercenaries based in Honduras.

The Sandinista government responded not only with a military mobilisation, but also by taking the US to the ICJ, arguing that the contra war violated international law.

"We went to the World Court because it wasn't simply a matter of the most

powerful nation doing whatever it wants, [we needed] to remind the world that international law exists." Carlos Argüello

Nicaragua's victory was seen as a David versus Goliath moment, showcasing the US's disregard for international law. Despite the ICJ ruling in Nicaragua's favour and ordering the US to pay US\$17 billion in reparations, the US refused to accept the court's verdict and the reparations remain unpaid.

Nicaragua views the ICJ as a means of resistance, an 'international legal weapon' and a 'solidarity instrument.' Over the

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"Obviously, we don't have great possibilities of sending food [to Palestine], which they need. One of the few things we could help with was with our experience in the International Court of Justice (ICJ)."

Dr CARLOS ARGUELLO
Nicaragua's representative to the ICJ

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past year, Nicaragua has used its legal experience to support cases against Israel at the ICJ, aiming to halt the Israeli war on Palestine.

This included backing South Africa's case against Israel under the UN Genocide Convention and pursuing its own case against Germany for 'facilitating the commission of genocide' in Palestine.

In its case against Germany, Nicaragua argued that by supplying military equipment to Israel and defunding the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA), Germany was complicit in genocide as defined by the 1948 Genocide Convention.

Nicaragua's legal efforts resulted in a significant reduction in German

arms sales to Israel and the reinstatement of its funding to UNRWA. This action sets a precedent for holding other countries, including the UK, accountable for their involvement in crimes committed by third-party states.

This legal victory, however, has had repercussions. Following the ICJ's announcement, the US Senate threatened an imminent vote on imposing more sanctions on Nicaragua.

In a related development, the ICJ issued an advisory opinion in July 2024, stating that Israel's continued occupation of Palestinian territories is unlawful and must end promptly.



Dr Carlos Arguello at the ICJ Nicaragua vs Germany case

Solidarity through people-to-people links

"I am proud of this revolutionary leadership that has denounced before the International Court of Justice the murderers of children and babies, and those complicit in these crimes."

LEILA KHALED, renowned Palestinian resistance figure, 19 July 2024, on the occasion of the 45th anniversary of the Sandinista Revolution, pictured below with Vice President Rosario Murillo. Leila Khaled's visit included raising awareness about Gaza and strengthening solidarity between Palestinians and Nicaraguans by visiting schools, universities and FSLN leaders throughout Nicaragua.



Palestine Park was opened on 8 February 2024 by the Mayor of Managua Reyna Rueda and representative of the Palestine Embassy Mohammed Shafied.



In August 2024 Palestinian doctors visited Nicaraguan hospitals to learn about Nicaragua's free community healthcare system

Since the signing of a technical agreement in 2019, Palestine and Nicaragua have shared expertise, particularly in healthcare. A Palestinian doctor has trained Nicaraguan trauma specialists, enabling doctors to perform specialised spinal surgeries, making Nicaragua the only Central American country to offer these surgeries free.

"The Government... of Nicaragua denounces the malignant, perfidious, abominable actions of the Government of Israel, yet one more in successive crimes against humanity, today against an innocent and unprotected school in Gaza."

PRESIDENT DANIEL ORTEGA
10 August, 2024

Join Nicaragua Solidarity Campaign Action Group (NSCAG)

International solidarity remains crucial in ensuring that Nicaragua thrives free from external interference, a sovereign country exercising its right to determine its own future through deepening and consolidating its priority: the fight against the poverty.



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