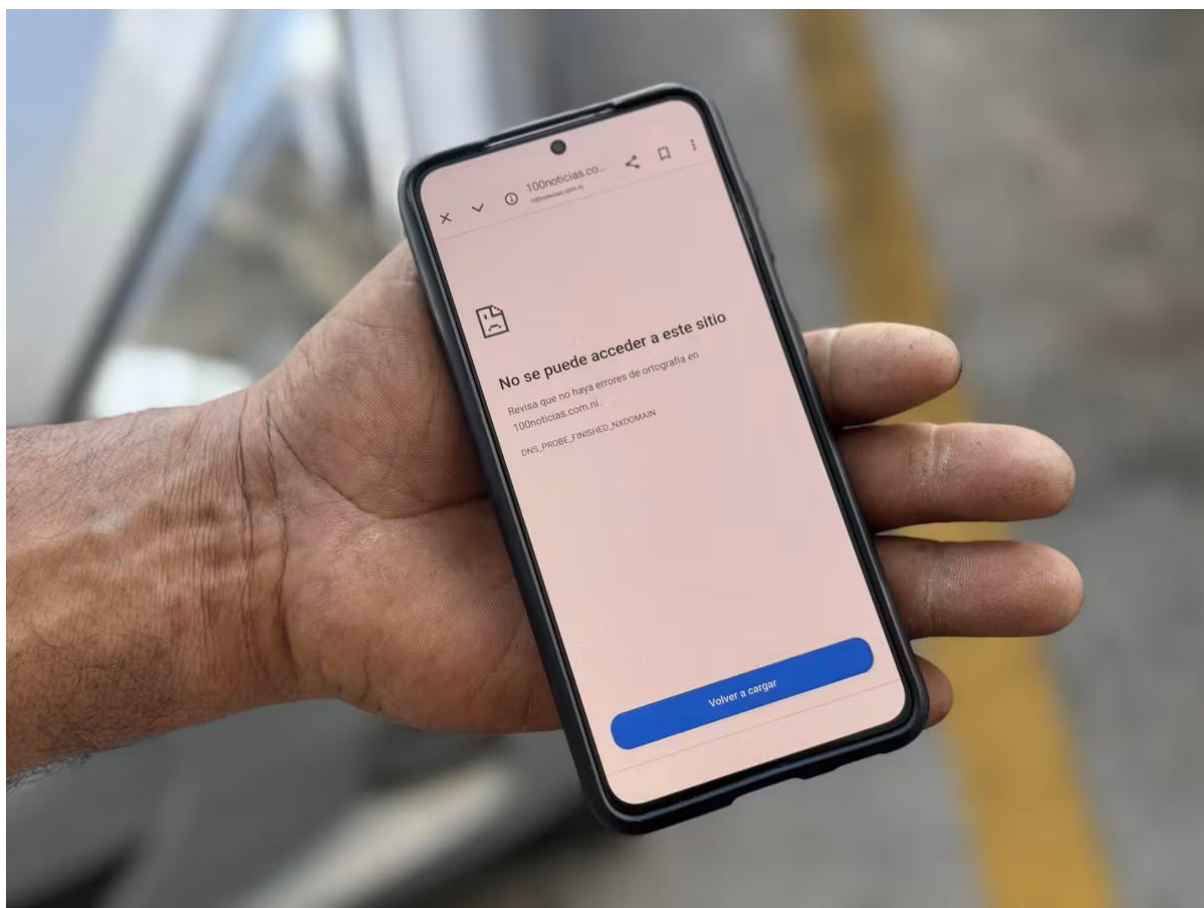


Foundation for freedom



The blocking of media outlets under the “.com.ni” domain marks a new repressive phase in the digital space — currently the only space available to Nicaragua’s independent press. Sourced from the web / EFE.

Voices That Won’t Be Silenced: Independent Journalism in Nicaragua Stands Firm Against Repression and Precarity

January – March 2025

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Repression against independent journalism in Nicaragua has not disappeared—it has merely changed form: threats, digital harassment, and fear tactics have replaced the overt censorship of previous years.
FLED / Illustrative image generated with AI



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Executive Summary

The Foundation for Freedom of Expression and Democracy (FLED) presents the first quarterly report of 2025 (January–March), which documents cases of violations against press freedom in Nicaragua, along with an analysis of the context faced by independent journalism both inside and outside the country.

During this period, FLED documented 26 cases of violations against press freedom, of which 20 were directed at individuals and 6 at media outlets. It is important to emphasise that these figures do not represent the full scope of incidents, as significant underreporting persists. Many victims refrain from filing complaints for fear of being identified and facing even greater reprisals, such as imprisonment.

Exile continues to be a painful but necessary measure for those seeking to mitigate the risks of state repression. In this quarter, FLED recorded that at least six journalists were forced into exile. This brings the total number of individuals linked to media who have been forced to leave the country between April 2018 and March 2025 to 289. Of these, 178 are journalists and/or reporters, representing 61.6% of the total.

This figure highlights the high level of vulnerability faced by those practicing journalism on the ground. Due to the nature of their work, they are more exposed to threats, persecution, and reprisals by the government led by Daniel Ortega and Rosario Murillo, who implement repression through state institutions—primarily the police, which acts as the main repressive arm—as well as through para-state structures linked to the ruling party.

The second most affected group consists of editors, directors, and media executives. In its effort to dismantle the independent press, the regime has also targeted administrative and editorial managers, forcing them into exile as the only way to safeguard their own safety and that of their families. FLED has recorded 48 exiled individuals in this category, representing 16.6% of the total.

As for other media workers—technicians, announcers, administrative staff, among others—records indicate that 45 people have been forced to leave Nicaragua, representing 15.6%.

Photographers and camerapeople have also been targeted, as their work enables the documentation of aggressions and the identification of those responsible. This group includes 18 exiled individuals, equivalent to 6.2%.

These figures are alarming and reflect the high cost of practicing independent journalism in Nicaragua, especially over the past seven years. Even in exile, most of these individuals remain committed to their professional duties, defying censorship and informing the world about what is happening in the country.

Journalists Forced to Combine Their Profession with Other Economic Activities to Survive

Since early 2024, FLED has been documenting a growing phenomenon among Nicaraguan journalists—both those who remain in the country, enduring adverse conditions, and those in exile: **the need to combine their journalistic work with other economic activities in order to survive.**

This trend is largely due to the progressive deterioration of conditions for practicing journalism. The shutdown of independent media, the lack of job opportunities in the sector, the precarious nature of the profession, and the lack of sustained support for those working from exile or in hiding have forced many journalists to diversify their sources of income.

An exiled journalist in Costa Rica shared that she rides around the streets of San José at night delivering orders on a motorcycle for fast-delivery apps:

"If things were already bad, they've now got worse. My husband and I decided to do this—it has nothing to do with my profession, but there's no other option. This country is expensive and we can't return to Nicaragua," she explained.

Data collected by FLED shows that between the first quarter of 2024 and the first quarter of 2025, a total of 89 journalists (45 men and 44 women) were forced to alternate journalism with other occupations to support themselves. In the first quarter of 2025 alone, 32 such cases (18 men and 14 women) were recorded—the highest number documented to date.

This systematisation includes journalists who continue reporting clandestinely within Nicaragua, as well as those practicing journalism in exile, particularly in Costa Rica and the United States.

"I'm not going to romanticise the situation. This shouldn't be happening, but we have to do it to survive," said another journalist interviewed by FLED.

This situation underscores the urgent need to design strategies for economic support, technical assistance, and network strengthening, with the goal of sustaining independent media in the face of a real risk of an information blackout driven by the economic survival needs of journalists.

FLED calls on organisations that defend freedom of expression, embassies, and international donors to take action in response to the crisis facing independent journalism in Nicaragua. It is urgent to prevent the lack of opportunities from further widening the information gaps already evident in outlets with reduced teams and limited journalistic production.

Nicaraguan Government Diversifies Its Appetite and Tactics that Violate Press Freedom

The repressive actions of the Sandinista government persist. Harassment, intimidation and so-called “visitas de puntualización de objetivos” (targeted visits) to journalists’ homes continue—often directed at individuals who have been retired from the profession for years due to job loss, personal choice, or retirement. These aggressions are compounded by arbitrary arrests and enforced disappearances of journalists.

On February 9, journalist Irving Guerrero Montes, former correspondent for Radio Corporación and Channel 23 in the León department, was reported detained. Although he had retired from journalism years ago, he was arrested by the police, who accused him of allegedly possessing illegal weapons.

With his arrest, four journalists have now been detained under enforced disappearance conditions in Nicaragua. FLED continues to demand the release of Elsbeth D’Anda, Leo Catalino Cárcamo and Fabiola Tercero, whose arrests and/or disappearances remain unexplained. The State must immediately cease its persecution of those who are or have been engaged in journalism.

As part of its strategy to dismantle independent journalism in Nicaragua, the regime also continues a smear campaign promoted by pro-government spokespersons. This includes public attacks, obscene and violent language, and stigmatising rhetoric aimed at discrediting journalistic work, undermining public trust in critical media and minimising reports of human rights violations.

Despite these adverse conditions, independent journalists and media outlets continue to report with courage, commitment, and conviction. Their work —sustained amid risk and hardship— demonstrates admirable resilience and a steadfast defence of human rights.

