Beat: News

Holding the Nicaraguan Regime Accountable

US Dept of State Press Statement

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USPA NEWS - The Ortega-Murillo regime for years has chipped away at Nicaragua's democratic institutions and, along with a small circle of enablers, has allowed corruption and impunity to reign. Nicaragua is increasingly deepening its relationship with Russia as it turns its back on the Nicaraguan people.

Today, the United States took additional actions to promote accountability for the Ortega-Murillo regime's attacks on civil liberties and democracy. The Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control imposed sanctions on Nicaraguan state-owned mining company ENIMINAS and the president of its board of directors, Ruy Delgado Lopez. The Nicaraguan National Assembly's 2017 creation of ENIMINAS increased the government's involvement in the mining sector, notably gold mining. The Ortega-Murillo regime promotes the gold mining industry, driving profits to its allies in the private sector and increasing ENIMINAS revenues that are managed by senior figures in the ruling party. As the Ortega-Murillo regime continues to isolate itself by repressing Nicaragua's democracy and Nicaraguans' human rights, it finds itself moving closer to other authoritarian nations like Russia.

On November 7, 2021, following months of repression and the imprisonment of more than 40 democratic leaders, including seven potential presidential candidates, opposition members, journalists, students and members of civil society, the Ortega-Murillo regime stole an election that denied Nicaraguans their ability to choose their own government. By declaring victory after the fraudulent election, the regime entrenched itself in power and established a dynastic dictatorship similar to the Somoza regime, which the Sandinistas overthrew more than 40 years ago. In the months that have followed, the Ortega-Murillo regime has closed over 500 non-governmental organizations and universities and refused to release the more than 180 political prisoners who remain unjustly detained.

With these new sanctions, the United States adds its voice to the international condemnation of the Ortega-Murillo regime's malign behavior. The United States joins the regional calls for a return to democracy in Nicaragua and will continue to use the diplomatic and economic tools available to us to promote accountability for the Ortega-Murillo regime. We call again for the immediate and unconditional release of political prisoners.

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