

Debunking Myths About Nicaragua's 2021 Elections, Under Attack by USA/EU/OAS

By [Ben Norton](#)

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Millions of Nicaraguans went to the polls on November 7, 2021, re-electing the leftist Sandinista Front and President Daniel Ortega by a large margin.

The Joe Biden administration refused to recognize the results, however. The United States and its allies in the European Union and the Organization of American States (OAS) have instead launched what essentially amounts to a new coup attempt against Nicaragua's Sandinista government.

On November 10, President [Biden signed the RENACER Act](#), which will impose more [crushing sanctions on Nicaragua](#). Washington's escalating campaign of economic war was supplemented by the [OAS' claim](#) that the election was "illegitimate."

This campaign of hybrid warfare aimed at overthrowing Nicaragua's Sandinista government has many parallels with the ongoing [US coup attempts against Venezuela](#) and [Cuba](#), as well as the military putsch the OAS oversaw against [Bolivia's elected socialist President Evo Morales](#) in 2019. Indeed, it involves many of the same tactics and players.



Nicaraguan voters in Chinandega on November 7, 2021

Following the line of Washington and Brussels, international corporate media outlets have spread an array of demonstrably false claims about Nicaragua's 2021 elections, incorrectly reporting, for instance, that the government banned anti-Sandinista parties, that is imprisoned opposition candidates, or that voter turnout was negligible.

Unlike the foreign reporters spreading these falsehoods from Florida, Costa Rica, or Spain, The Grayzone was on the ground in Nicaragua to observe the electoral process.

This reporter, Ben Norton, visited 4 different polling stations in various parts of Chinandega, one of the largest cities in the country.

There, I spoke to more than a dozen average voters, to hear their experiences and get their perspectives on the election. Everyone I interviewed said the process was clean, fair, and transparent, and that they were able to vote without any difficulties.

I took these photos at different voting centers in Nicaragua on election day on November 7

As you can see, there were a lot of people voting, in a transparent, well organized election. The polls were full, but people were able to go in, vote, and go home in a quick, open process pic.twitter.com/LizeKgRCcN

— Ben Norton (@BenjaminNorton) [November 9, 2021](#)

Myth: the opposition was barred from participating in Nicaragua's 2021 elections

Although its correspondent [Natalie Kitroeff](#) was reporting from Mexico, not Nicaragua, the New York Times leveled several baseless accusations against the Sandinista government in an attempt to discredit its electoral victory.

Among the most absurd of these claims is that Nicaragua prevented opposition parties from participating and closed voting stations.

This is simply false. There were a total of seven different alliances participating in Nicaragua's 2021 elections: five national opposition parties (all of which were right-wing), another regional opposition party on the Caribbean Coast, and finally the leftist Sandinista Front-led alliance, which itself consists of nine parties.

The following parties competed in the November 7 elections:

National opposition parties

- Constitutionalist Liberal Party (PLC)
- Independent Liberal Party (PLI)
- Alliance for the Republic (APRE)
- Nicaraguan Christian Way (CCN)
- Nicaraguan Liberal Alliance Party (ALN)

Regional opposition party on Caribbean Coast

- Yapti Tasba Masraka Nanih Aslatakanka (YATAMA)

FSLN alliance

- Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN)
- Nationalist Liberal Party (PLN)
- Christian Unity Party (PUC)
- Alternative for Change (AC)
- Nicaraguan Resistance Party (PRN)
- Multiethnic Indigenous Party (PIM)
- Yapti Tasba Masraka Raya Nani Movement Party (Myatamaran)
- Autonomous Liberal Party (PAL)
- Progressive Indigenous Movement Party of the Moskitia (Moskitia Pawanka)

These are the 7 options in Nicaragua's elections today:

- 5 national opposition parties (all right-wing)
- 1 regional party on the Caribbean Coast
- Sandinista Front-led alliance

So there are 6 options on the national ballot and 7 options on the coast (which has political autonomy) pic.twitter.com/hsWRoyXr1z