In another development, on January 8, the government ordered all public institutions to exclusively contract the National Electricity Transmission Company (ENATREL) for primary internet and data link services. This provision, effective immediately, reinforces state control over telecommunications, limits institutional autonomy and expands the executive branch’s capacity to monitor digital information flows.

Finally, we encourage all our readers to consult the full report, which details the documented cases of press freedom violations during the quarter, along with an analysis of the main challenges faced by journalists and independent media both inside and outside Nicaragua. This report offers a comprehensive look at the conditions under which journalism is practiced in an increasingly repressive and censored environment.

We also present an interview with Paolo Nigro from the organisation Access Now, who shares valuable insights on the importance of digital security for journalists working in high-risk contexts like Nicaragua.

Main Issues Affecting Journalism in Nicaragua

FLED maintains constant communication with directors and journalists from independent media outlets, including those still resisting within Nicaragua and those in exile. This close engagement —combined with ongoing news monitoring and support from our Press Freedom Promoters network— has allowed us to systematically document the difficulties faced by independent journalists both inside and outside the country.

Recognising and analysing these situations is essential for identifying potential strategies to sustain news reporting amid an increasingly hostile environment. Below, we share the five most significant issues recorded during the January–March 2025 quarter.

• **Growing Number of Journalists Abandon the Profession Amid Repression and Stigmatisation**

In Nicaragua, the number of journalists leaving the profession continues to grow due to an increasingly hostile environment for the independent press. Repression, stigmatisation and constant dangers have turned journalism into a high-risk profession, forcing many professionals to completely disengage from their work to prioritise their own safety and that of their families.

Many who remain in the country have opted for silence, anonymity, or full retirement, even before reaching retirement age. Others, already elderly, have been out of active journalism for years but continue to face harassment. FLED has documented recent cases of police officers visiting the homes of relatives of exiled journalists, even those

who have been abroad for more than two years—clear evidence of extended persecution.

Journalists consulted by FLED claim that practicing journalism inside Nicaragua has become "virtually impossible." Surveillance, harassment and stigmatisation by pro-government spokespeople, who label them enemies for not aligning with official narratives, have led to a limited form of reporting based on informal surveys and conversations, without bylines or identifiable faces.

In addition, all state institutions—including local governments—systematically deny access to independent media. "We're banned. As soon as they see us arrive, security guards kick us out. They have clear instructions not to let us in," a journalist told FLED.

The level of hostility is so intense that even within the country, journalists prefer not to publicise international awards or recognitions they receive for fear of retaliation. Meanwhile, those in exile face other challenges: securing stable employment, surviving in high-cost environments and navigating complex immigration processes.

• **Suspension of Funds and Resistance Strategies of Media and Journalists**

To understand the impact of the temporary suspension of U.S. aid on independent journalism and the measures adopted by media outlets to cope, FLED conducted a survey targeting 16 directors of Nicaraguan media outlets.

The results reveal how, in response to the reduction in international funding, media organisations have begun implementing various strategies to sustain operations and keep their journalistic efforts alive amid crisis.

Among the most immediate effects were staff layoffs, salary cuts and internal restructuring of newsroom teams. As of the end of March 2025, at least 38 journalists had lost their jobs: 22 men (57.8%) and 16 women (42.2%). In total, 43.8% of outlets reported reducing both staff and salaries; 37.5% only reduced staff; and 12.5% only adjusted salaries. Just 6.2% implemented no cuts at all.

In response, media outlets have turned to several resistance strategies. The most common has been redistributing work among remaining staff (62.5%) to ensure continuity of coverage with the few available resources.

Some 18.8% of outlets chose to scale back coverage, focusing solely on high-priority topics or regions. Another 18.7% adopted mixed strategies, including crowdfunding,

cutting operational costs, flexible working hours and actively seeking new donors to resume or maintain partial operations.

Despite the financial crisis, 62.5% of outlets surveyed stated they currently have no plans to shut down, showing strong resilience in the face of a challenging scenario.

These strategies demonstrate independent journalism's commitment to the right to information, even under conditions of precarity, exile and repression. Far from giving up, media outlets are finding ways to adapt, innovate, and uphold their work with integrity and a sense of public service.

In this context, audience support is more important than ever. When it does not compromise their safety, supporting media through financial contributions, content sharing and boosting digital visibility, are concrete, meaningful ways to defend press freedom in Nicaragua.

• **Pro-Government Media Face Increasing Restrictions on Reporting the Reality in Nicaragua**

Even those aligned with the government's narrative are not exempt from restrictions, censorship and limitations that prevent them from fully exercising their journalistic work. Though their content is focused on state propaganda, pro-government journalists also face internal bans, aggression and strict oversight of what they report, how they say it, and with whom they associate.

FLED, through its network of Press Freedom Promoters, has documented that in several departments across the country, pro-government journalists "suffer censorship in silence." Collected testimonies show that restrictions have intensified in recent months—even within media outlets fully aligned with the Sandinista Front. It's a paradox: those repeating the official narrative are also trapped in a system of absolute control.

Among the imposed measures is a strict prohibition on any form of contact, conversation, or closeness with independent journalists, whom the regime brands as "coup plotters" or "enemies of the people." They are also forbidden from engaging with citizens considered critics or opponents of the ruling party, limiting their interaction with the public and other sources of information.

Local radio stations are now required to rebroadcast Radio Ya's news programmes, the country's main pro-government radio outlet. This has come at the cost of local content production which, although also propagandistic, offered some territorial

contextualisation. The result has been greater disconnection from audiences—already on the decline—and a significant reduction in the plurality of voices in public discourse.

Many local news shows have had to reschedule to accommodate Radio Ya's central news broadcast on air from 5:30 to 7:00 a.m., causing an even sharper drop in their audience levels. This drift toward increasingly centralised and uniform information deepens the informational void in the regions.

In addition, live segments such as call-ins and open-mic shows have been banned. These once served as citizen platforms to voice community problems such as lack of potable water, inadequate waste collection, or prolonged power outages—issues affecting thousands, especially in rural areas. Now, the public has lost even those small spaces where their voices could be heard.

Censorship also extends to high-impact local news. In response to the recent wave of confiscations carried out by the Sandinista government—including properties from civil society organisations, private citizens, and the Catholic Church—official media are strictly prohibited from mentioning the origin or former ownership of seized assets.

A recent example was the inauguration of a new branch of the medical company SERMESA in Matagalpa, housed in facilities confiscated from the Diocese of Matagalpa. While official media celebrated the opening and its alleged community benefits, they omitted any reference to the building's original ownership.

These practices reveal that even within the government's media apparatus, control is ironclad and ever-present. Pro-government journalists operate under a logic of forced submission, where reporting is not a professional duty but a political directive. This reality shows that censorship in Nicaragua is indiscriminate: it targets any voice that dares to inform autonomously—even those within the margins of power.

• Nicaraguan journalists in exile face barriers to accessing public information in Costa Rica

Despite the entry into force of Law 10554 on Access to Public Information in Costa Rica on November 1, 2024, Nicaraguan journalists in exile continue to face obstacles in accessing public information and interviewing Costa Rican state officials.

A recent case was shared by a journalist who, while attempting to interview the Deputy Minister of Migration for a documentary on de facto stateless persons, experienced a frustrating situation:

"They rescheduled the date three times. Finally, when everything was ready, an hour before the interview they called to say the official couldn't attend. I felt like I was back in Nicaragua, where they used to do the same thing to evade us," he said.

This has not been an isolated incident. Despite Nicaraguan journalists raising these access issues in various dialogue spaces, the situation persists.

On February 24, during a conference convened by the Refugee Unit, several invited journalists were prevented from asking questions or conducting interviews. When they requested statements, the response was blunt: "We are not authorised to give interviews."

Even the intervention of donor NGO representatives, who expressed solidarity with the journalists, did not alter that stance. The following day, Andrea Carrillo, head of communications at the General Directorate of Migration and Foreigners, contacted some reporters to reiterate that officials cannot offer interviews, although she clarified that the official spokesperson could. However, that spokesperson never appeared.

These episodes have raised concerns among exiled journalists, especially regarding institutions such as the Directorate of Migration and Foreigners. While Costa Rica maintains its democratic tradition and welcoming stance toward politically persecuted individuals, exiled Nicaraguan journalists face barriers that limit their full right to practice journalism and access public information in their host country.

• **Journalists face sustained psychological exhaustion**

In the current context of repression and constant surveillance, the mental health of journalists in Nicaragua continues to deteriorate. Far from improving, the climate of insecurity, isolation, and fear in which they operate has deepened emotional exhaustion, especially for those still in the country. The real possibility of being watched, persecuted, or criminalised for practicing journalism has become part of daily life.

One of the main contributors to this decline is the reduction or loss of close support networks. Fear of reprisals has led family and friends to distance themselves, both physically and digitally, for their own safety. This forced disconnection leaves many journalists without emotional support, exacerbating feelings of loneliness, anxiety and uncertainty in an increasingly hostile and unpredictable environment.

The situation is worsened by the lack of dignified and sustainable job opportunities, as well as the absence of safe spaces or specialised programmes offering psychosocial care to those facing this structural violence. Available emotional support options are often inaccessible due to financial, geographic, or security constraints, leaving journalists in a state of high emotional and physical vulnerability.

Although mental health directly affects both professional capacity and daily life, it remains largely overlooked and under-addressed within support strategies for independent journalism. This creates a critical gap that urgently needs attention.

