



SOVEREIGN MILITARY HOSPITALLER ORDER  
OF ST. JOHN OF JERUSALEM OF RHODES AND OF MALTA

PERMANENT OBSERVER MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE  
AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN GENEVA

**U.N. Human Rights Council – 54<sup>th</sup> regular session**

**Item 2 – Interactive Dialogue on the report of the High Commissioner on the human rights situation in Nicaragua**

**Statement by H.E. Ambassador Marie-Thérèse Pictet-Althann, Permanent Observer**

*12 September 2023, Geneva*

Mr President,  
Mr High Commissioner,  
Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

My Delegation shares the High Commissioner's concerns about the grave human rights violations in Nicaragua, as described in his report.

The Sovereign Order of Malta and the Republic of Nicaragua entertain diplomatic relations since 1953 and throughout the years we have implemented social and assistance programs for the benefit of the Nicaraguan people.

Regrettably, such humanitarian collaboration has considerably slowed down over recent years due to new conditions set by the local authorities. Should the current restrictions be lifted, the Order of Malta would be ready to relaunch its initiatives and programs of support in various sectors, to the benefit of the poorest and most vulnerable groups of the population.

Always in this spirit of worldwide cooperation and mutual respect, as well as of care for the well-being of all, the Order calls for the lifting of repressive measures affecting certain groups of citizens, in particular ecclesiastics, humanitarian and medico social workers.

We wish further to express our solidarity and support to the Catholic Church of Nicaragua, for the difficult situation it is facing and the hardship it suffers from, which constitutes a violation of the basic human right of freedom of religion or belief as highlighted in chapter II.C of the report.

In conclusion, the Order of Malta joins the High Commissioner in urging the government to restore and uphold the human rights of all Nicaraguans and release all persons arbitrarily detained.

Thank you.