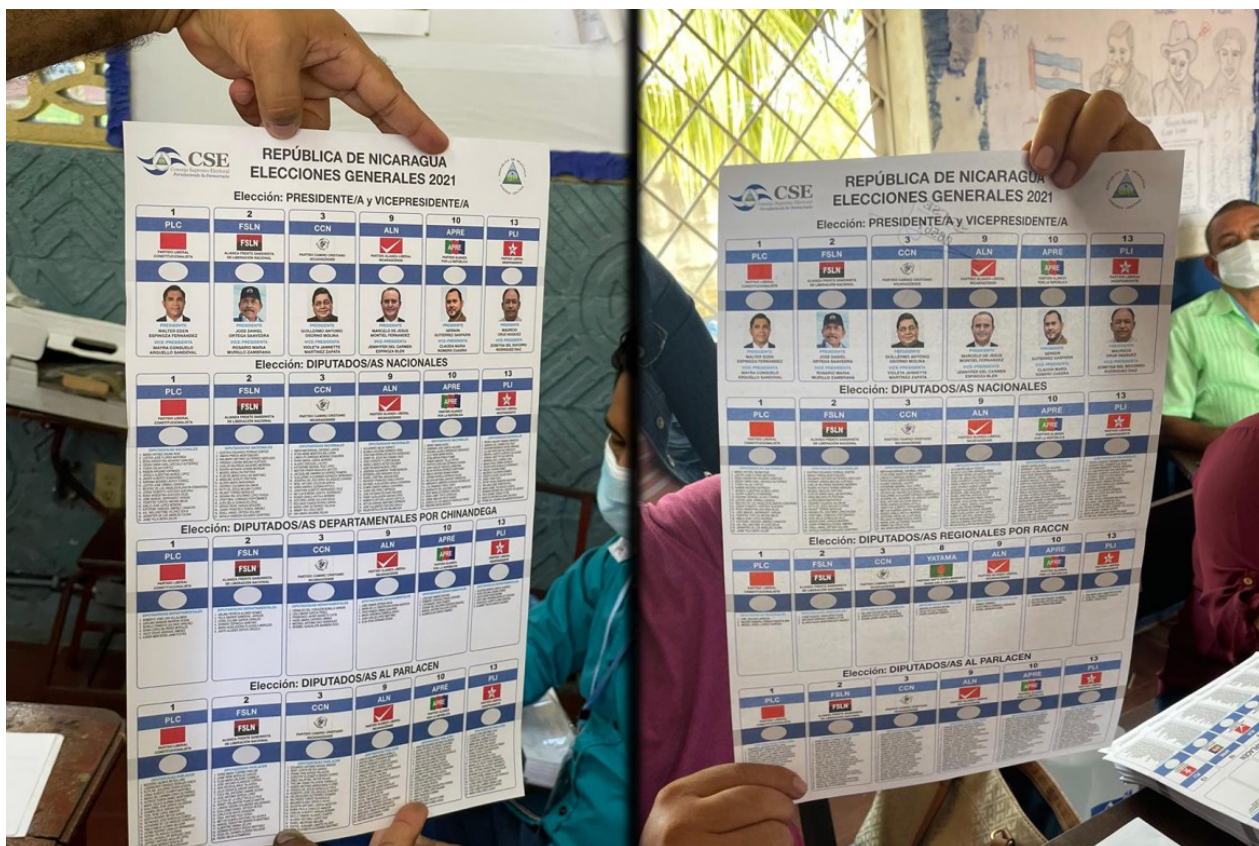
— Ben Norton (@BenjaminNorton) [November 7, 2021](#)

The Sandinistas created a system of political autonomy for Nicaragua's eastern Caribbean Coast, responding to requests for self-determination by the large Indigenous and Afro-descendent communities there.

This meant that, in the two separate zones of the North Caribbean Coast Autonomous Region (RACCN) and South Caribbean Coast Autonomous Region (RACCS), there were seven

options on the ballot in the election for regional lawmakers.

Everywhere else in Nicaragua, there were six options on the ballot, five of which were anti-Sandinista opposition parties.



The ballots in Nicaragua's November 7, 2021 elections. The right is the ballot on the Caribbean Coast, with 7 options. The left is the ballot everywhere else, with 6 options.

Myth: voter turnout was negligible

Another unfounded accusation spread by foreign corporate media outlets to attack the integrity of Nicaragua's elections is that voter participation was supposedly very low.

According to official results from [Nicaragua's Supreme Electoral Council](#) (CSE), the Sandinista Front won 75.87% of the total of 2,921,430 votes, with 65.26% turnout.

The main opposition party, the PLC, got 14.33%. The other four opposition parties each got 3% or less.

Western governments sought to discredit these electoral results by claiming the CSE is unreliable. But anyone even vaguely familiar with the history of recent Nicaraguan politics can see that this 2021 outcome is highly consistent with both polling and past results.



Nicaraguan voters in Chinandega on November 7, 2021

In Nicaragua's [2016 elections](#), which were observed by the OAS, the FSLN got 72.44% of the vote, and the PLC garnered 15.03%, with [68.2% participation](#) – figures very similar to those of 2021.