Several journalists have shared with FLED that they live in a constant state of alert: monitoring their movements, restricting communications and avoiding exposing loved ones. Even those with family support have chosen distance as a means of protecting their close circles.

The consequences of repression and censorship in Nicaragua are numerous and deep. Among them, the impact on mental health is devastating, even in the short term. It is urgent to strengthen emotional support networks, develop psychosocial care spaces, and promote comprehensive support for journalists and their families.

This reality also affects those who have gone into exile. Although they do not face direct police harassment or persecution by parastate actors abroad, loneliness, migration-related uncertainty, lack of stable employment and financial pressures — such as paying rent or meeting basic needs— are ongoing sources of anxiety and emotional strain.

Case Descriptions

Natural Persons

Date of the event	January 13, 2025
Victim's name	Tiffany Roberts
Gender	Female
Location	Managua
Source of information	https://www.youtube.com/live/4ZlRgLQ2d2o?si=K4-cP9RQr1-937ps
Area of work	Journalist

Risk classification	Stigmatising Discourse
Aggressor	Santiago Aburto
Description of the facts	<p>During a live broadcast of the programme BTN Noticias on January 13, specifically at minute 3:02:20, host Santiago Aburto questioned and attacked journalist Tifany Roberts for her comments directed at Bishop Rolando Álvarez, following his decision to grant an interview to a Spanish media outlet before speaking with a Nicaraguan outlet.</p> <p>Aburto stated that Roberts, whom he identified as "a member of the Sandinista army," was upset with Bishop Álvarez for not giving interviews to Nicaraguan media.</p> <p>The journalist had written on her X (formerly Twitter) account: "How sad that Bishop Rolando Álvarez does not feel confident enough to sit down with a Nicaraguan journalist to discuss these issues, distancing himself more and more from the Nicaraguan community that loves him so much."</p> <p>In response, Aburto claimed the bishop had every right to choose whom he grants interviews to: "Bishop Rolando Álvarez knows who is who, where they come from, and what they represent. These people want to be granted interviews by force, calling themselves journalists with Sandinista affiliations," he said.</p> <p>In recent years, Aburto has consistently attacked independent media outlets and journalists, acting as though he were an official government spokesperson.</p>

Date of event	January 27, 2025
Victim's name	Dennis Castellón
Gender	Male
Location	Nueva Segovia
Source of information	https://www.youtube.com/live/qabo9pcNVJQ?si=fwquwPGa0axmFBF2
Area of work	Satire content creator
Risk classification	Assaults and attacks
Aggressors	Police officers, Sandinista fanatics

Description of the facts	<p>The satirical content creator Dennis Castellón, known for his character LOCUIN, denounced that paramilitaries accompanied by senior police officials showed up at his mother's home in the department of Nueva Segovia on Saturday, January 25, to intimidate her due to the satires he produces about Rosario Murillo.</p> <p>According to LOCUIN, the officers ordered his mother to deliver a message: he must immediately stop his criticism of Murillo, warning that if he did not comply, he could be "disappeared," even in the United States, where he currently resides.</p> <p>Exiled in the United States since 2021, LOCUIN stated that these actions were carried out under direct orders from Rosario Murillo and warned that this type of threat could also extend to other content creators outside the country.</p> <p>Despite the intimidation, the humourist affirmed that he will continue producing his satires, which, according to him, are the most viewed on his social media and aim to denounce the political reality in Nicaragua.</p> <p>Satire is a common tool in opinion genres and constitutes a legitimate form of denunciation in the face of situations that affect citizens; therefore, it should not be criminalised.</p>
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Date of event	February 3, 2025
Victim's name	Anonymous
Gender	Anonymous
Location	Anonymous
Source of information	Promoter of Press Freedom
Area of work	Journalist
Risk classification	Assaults and attacks
Aggressors	Police officers
Description of the facts	<p>A source close to the family of an independent journalist informed a Press Freedom Promoter that police officers raided the journalist's home.</p> <p>After the raid, the journalist was taken to the local police station. Following several hours of interrogation and threats, he was released, though under the warning that his movements would be monitored. However, according to the family member, the police confiscated his mobile phone.</p> <p>To mitigate the risk of further harassment and intimidation at his home, the journalist was forced to relocate to another department in the country.</p>

	<p>According to his family, he has not worked in journalism for more than two years due to unemployment.</p> <p>The Nicaraguan government, far from ceasing its attacks on the independent press, continues to violate journalists' rights, harassing and intimidating them — even those who have been out of the profession for years.</p>
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Date of event	February 7, 2025
Victim's name	Miguel Mendoza
Gender	Male
Location	Managua
Source of information	https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?mibextid=wwXlfr&ref=watch_permalink&v=3777535139224227&rdid=vIYVihUHEkcj35Zn
Area of work	Sportswriter
Risk classification	Stigmatising Discourse
Aggressors	Enrique Quiñones
Description of the facts	<p>The sports commentator Miguel Mendoza has once again been subjected to verbal attacks and discrediting remarks by Enrique Quiñones, a spokesperson defending the ruling party, revealing a sustained pattern of harassment over the past two years.</p> <p>These attacks, which include the use of the derogatory nickname "trompa de guabina" (guabina horn) to refer to Mendoza, have intensified across both traditional media and social media platforms.</p> <p>During the programme "Choque de Opiniones" on February 7, 2025, Quiñones accused Mendoza of publishing lists of individuals who have participated in protests or received donations, which, according to him, has had negative consequences for those mentioned.</p> <p>At minute 1:18:15 of the broadcast, Quiñones claimed that several individuals included in the lists shared by Mendoza are now facing problems as a result of this exposure.</p> <p>Later, at minute 1:25:34, he asserted that because of Mendoza, he himself has been affected, as his name appeared on one of these lists, causing him personal harm.</p>

	Despite the ongoing attacks and disparagement, Mendoza continues to carry out his journalistic work, particularly through interviews on his social media platforms, where he maintains a strong following.
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Date of event	February 9, 2025
Victim's name	Irving Guerrero Montes
Gender	Male
Location	León
Source of information	https://www.despacho505.com/politica/25600-periodista-irving-guerrero-presos-nicaragua/
Area of work	Journalist
Risk classification	Arbitrary detention
Aggressors	Police officers
Description of the facts	<p>On February 9, 2025, Nicaraguan police officers arrested journalist Irving Guerrero Montes at his residence in the El Sagrario neighbourhood, León department.</p> <p>Guerrero Montes, 65, is a senior citizen with chronic illnesses and has a long history as a correspondent for various media outlets.</p> <p>The arrest took place in the afternoon while Guerrero was with his family. According to available information, he is accused of allegedly possessing illegal firearms.</p> <p>The arrest was initially reported by the pro-government station Radio Venceremos, owned by former León mayor Tránsito Téllez; however, the report was later removed.</p> <p>To date, no official information has been provided about his whereabouts or formal charges against him, raising concerns about his legal status and well-being.</p> <p>With Guerrero's arrest, the number of journalists imprisoned and/or disappeared in Nicaragua for political reasons has risen to four. The other detained journalists are Fabiola Tercero, Elsbeth D'Anda, and Leo Cárcamo.</p>

Date of event	February 15 2025
Victim's name	Anonymous
Gender	Anonymous
Location	Anonymous
Source of information	Promoter of Press Freedom
Area of work	Media Director
Risk classification	Assaults and attacks
Aggressors	Police officers
Description of the facts	<p>A Nicaraguan journalist, who requested anonymity from the Press Freedom Promoter for security reasons, has reported receiving threats from Sandinista paramilitaries, which forced her to temporarily shut down her news platform.</p> <p>She also disclosed that her team has gone into exile due to persecution, and she is currently considering leaving the country to protect her physical safety and that of her family.</p> <p>It is regrettable that more journalists are being forced to abandon their news platforms, their families, and their country as a consequence of exercising their rights and freedoms.</p> <p>Almost seven years into Nicaragua's sociopolitical and human rights crisis, the government must implement concrete actions to ensure press freedom and protect journalists.</p> <p>It is essential that authorities cease censorship and harassment, allowing an environment where media and journalists can operate without fear of retaliation.</p>

Date of event	February 19, 2025
Victim's name	Carlos Fernando Chamorro
Gender	Male
Location	Managua

Source of information	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FxIQgAmuAQI
Area of work	Media Outlet Director
Risk classification	Stigmatising Discourse
Aggressor	Santiago Aburto
Description of the facts	<p>On the February 19 episode of Buenas Tardes Nicaragua, host Santiago Aburto attacked journalist Carlos Fernando Chamorro, director of the digital media outlet Confidencial.</p> <p>Aburto referred to Chamorro as “the Sandinista Carlos Fernando Chamorro, former director of the official FSLN newspaper Barricada in the 1980s.” He also claimed that “all these people who call themselves the opposition have lived off U.S. taxpayers, and Europeans too,” and insisted that it is time to “hold them accountable” and determine “who kept the money.”</p> <p>In an attempt to discredit media outlets and journalists who have received funding from USAID projects, he asserted that his programme is “the only independent, serious programme that has been on the air for 21 years,” emphasising that “not a single dollar has ever come from the foundations they’re involved with.”</p> <p>Aburto specifically pointed to “the Chamorros, Carlos Fernando Chamorro and Cristiana Chamorro,” as beneficiaries of “millions of dollars... for years.”</p> <p>It is important to remember that receiving support from international cooperation is not a crime, and that each media outlet and journalist, within the framework of the projects they participate in, defines their own editorial line.</p> <p>Aburto should consider that a plurality of voices is essential to ensure freedom of information and expression in any society. With his attacks, rather than fighting censorship, he reinforces the government’s narrative and its repressive actions.</p>

Date of event	February 26, 2025
Victims’ names	Carlos Fernando Chamorro, Luis Galeano, Santiago Aburto, Álvaro Navarro, Sergio Marín, Jennifer Ortiz, Jackson Orozco, Dino Andino, Lucia Pineda, Miguel Mendoza
Gender	Male, Male, Male, Male, Male, Female, Male, Male, Female, Male
Location	

Source of information	https://www.el19digital.com/articulos/ver/161669-detalles-del-momento-mercenarios-o-periodistas
Area of work	Media Director, Media Director, Media Director, Media Director, Media Director, Media Director, Journalist, Journalist, Media Director, Sports Commentator
Risk classification	Stigmatising Discourse
Aggressor	Moisés Absalón Pastora
Description of the facts	<p>On February 26, 2025, during the broadcast of the programme Detalles del Momento, Sandinista deputy Moisés Absalón Pastora launched personal and collective attacks against Nicaraguan journalists.</p> <p>At minute 4:32 of the programme, Pastora claimed that the image of journalism in Nicaragua has been damaged by what he called “sinners of information,” adding that “they stained the righteous with their filth—those of us who, with a sense of nation, believe we can also contribute to building peace.”</p> <p>Pastora expressed his frustration about the widespread discredit that, according to him, has fallen upon the profession: “it’s upsetting when one hears some sectors of society contemptuously say ‘here come those journalists’ or ‘you look like a journalist.’”</p> <p>Between minutes 7:49 and 11:23, Pastora directly referred to a list of communicators whom he labelled as “mercenaries, terrorists, and traitors to the homeland.” Pastora said, “there’s Carlos Fernando Chamorro, Luis Galeano, Santiago Aburto, Álvaro Navarro, Sergio Marín, that so-called Jennifer Ortiz, Jackson Orozco, Dino Andino, Lucía Pineda, Miguel Mendoza... all mercenaries, terrorists, traitors who deservedly have been stripped of their nationality.”</p> <p>Pastora claimed that these journalists—many of whom are in exile and were among the group of 222 individuals released and expatriated in 2023—make up “a mercenary media front that now, from abroad, continue to be paid... for pennies,” concluding that they “stopped being credible voices a long time ago.”</p> <p>Once again, the recurring narrative of criminalisation of the independent press in Nicaragua is evident, characterised by accusations and smear campaigns from official platforms.</p> <p>In this case, there is a particular nuance: communicator Santiago Aburto appears as a victim, even though in other contexts he has been identified as a perpetrator.</p> <p>Although this may seem contradictory, we want to emphasise that at FLED we defend the right to freedom of the press and freedom of expression. Therefore, we make an active call for respect, the responsible use of language, and the proper use of terms—and precisely in line with these principles, we do not minimise the attack directed at him.</p>

Date of event	March 17 & 18, 2025
Victim's name	Anonymous, Anonymous
Gender	Anonymous, Anonymous,
Location	Anonymous, Anonymous
Source of information	Promoter of Press Freedom
Area of work	Journalist
Risk classification	Assaults and attacks
Aggressors	Police officers
Description of the facts	<p>Two journalists, residing in different departments of Nicaragua, reported to a Press Freedom Promoter that they received threats on March 17 and 18. Both have requested to remain anonymous to protect their lives and the safety of their families.</p> <p>One of the journalists reported having been threatened by paramilitaries and by the host of a local radio news programme who, according to the journalist, is supported by the municipal government. “Every time I publish something, he warns me that it won’t be well received at the departmental headquarters. It’s something that makes me feel desperate,” he stated.</p> <p>According to colleagues, this individual serves as a tool for surveillance and intimidation of independent journalists, to the point that some have chosen to feign allegiance to the government in order to protect themselves.</p> <p>The other journalist reported receiving intimidating messages from unknown individuals via social media. He says he feels constantly watched and has had previous confrontations with defenders of the Sandinista regime. The threats, he indicated, aim to discourage him from continuing his journalistic work.</p>

Date of event	March 20, 2025
Victim's name	Houston Castillo Vado
Gender	Male,
Location	Managua

Source of information	https://www.facebook.com/entrelineasnooficial/posts/pfbid02uWRXRh1fRsAa3r2VTABrEk84PDA5BqLC6RiFyGVTofdCQUdyGWVEzkTBb6L6g4Tgl?rdid=rrgPp7v9LkEaEcls
Area of work	Journalist
Risk classification	Assaults and attacks
Aggressor	Entre Líneas No Oficial (a Facebook page)
Description of the facts	<p>The Facebook page Entre Líneas No Oficial, known for spreading content targeting opponents and dissidents of the Nicaraguan government, published a post attacking exiled journalist Houston Castillo, following an interview he conducted with former Sandinista guerrilla Mónica Baltodano that was broadcast by Realidades.</p> <p>Castillo, who also became unemployed after the dismantling of the media outlet Voice of America (VOA), has been subjected to harassment. The posts included insults and disparaging remarks, accompanied by photographs of both him and Baltodano.</p> <p>One of the messages read:</p> <p>“Sandinista propagandist was infiltrated at VOA, paid with U.S. taxpayer money. He ran to his ‘little commander monkey, the criminal and troublemaker Mónica Baltodano’ with a list of soft questions. We wouldn’t be surprised if she paid for it — both are traitorous ‘piricuacos’ (Sandinista combatants).”</p> <p>Castillo denounced the attacks, stating that they aim to delegitimise his journalistic work:</p> <p>“They call us ‘leftists’ and label us as ‘traitors’ to discredit us. That’s the regime’s narrative,” he said.</p> <p>This type of attack constitutes a violation of the right to freedom of expression and helps reinforce the government’s repressive strategy against independent journalism, fostering a climate of censorship, intimidation, and hostility toward those who practice journalism independently.</p>



In the month of February, a raid was carried out on the home of an independent journalist in Nicaragua.

FLED / Illustrative image generated with AI

Legal entities

Date of the incident	February 20, 2025
Media outlet	Vidas Caribeñas
Geographic area	RACCS
Source of information	https://x.com/AlertasLP_Nic/status/1892700641140551798
Type of incident by work area	Digital Platform
Type of risk	Internet Restrictions
Aggressors	Unidentified
Description of the events	<p>The media platform Vidas Caribeñas reported being the target of cyberattacks following the release of a podcast episode addressing the situation of Nicaraguan Indigenous women exiled in Costa Rica. The content, which focused on the multiple forms of violence and challenges these women face, triggered a series of attempts to disrupt the platform’s communicative work.</p> <p>According to the report, fake accounts were detected attempting to hack the site, compromising not only its security but also its ability to maintain clear and direct communication with its audience—particularly with the communities that follow its content.</p> <p>Vidas Caribeñas noted that these actions are not isolated incidents, but rather part of a pattern of systematic harassment against media outlets and platforms that shed light on human rights violations, especially those affecting historically marginalized communities.</p> <p>At FLED, we reaffirm the importance of a free internet where information can be shared, protected, and where the right to freedom of expression and information is guaranteed. This becomes even more urgent when it involves voices that document and expose realities authoritarian regimes seek to silence.</p>

Date of the incident	March 3, 2024
Media outlet	La Prensa

Geographic area	Managua
Source of information	https://www.el19digital.com/articulos/ver/161823-de-imperio-mediatico-a-fantasma-digital-el-triste-final-de-la-prensa
Type of incident by work area	National media
Type of risk	Stigmatising Discourse
Aggressors	Stalin Vladimir Centeno
Description of the events	<p>On March 2, 2025, the newspaper La Prensa marked its 99th anniversary amid the exile of its directors and journalists, the shutdown of its print edition, and the ongoing systematic repression of independent media in Nicaragua.</p> <p>In that context, on March 3, official government spokesperson Stalin Vladimir Centeno published an opinion piece attacking the news outlet and its journalists. Centeno described La Prensa as “the most perverse symbol of corruption disguised as journalism, a malignant tumour in Nicaragua’s history that has devoured the truth.”</p> <p>He added that the outlet does not represent journalism but rather “a machine of destruction” that “was born from the rotten womb of the Chamorro oligarchy and grew feeding on deceit, coup-mongering, and servitude to imperialism.”</p> <p>Centeno claimed that La Prensa is “a corpse that reeks of defeat,” and that its decline is not due to the passage of time or the digital transition, but because “the people woke up and said: enough!”</p> <p>The article also echoed the official narrative accusing independent media of participating in an alleged coup attempt in 2018. “La Prensa was not an observer of events; it was a leading actor (...). It wasn’t a newspaper; it was a weapon. It didn’t inform, it incited. It didn’t analyse, it conspired,” wrote the spokesperson, referring to the outlet’s coverage of the civic protests that year.</p> <p>In a tone filled with hatred and dehumanisation, Centeno declared that “those who once handed down verdicts from their editorials are now condemned to oblivion (...). La Prensa does not die with dignity—it dies spat on by history, trampled by the people, vomited by Nicaragua.” He asserted that the newspaper’s anniversary is not a moment of celebration but “the burial of a traitor.”</p> <p>Centeno’s attack is part of the broader state-led strategy of criminalisation and delegitimisation of independent journalism. Despite everything, La Prensa continues to report and remains one of the most important newspapers in Nicaragua and the region.</p>