And in the 2011 elections, which were [monitored by the Carter Center](#), European Union, and OAS, the Sandinista Front won 62.46% of the vote.

Moreover, the results in the 2021 election are unsurprising when one considers the months of opinion polling before the vote. The most respected, and really only credible, apolitical polling firm in Nicaragua is M&R Consultores. (CID-Gallup did an extremely inaccurate study on behalf of the right-wing opposition, which was plagued with problems and heavily [criticized for its bad methodology](#).)

In the lead-up to the November 7 vote, [M&R Consultores' surveys](#) consistently found that [60 to 70% of Nicaraguans](#) supported the Sandinista Front and the government of President Ortega.

61% of Nicaraguans say the country is better with a leftist Sandinista government.

Just 4% strongly sympathize with the right-wing opposition.

The US govt-backed opposition groups, which have millions of dollars in foreign funding, can't even get 1% support from the population.
pic.twitter.com/QqYmWN5liF

— Ben Norton (@BenjaminNorton) [May 26, 2021](#)

When considering these polls in combination with past elections, the 2021 results appear utterly unsurprising. But the cold, hard data did not interrupt the wave of disinformation

flowing from corporate media across the world.

Several major news outlets published the dubious claim that only 18.5% of Nicaraguans participated in the vote. In each case, the source was a shady, little-known organization called Urnas Abiertas, which appears to have fabricated the figure out of whole cloth.

Indeed, Urnas Abiertas has not published any raw data publicly, and scarcely exists as an organization.

[Urnas Abiertas](#) calls itself a “citizen observatory,” but has no technical credentials to speak of. Its official website and social media pages contain no concrete information about the group and do not even disclose the identities of its staff members.

The report it published after the election is totally anonymous and is just [four pages long](#) (in both Spanish and English). The document does not include any of the raw data it supposedly collected. It vaguely describes its methodology in two brief paragraphs, without identifying any of the people who purported to run a massive secret monitoring operation.

[The organization’s previous reports](#) are also anonymous, not naming any authors or researchers, and, once again, do not contain raw data or detailed information about methodology.

Moreover, the logos at the bottom of these past reports show that Urnas Abiertas collaborates with a series of right-wing [opposition groups in Nicaragua that are funded by CIA cutouts](#).








Nicaraguan anti-Sandinista opposition NGOs that Urnas Abiertas lists as its allies, including numerous US government-funded groups


In fact, only two people have been publicly identified with this shadowy organization, and both are partisan right-wing activists who work in the Western government-funded nonprofit-industrial complex, without any technical background or experience in election monitoring.

The man most closely linked to Urnas Abiertas is Pedro Salvador Fonseca Herrera, an anti-Sandinista activist sponsored by the European Commission – a clear conflict of interest, given the EU’s refusal to recognize the election and its role in openly funding and supporting the extremist opposition in Nicaragua.



Fonseca Herrera previously worked in Washington, DC as a “consultant” for the Organization of American States (OAS) in 2017 and 2018, during the violent OAS-backed coup attempt in Nicaragua.








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**Pedro Salvador Fonseca (He/Him)**
European Commission & One Young World Peace Ambassador

Experience

**Peace Ambassador**
One Young World · Full-time
Jul 2021 – Present · 5 mos
European Commission and One Young World Peace Ambassador.
 One Young World Peace Ambassadors

**Titular Professor**
Universidad Americana (UAM)
Aug 2019 – Nov 2020 · 1 yr 4 mos
Managua, Nicaragua
Titular Professor at the School of Law and International Relations:
-Poverty and Development in Latin America and The Caribbean.
-Theory and Practice of Conflict Resolution.
-Political Systems. [...see more](#)

**Organización de los Estados Americanos (OEA)**
1 yr 2 mos
Consultant to the Office of the Assistant Secretary General
Sep 2017 – Jul 2018 · 11 mos
Washington, District Of Columbia, Estados Unidos
-Model OAS Program Coordinator Assistant, and project manager.
-Partnership officer.
-General Coordinator of the 2018 Washington Model OAS Conference for Universities at the OAS Headquarters. [...see more](#)
  

One of the only two people publicly associated with Urnas Abiertas

Before that, Herrera organized with the regime-change lobby group Techo, which also happens to be the former employer of the only other known person associated with Urnas Abiertas, Olga Valle López.