Date of the incident	March 14, 2024
Media outlet	100% Noticias, La Prensa, Onda Local y Confidencial
Geographic area	Managua
Source of information	https://www.dw.com/es/medios-cr%C3%ADticos-de-nicaragua-denuncian-bloqueo-de-sus-sitios-web/a-71928977
Type of incident by work area	National media
Type of risk	Internet Restrictions
Aggressors	Universidad de Ingeniería UNI
Description of the events	<p>At least four independent media outlets have reported that the government of Daniel Ortega and Rosario Murillo blocked websites using the .ni domain, in a new assault on press freedom in Nicaragua.</p> <p>Among the affected outlets are Confidencial, La Prensa, 100% Noticias, and Onda Local, whose websites were still operating under Nicaragua's official domain (.com.ni).</p> <p>The measure was carried out by the National University of Engineering (UNI), through its NIC.NI unit, which is responsible for managing national domain names.</p> <p>The media outlets reported that they received no prior notification of the block. "We knew it would happen; it was just a matter of time," said Julio López, director of Onda Local, in an interview with a digital outlet. "That's why Onda Local had already prepared alternative domains," he added.</p> <p>Confidencial explained that they had migrated to a new domain in June 2022. "We only ask users who were still accessing the site ending in .com.ni to connect directly to the new address, as the block prevents redirection," the outlet stated in a report.</p> <p>In the case of 100% Noticias, which relocated its operations to Costa Rica following the forced exile of its team, its director Lucía Pineda Ubau described the block as "a direct order from the dictatorship" and "a new attempt at censorship against the independent press."</p> <p>Meanwhile, Confidencial warned that this "arbitrary and unjustified" suspension violates citizens' rights and contravenes ICANN policies, which require neutral and transparent domain management.</p>

	This latest repressive measure confirms that attacks in Nicaragua are evolving. The regime is now focusing its efforts on controlling and censoring the digital space, attempting to silence critical voices that continue to resist online.
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	Month			Quarterly total of specific risks
	January	February	March	
Assaults and attacks	1	2	3	6
Stigmatising Discourse	1	12	1	14
Arbitrary detention		1		1
Internet Restrictions		1	4	5
Grand Total	2	16	8	26

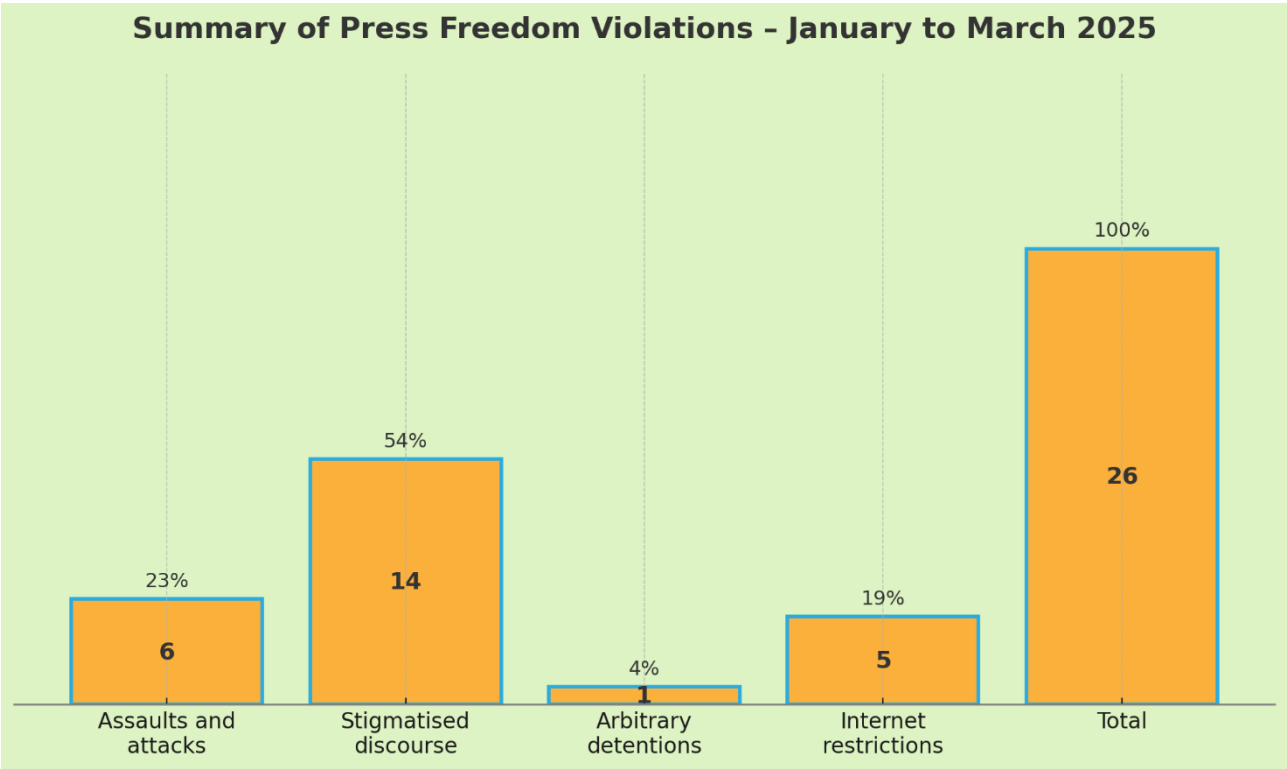
In the first quarter of the year, a continued pattern of repression against the independent press in Nicaragua was identified. FLED documented 26 cases of press freedom violations, with stigmatising discourse being the most frequent indicator, appearing in 14 cases, followed by aggressions and attacks with 6 cases, and internet restrictions, which occurred 5 times. There was also one arbitrary detention, showing that although the most severe forms of repression are less frequent, they are still being used by the Nicaraguan State.

It is clear that Nicaragua maintains a strategy of control that combines symbolic violence with direct actions. In particular, the use of stigmatising discourse has remained a consistent tool to delegitimise the work of independent journalists and media outlets.

From official platforms, pro-government social media accounts, and state-run media, a narrative is constantly reproduced portraying the free press as an enemy of public order or as aligned with foreign interests. This practice follows a logic of attrition — silencing without imprisonment and isolating without directly shutting down media outlets. Official spokespeople have not stopped making it clear that those who exercise their rights and freedoms will be publicly discredited.

The focus on internet-based attacks this quarter reflects the regime's ongoing effort to control the virtual environment —the only remaining free space for the independent press.

Although physical violence has been lower compared to previous periods, the persistence of aggression, along with ongoing mechanisms of pressure and surveillance, remains firmly in place in Nicaragua. Over the past seven years, the repressive apparatus has adapted, but the goal of censorship has remained unchanged.



Perpetrators/Aggressors	Total	%
State actors	20	74.1
Non-state actors	2	7.4
Unidentified	1	3.7
Parastate actors	4	14.8
Grand Total	27	100

In the 26 documented cases of press freedom violations during this quarter, 27 aggressors were identified. This difference is explained by the fact that, in at least one case, there was simultaneous participation by police officers and Sandinista supporters, a clear example of collaboration between state and parastate structures in the repression.

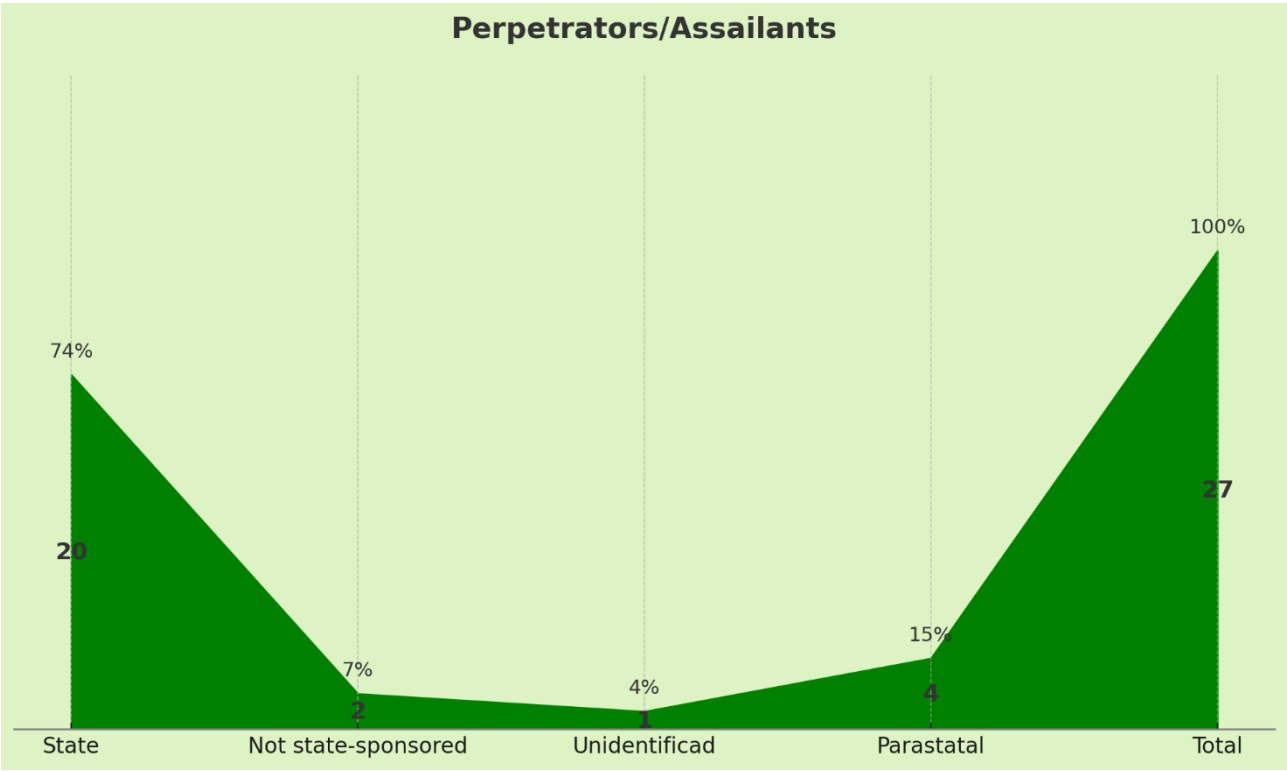
Out of the total number of aggressors, state actors accounted for the largest share, with 20 cases; followed by parastate actors with 4 cases; non-state actors with 2 cases; and 1 case in which the perpetrator was not identified. As documented in various reports, the government (the State) continues to be the main aggressor against the independent press. It has refined its censorship mechanisms, combining repressive actions with the involvement of parastate actors, thereby increasingly enhancing its capacity for intimidation.

Aggressions carried out by state actors follow an institutionalised pattern: the use of police forces and public entities to monitor, harass, or obstruct journalistic work.

On the other hand, parastate groups —such as regime supporters, official spokespersons, and political operatives— act with impunity, replicating official narratives, promoting the discrediting of independent media, and carrying out both physical and symbolic attacks. Their role is crucial in sustaining the information blockade from behind anonymity or through non-formal yet power-serving structures.

Although to a lesser extent, non-state actors—individuals with no explicit ties to the state apparatus or parastate structures—were also involved in some attacks.

The data clearly shows that repression of press freedom in Nicaragua operates on multiple levels. There exists an authoritarian ecosystem in which various forms of violence converge to restrict the universal rights inherent to citizenship.



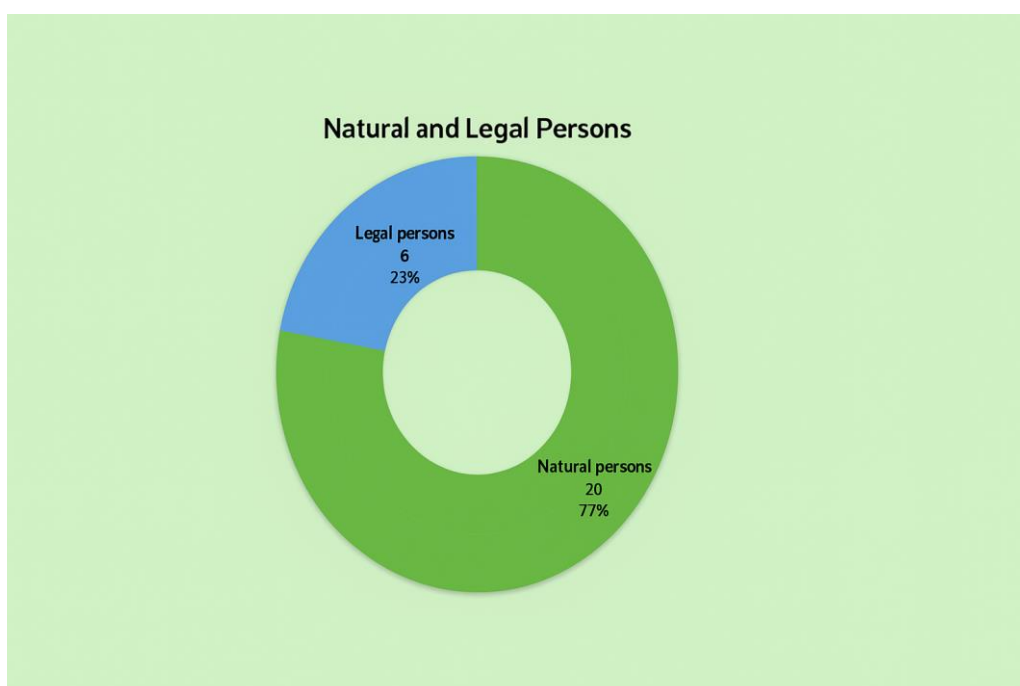
Natural and Legal Persons as Victims	Total	%
Natural persons	20	77
Legal persons	6	23
Total	26	100

During this quarter, the attacks affected **20 individuals (natural persons)** and **6 organizations (legal persons)**—in this case, media outlets. This figure reflects not only the continuation of repression but also its **systematic nature**, targeting both individuals and the platforms that support journalistic work.

Among the individuals, the **primary targets remain journalists, communicators, and independent reporters**, who face repeated forms of aggression. Digital attacks predominate, including **harassment campaigns, defamation, and threats**—many of which are directed not only at the journalists themselves but also at their family members, in an effort to instil fear and create isolation. In addition, a **sustained campaign of stigmatisation and delegitimisation** continues against media leadership, especially **directors**, who—due to their strategic role in shaping editorial lines—are seen as key figures to neutralise.

The **attacks targeting media outlets** clearly reflect the discomfort their work causes for those in political power in Nicaragua. Despite forced exile, censorship and the many restrictions imposed by the state apparatus, these outlets continue their **journalistic mission**. They remain committed to documenting the country's reality, amplifying the voices of victims, and creating spaces for denouncing abuses, thus breaking through the wall of silence.

Discredit campaigns, cyberattacks and access blocks are not just attempts to silence them; they also confirm the **impact, relevance, and reach** these outlets maintain, even from outside Nicaragua.



Other Important Aspects Related to Press Freedom

IACHR Requests Expansion of Provisional Measures for Disappearance of Journalist in Nicaragua

On January 2, 2025, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR)¹ requested the Inter-American Court of Human Rights to expand the provisional measures in the case of *Juan Sebastián Chamorro et al.* to include *Catalino Leo Cárcamo Herrera* and his family.

Cárcamo, a 61-year-old journalist and former Head of the Press Department at *Radio Darío*, was detained by state agents on November 22, 2024, in the Department of León. His whereabouts remain unknown since that time.

“The Commission considered Mr. Catalino Leo Cárcamo’s situation especially concerning, given that his whereabouts are unknown following his detention,” warned the IACHR, adding that the journalist’s health condition and age increase the risk he faces while detained.

Despite multiple efforts to determine his location, the Nicaraguan state has provided no information or evidence of effective measures to protect his well-being. The IACHR also asked the Court to order his release “given the State’s inability to guarantee the rights of those in its custody.”

Constitutional Reform Consolidates Authoritarianism in Nicaragua

A constitutional reform passed by the National Assembly of Nicaragua deepens the Executive’s total control over the other branches of government.

The Regional Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)² expressed alarm over a series of changes that “mark the death of fundamental freedoms and the rule of law in Nicaragua,” according to High Commissioner Volker Türk.

Among the most serious changes, according to OHCHR, is the **elimination of separation of powers**: the constitutional reform **concentrates even more power in the Presidency**, which now coordinates the legislative, judicial, and electoral bodies, while **removing the article that explicitly guaranteed separation of powers**, as well as references to political pluralism.

¹ https://www.oas.org/es/CIDH/jsForm/?File=/es/cidh/prensa/comunicados/2025/003.asp&utm_content=country-nic

² <https://www.oacnudh.org/nicaragua-la-reforma-constitucional-profundiza-retrocesos-en-libertades-civiles-y-politicas/>

The reform also **restricts freedom of expression and of the press** based on vague and undefined notions of "well-being"; eliminates the **right to strike**; and **weakens essential due process guarantees**, such as the right to be informed of charges and to proper legal defence. It also **removes the explicit ban on torture**.

The text was unanimously approved by all 90 members of the National Assembly, without abstentions or opposing votes.

OHCHR also warned that the reform enables the **revocation of nationality** for those accused of "treason," a legally ambiguous category often used to punish dissenting voices.

"These reforms could seriously undermine the guarantees for free and fair elections in accordance with international standards," warned Andrés Sánchez Thorin, OHCHR's representative.

RSF Again Calls for End to Persecution of Journalists

On Nicaragua's National Journalist Day, commemorated each year on March 1, international organization *Reporters Without Borders* (RSF)³ stated that the date, far from being a celebration, "has become a stark reminder of the relentless oppression faced by independent journalists under the government of Daniel Ortega."

RSF warned that in the past year, **four journalists have been detained in Nicaragua**, three of whom remain disappeared, and **hundreds have been forced into exile**. "What should be a festive day for Nicaraguan journalists is marked instead by repression, exile, and forced disappearances," said Artur Romeu, RSF's Director for Latin America.

The organisation issued an urgent call to the international community to demand that the regime **immediately end persecution, release imprisoned journalists, and clarify the whereabouts of the disappeared**.