Valle López’s LinkedIn profile shows that she, too, has worked with Techo, which is [funded](#) by Latin American governments and major Western multinational corporations, and pushes their interests in Latin America by destabilizing left-wing states.

Fonseca Herrera and Valle López were identified as “researchers” with Urnas Abiertas in an event in October organized by the [US government-funded Wilson Center](#) and the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA), a

[Western state-backed](#) lobby group.

The event, a panel discussion titled “[Nicaragua 2021 elections: A painful plan to end with democracy](#),” did not even pretend to be impartial; it explicitly aimed to discredit the country’s vote weeks before it even took place. The host, from International IDEA, referred to the forthcoming vote as an “electoral farce.”

Fonseca Herrera and Valle López spoke alongside US government-funded right-wing Nicaraguan and Venezuelan opposition figures, and their inflammatory comments made it extremely clear that these two anti-Sandinista activists are political operatives, not impartial electoral observers. They had already established their conclusion that Nicaragua’s election was supposedly illegitimate weeks before it even took place.

The panel discussion was in fact the presentation of a [report of the same name](#) that Urnas Abiertas published in a joint effort sponsored by International IDEA and Venezuelan right-wing activists at the Universidad Católica Andrés Bello (UCAB).

Unlike the other reports published by Urnas Abiertas, this document named the authors: three foreigners from International IDEA, two Venezuelan anti-Chavista activists, and just two Nicaraguans: Olga Valle y Pedro Fonseca.

Equipo de trabajo del Informe

- Equipo nacional de Urnas Abiertas: lo integran Olga Valle y Pedro Fonseca, las identidades de otras personas que conforman el equipo se mantienen reservadas, por razones de seguridad.
- Equipo internacional de IDEA Internacional: lo encabeza su Director Regional para América Latina y el Caribe, Dr. Daniel Zovatto, y lo integran Rafael López Pintor y Marcelo Varela-Erasheva.
- Equipo internacional del Centro de Estudios Políticos de la Universidad Católica Andrés Bello: lo integran Benigno Alarcón y Roberto Abdul.

The foreign authors of Urnas Abiertas’ report trying to discredit Nicaragua’s 2021 elections before they even took place

In other words, this document that purported to inform people about the situation on the ground in Nicaragua was almost entirely written by non-Nicaraguans outside of the country. And it had the support of a Western government-funded lobby group and Venezuelan right-wing activists at UCAB, a key hub for the anti-Chavista opposition.

UCAB, one of the most elite private universities in Venezuela, is run by the Catholic Church, which has played a major role in coup attempts in both Venezuela and Nicaragua. At the beginning of the US-sponsored putsch in Venezuela in 2019, [UCAB hosted coup leader Juan Guaidó](#). The university is directed by Francisco José Virtuoso, an ultra-conservative priest who openly [supported the coup attempt and Guaidó](#).

NICARAGUA: ELECCIONES 2021: UN PLAN DOLOSO PARA ACABAR CON LA DEMOCRACIA

Este informe es resultado del esfuerzo conjunto entre el observatorio ciudadano nicaragüense Urnas Abiertas, la Oficina para América Latina y el Caribe del Instituto Internacional para la Democracia y la Asistencia Electoral (IDEA), y el Centro de Estudios Políticos y de Gobierno de la Universidad Católica Andrés Bello.

La información de campo de este informe es el resultado del trabajo del equipo y voluntarios de la organización no gubernamental Urnas Abiertas y su Observatorio de Violencia Política.

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A section of an October 2021 Urnas Abiertas report showing it was sponsored by International IDEA and the Venezuelan opposition-controlled UCAB

In short, Urnas Abiertas is a tiny fringe group run by two young anti-Sandinista activists with no expertise in election monitoring. It is not even clear if they are physically in Nicaragua or outside of the country – although they do have the support of Western governments and the right-wing Venezuelan opposition.

These clear conflicts of interest and Urnas Abiertas' flagrant lack of credibility did not however stop the [Los Angeles Times](#) from publishing a puff piece praising Urnas Abiertas and claiming without a shred of evidence that it secretly mobilized 1,450 volunteers at 563 voting centers across Nicaragua to observe the election.

Considering Urnas Abiertas has fewer than 1,300 [followers on Twitter](#), it seems extremely implausible that such a miniscule outfit could secretly mobilize 1,450 electoral observers, especially without attracting attention from the government. But this did not stop corporate media from printing the absurd claim.

US government-funded opposition media outlets in Nicaragua also [amplified](#) the shadowy group's unsubstantiated allegations of 81.5% abstention in the 2021 election. But once again, they presented absolutely zero evidence to back up these claims.