The situation has created an atmosphere of **fear and self-censorship** in the country. RSF reports that many journalists have abandoned their work out of fear of retaliation, while those who remain face **house arrest, constant threats and state surveillance**.

RSF notes that these actions are part of a **systematic strategy** by the regime to silence the independent press and tightly control the flow of information. According to RSF and the **Foundation for Freedom of Expression and Democracy (FLED)**, at least **46 journalists were expelled from Nicaragua** in the past year.

³ <https://rsf.org/es/mientras-nicaragua-celebra-el-d%C3%ADa-nacional-del-periodista-su-libertad-de-prensa-agoniza>

Nicaragua Absent from UN Universal Periodic Review Session

The government of Nicaragua **did not attend the March 26, 2025 session** of the UN Human Rights Council, during which its **final Universal Periodic Review (UPR) report** was scheduled for adoption. The absence forced the postponement of the procedure to the Council's 60th session. Nonetheless, the review process continues, and the **adoption session is now scheduled for November 13** in Geneva, Switzerland, when the recommendations to the Nicaraguan state will be presented.

Before the Nicaraguan government's withdrawal was made public, **FLED**, together with **ARTICLE 19**, **PEN International**, **CPJ**, **PCIN**, and **IAPA**, had called on the Council to issue **strong recommendations** to protect freedom of expression and press, taking into account serious allegations by civil society and findings presented by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.⁴

These organisations pointed out that, despite the Nicaraguan State claiming in its National Report (September 2024) that **no violations of freedom of expression occurred between 2019 and 2023**, multiple reports reveal a starkly different reality. Since 2018, Nicaragua has experienced a **human rights crisis marked by the systematic repression of critical voices**, with arbitrary detentions, forced exile, surveillance, torture, judicial harassment, and **revocation of nationality** as recurring practices.

The signatory organisations urged the Nicaraguan State to **immediately end its persecution of dissenting voices**, and called on the Human Rights Council to **take firm action to protect them and safeguard civic space**.

RELPEX: A Network Giving Voice to Journalism in Exile

At the Ibero-American Colloquium on Digital Journalism held during ISOJ in Texas, the **Latin American Network of Journalism in Exile (RELPEX)** was presented. It is an initiative by the **Inter American Press Association (IAPA)** that brings together more than **200 exiled journalists**, especially from **Nicaragua, Venezuela, and Cuba**.

"Exiled journalism has become the last line of defence against the information blackout imposed by authoritarian regimes," said Carlos Lauría, IAPA's Executive Director.

⁴ <https://ifex.org/free-expression-advocacy-organizations-call-on-the-un-human-rights-council-to-ensure-the-protection-and-respect-of-freedom-of-expression-and-press-freedom-in-nicaragua/>

RELPEX was launched in **October 2024** and now includes around **200 members**, primarily from **Venezuela, Nicaragua, Cuba, El Salvador, Mexico, and Ecuador**. The network aims to provide **employment opportunities, legal assistance, psychosocial support and content production resources for journalists working from exile**.

Interview

Only a collective and holistic approach to digital security can be a form of resistance, says digital security expert Paolo Nigro

Paolo Nigro, Regional Coordinator of Access Now's Digital Security Helpline, spoke with FLED about the alarming advance of state control in the digital space across Central America.

Nigro noted that Nicaragua stands out as one of the most extreme cases, where surveillance, censorship, and criminalisation of security tools have seriously affected independent journalism, civil society organisations, and the general population.

He warned that the repressive actions range from social media monitoring to website domain blocking. In this context, he emphasized that collective training with a holistic approach becomes an essential tool for resisting and defending fundamental rights and freedoms.

Here are some of his key reflections:

How has the digital landscape evolved in Central America in terms of state control, surveillance, and censorship against journalists and independent media in recent years?

Digital surveillance, censorship and control have become increasingly relevant in the region. States are investing more resources to monitor and intercept communications, block information sources, and actively censor the population. Journalism —especially the independent sector— has been one of the most attacked.

In Nicaragua, what are the most common patterns used to try to silence independent journalism?

Since 2018, the Nicaraguan state has censored, repressed, and surveilled media, activists and civil society at large. A recent example is the attempt to disable the domains of several independent media outlets through the domain authority managed by the National University of Engineering (UNI).

Mass surveillance is also widely used. We've received reports of:

- Messaging apps being monitored
- Infiltrators in chat groups identifying activists
- General social media activity being tracked
- Accounts being hacked
- Devices being confiscated during arrests to extract information

The state has also used this data to build legal cases against journalists, activists, and opposition figures. In some cases, people have been forced to surrender their device data during arrests.

We should also mention “troll centres”: coordinated groups that flood posts with negative comments, spread disinformation en masse, and intimidate people online.

How have tools like VPNs, encryption, and two-factor authentication protected journalists in high-risk environments?

It's easy to feel like “there's nothing we can do,” but in reality, there are tools and practices that have effectively protected independent journalism, sources, and activism. To prevent account theft:

- use two-factor authentication
- set up accounts securely
- use strong and unique passwords
- create protocols for device loss or arrest scenarios.

While for secure communication:

- use apps like Signal
- set them up properly with disappearing messages

Less technical measures are also key, like verifying group members, auditing accounts, and having clear incident response protocols.

For protecting device data:

- use full-disk encryption
- password-protect operating systems
- encrypt sensitive files

VPNs are useful, especially for guarding against eavesdropping and masking connections to servers. However, VPNs do not prevent malware, nor do they hide all personally identifiable information, and they don't protect your accounts directly.

We must also address the criminalisation of security tools. In Nicaragua, simply having secure messaging apps or a VPN has been used as grounds for suspicion or persecution. Civil society and journalists must defend the right to use these tools.

How can journalists assess their digital risk and develop a protection strategy adapted to their context?

There is no universal risk scale —risk assessment must always be personalised. The first step is “threat modelling,” which involves mapping the specific threats based on:

- your work
- your country/region's context
- the information you need to protect
- recent incidents

After identifying these risks, you can create security protocols, policies and action plans to strengthen your digital security posture.

If resources or time are limited, there are general best practices (as mentioned above), but we recommend custom evaluations whenever possible.

What does Access Now do, and how can independent journalists access support when their digital security or platform integrity is at risk?

Access Now works on digital rights globally. We combine advocacy, public policy, legal work and direct support.

If digital security is at risk, journalists can contact the Digital Security Helpline at:

 help@accessnow.org

This service is exclusively for civil society operatives —including journalists and activists— and not for private or personal cases.

What collective actions can journalists and media in the region take to confront digital attacks?

In my view, the most important steps are:

- Strengthening regional networks and coalitions like the newly launched Central American Journalism Network
- Integrating digital, psychosocial and physical security into all organisational practices
- Understanding that security is not an individual responsibility: it must be collective and organised

This is how we build resilience, secure resources, and implement protective digital practices.

Recently, .ni domains used by Nicaraguan independent media were blocked by the government. While outlets had migrated to new domains, the silencing attempt was clear. What are your thoughts on this level of state control over digital infrastructure? Have you seen similar cases in the region?

This is the first known case of its kind in the region, and it should not be normalised. The removal of these domains is a completely arbitrary and unjustified action by UNI, which manages Nicaragua's .ni domains. Multiple organizations have attributed this to direct orders from the government. It must be denounced and investigated.

How can collective training in digital security become an act of resistance and empowerment for independent journalism in Central America?

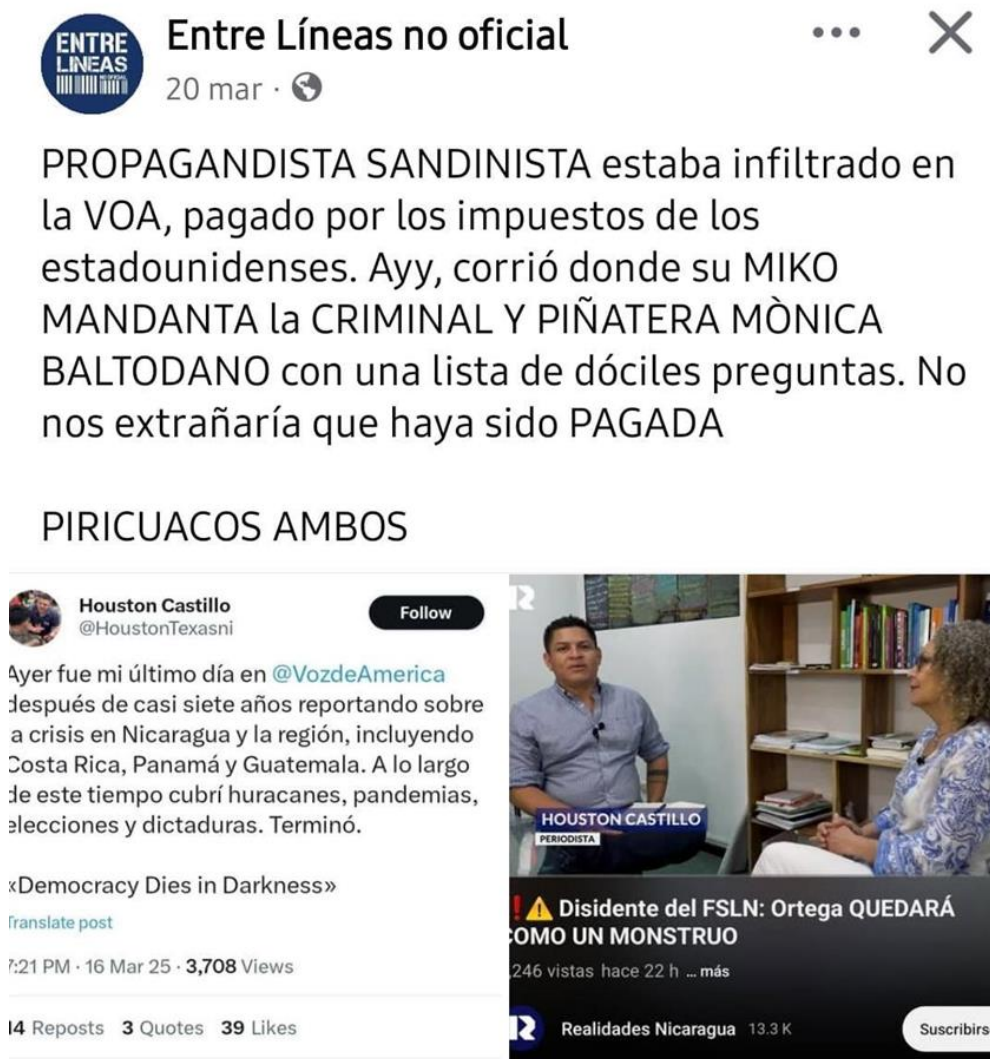
Collective training in digital security is central to resisting and defending journalists' rights to do their work. More broadly, however, it's a way to defend the public's right to information, press freedom, and expression.

Two final points:

Digital security should not be isolated from physical or psychosocial security. Digital issues happen through our devices, our routines, and our habits—they are not separate from real life. That's why we advocate for a holistic approach.

Security training should not be seen as a series of individual efforts. Protective strategies must be approached as collective care processes. Only in this way can they become true acts of resistance.

Appendix



This image is a social media post from the Facebook page "Entre Líneas no oficial", dated March 20, which contains a verbal attack against exiled Nicaraguan journalist Houston Castillo and former Sandinista guerrilla Mónica Baltodano.

The post accuses Castillo of being a "Sandinista propagandist" infiltrated in *Voice of America* (VOA) and criticises him for interviewing Baltodano, calling her "a criminal and troublemaker" and suggesting the interview was paid. The post includes derogatory language and terms used to discredit both individuals.

The image also shows:

- A screenshot of Houston Castillo's tweet announcing his departure from VOA after nearly seven years covering the region.
- A still from an interview video published by *Realidades Nicaragua* featuring Castillo and Baltodano.



Gobierno de Reconciliación
y Unidad Nacional
El Pueblo, Precedente!

4519
*La Patria
La Revolución!*

**Circular Administrativa
DGCE-SP-13-2024**

**Disposiciones para la Contratación de Servicios de Acceso a Internet y Enlaces de Datos
en el Sector Público.**

La Dirección General de Contrataciones del Estado del Ministerio de Hacienda y Crédito Público, en su calidad de Órgano Rector del Sistema de Administración de Contrataciones del Sector Público, en ejercicio de las facultades conferidas por la Ley N° 290 Texto Consolidado, Ley de Organización, Competencia y Procedimientos del Poder Ejecutivo, publicado en La Gaceta, Diario Oficial N° 170 del veintiuno de septiembre de dos mil veintitrés; Decreto N° 71-98 Texto Consolidado, Reglamento de la Ley N° 290 Ley de Organización, Competencia y Procedimientos del Poder Ejecutivo, publicado en La Gaceta, Diario Oficial N° 170 del veintiuno de septiembre de dos mil veintitrés; Ley N° 550 Texto Consolidado, Ley de Administración Financiera y del Régimen Presupuestario, publicado en La Gaceta, Diario Oficial N° 190 del diecinueve de octubre del año dos mil veintitrés; Ley N° 737, Ley de Contrataciones Administrativas del Sector Público, publicada en La Gaceta, Diario Oficial N° 213 y 214 del ocho y nueve de noviembre del año dos mil diez, respectivamente; Ley N° 1178, Ley de Adición a la Ley N° 606, Ley Orgánica del Poder Legislativo de la República de Nicaragua y a la Ley N° 737, Ley de Contrataciones Administrativas del Sector Público, publicada en La Gaceta, Diario Oficial N° 228 del quince de diciembre del año dos mil veintitrés; Decreto N° 75-2010, Texto Consolidado, Reglamento General a la Ley N° 737, publicado en La Gaceta, Diario Oficial publicado en La Gaceta, Diario Oficial N° 170 del veintiuno de septiembre de dos mil veintitrés.

Considerando

I

Que, de conformidad a lo establecido en el artículo 8 de la Ley No. 737, la Dirección General de Contrataciones del Estado del Ministerio de Hacienda y Crédito Público ejerce la Rectoría del Sistema de Administración de Contrataciones del Sector Público, para toda la Administración Pública central, autónoma por territorio o por funciones, correspondiéndole entre otros, la publicación de normas administrativas complementarias, de carácter general, que desarrollen o mejoren las contrataciones públicas en sus aspectos administrativos, técnicos, tecnológicos y económicos, con el objetivo de garantizar la comprensión, el cumplimiento y la difusión de la precitada Ley y su Reglamento General.

II

Que, en observancia al principio de vigencia tecnológica, establecido en el artículo 6 numeral 5) de la Ley No. 737, todas las Entidades y Organismos del Sector Público, deben adquirir soluciones de Tecnología de la Información y las Comunicaciones, que reúnan condiciones de calidad, modernidad, disponibilidad, fiabilidad, certeza, compatibilidad, seguridad y precios competitivos.

III

Que los servicios de acceso de internet y enlaces de datos, constituyen medios esenciales para asegurar la comunicación y transmisión de datos de las entidades que conforman el Sector Público, comprendida información pública reservada, la cual debe ser preservada y protegida para garantizar los intereses supremos nacionales y la seguridad soberana del Estado de la República de Nicaragua, ante amenazas como ataques externos a la seguridad cibernética que alteren o afecten los sistemas de comunicación nacional y actos tendientes a destruir o inhabilitar la infraestructura de carácter estratégico o indispensable para la provisión de bienes o servicios públicos, todo de conformidad con las leyes de la materia.



SOMOS PUEBLO QUE VENCE!
**CONSEJO DE COMUNICACIÓN Y CIUDADANÍA
CRISTIANA, SOCIALISTA, SOLIDARIA!**

Here is the English

Image of the government memo ordering Enatel to be contracted as the main internet provider for public institutions. Sourced from the web.



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.../CA DGCE-SP-13-2024

IV

Que la Empresa Nacional de Transmisión Eléctrica (ENATREL), creada por la Ley No. 583, "LEY CREADORA DE LA EMPRESA NACIONAL DE TRANSMISIÓN ELÉCTRICA, ENATREL", cuyo texto consolidado fue publicado en La Gaceta, Diario Oficial número 217 del 29 de noviembre de 2023, es una empresa pública descentralizada del Estado, de servicio público y de interés social, teniendo dentro de su finalidad desarrollar como actividad conexas, en su condición de propietaria de la red de telecomunicaciones por fibra óptica instalada en el Sistema Nacional de Transmisión Eléctrica, la explotación comercial, desarrollo, mantenimiento y operación de la capacidad instalada de los sistemas de comunicación, su infraestructura, medios y equipos, pudiendo operar a nivel nacional e internacionalmente, brindando toda clase de servicios de telecomunicaciones, de acuerdo a las respectivas leyes reguladoras de la materia, a las potencialidades y oportunidad de negocios en este mercado.

V

Que la empresa ENATREL cuenta con una infraestructura de red de fibra óptica desde su red troncal hasta la última milla, con cobertura a nivel nacional, la cual posee características técnicas que le permite brindar conexiones de gran ancho de banda y alta velocidad de transmisión, no propensa a interferencias electromagnéticas, cubriendo mayores distancias de transmisión con baja latencia, lo que garantiza que los datos e información se transmitan manteniendo su disponibilidad, integridad y confidencialidad.

Por Tanto:

Con base en las leyes, normas y consideraciones anteriormente expuestas, este Órgano Rector

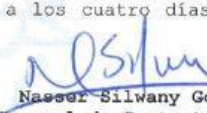
Acuerda:

Primero: Todas las Entidades y Organismos del Sector Público en general, deberán contratar los servicios principales de acceso a internet y enlaces de datos, con la Empresa Nacional de Transmisión Eléctrica (ENATREL), pudiendo para tal fin, suscribir los Convenios Interinstitucionales respectivos.

Para la contratación de servicios secundarios o redundantes de acceso a internet y enlaces de datos, las Entidades y Organismos del Sector Público, podrán contratar con otros Proveedores del Estado, aplicando el procedimiento ordinario de contratación que corresponda.

Segundo: La presente Circular Administrativa es de aplicación obligatoria e inmediata, para todas las Entidades y Organismos del Sector Público a partir de esta fecha, sin perjuicio de su publicación en el Portal Único de Contratación o cualquier otro medio de difusión.

Dado en la ciudad de Managua, a los cuatro días del mes de diciembre del año dos mil veinticuatro.


Nasser Silwany González
Director General de Contrataciones del Estado



CONSEJO DE COMUNICACIÓN Y CIUDADANÍA
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