All indications show Urnas Abiertas to be nothing more than an opposition front group posing as a monitoring organization – and with the stated intent of discrediting the Nicaraguan election results before the vote even took place.

Myth: Nicaragua arrested opposition presidential candidates

An even more common accusation made by Western capitals and corporate media outlets to discredit Nicaragua's 2021 election is that the Sandinista government arrested seven "presidential hopefuls" from the right-wing opposition.

The figures who were detained have been variously described in the international media as "precandidates" or "possible challengers." But in reality, not a single one was an actual registered candidate.

On the November 7 election, there were indeed six different presidential candidates to choose from. President Ortega was not even the first name or face on the ballot. (Number one was Walter Espinoza Fernández, the presidential candidate from the PLC.)

As for the opposition figures who were detained several months before the election, The Grayzone documented how they were [arrested for conspiring with a foreign government](#) (the United States), taking millions of dollars from Washington in a large money-laundering scheme to organize a violent coup attempt in 2018, in which hundreds of Nicaraguans were killed and the country was destabilized, and in which [right-wing extremists hunted down, tortured, and murdered Sandinista activists](#) and state security forces, even [setting some on fire](#).

That the opposition leaders who were detained [received millions of dollars from the US government](#) to carry out these operations is an undeniable matter of public record, confirmed by documents from CIA cutouts such as the [National Endowment for Democracy \(NED\)](#) and United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

In any other country on Earth, these figures would have faced similar, if not more severe legal consequences. Accepting millions of dollars in funding from a foreign state as you attempt to violently overthrow your elected government is illegal everywhere on the planet.

But when Nicaragua enforces its laws – even when they are [laws modeled after long-existing US legislation](#) – Washington condemns the country as “repressive” or “authoritarian.”

The United States, European Union, and OAS habitually refer to violent criminals as “political prisoners” after they are arrested in Nicaragua. People arrested for murder and rape have ended up on US-sponsored “political prisoner” lists.

In one high-profile case that caused a national scandal in Nicaragua, a charged murderer who had been active in the violent *tranque* barricades in the 2018 coup attempt was arrested, but later dubbed a “political prisoner” and released under pressure by the US, EU, and OAS. It was not long before he returned to his violent ways, [stabbing his pregnant girlfriend to death](#).

Another US-designated Nicaraguan “political prisoner” was let out of jail, only to be [caught again with explosives and guns](#), planning a terrorist attack on a pro-Sandinista mayor’s office.

[.@BenjaminNorton](#) traveled to Jinotepe, Nicaragua to report the shocking story of how the US and OAS lobbied for the release of violent criminals behind a 2018 coup attempt

One man they called a “political prisoner” stabbed his pregnant girlfriend to death <https://t.co/6fA6TZOgmO>

— The Grayzone (@TheGrayzoneNews) [February 28, 2020](#)

If an opposition figure is arrested for violating a law in Nicaragua, in an offense that would be punishable in any country, Washington often reflexively responds by dubbing that person a “political prisoner.” If they are wealthy and powerful, the US claims they were a “presidential hopeful,” even if they made no effort whatsoever to go through the legal

process of officially registering as a candidate.

This is a way to try to maintain impunity for US-backed coup-plotters and money-launderers. It is the geopolitical equivalent of the strategy that [Washington-sponsored insurgents in Hong Kong](#) openly espoused in the [New York Times](#): “use the most aggressive ‘nonviolent’ actions possible to push the police and the government to their limits,” and then frame that state’s self-defense against foreign aggression as a form of “repression” and “authoritarianism.”

One of the reasons the United States was particularly furious about Nicaragua arresting the coup leaders it had cultivated is because Washington clearly had made plans to repeat the putschist strategy that saw it appoint [Juan Guaidó as so-called “interim president” of Venezuela](#).

US government officials and their right-wing Central American allies not-so-subtly hinted that they planned to [recognize right-wing oligarch Cristiana Chamorro as the unelected “interim president”](#) of a parallel Nicaraguan coup regime. When she was arrested for money laundering in June, it foiled their new destabilization plot.

Nicaragua has an election in November and concerns are growing the US may try to impose a fake "interim president" like Juan Guaidó

The US State Dep't special envoy and right-wing Central American leaders recently referred to opposition oligarch Cristiana Chamorro as "president" pic.twitter.com/MmGlquS2dC

— Ben Norton (@BenjaminNorton) [March 24, 2021](#)

Myth: there were no foreign electoral observers and journalists

Another myth spread by foreign media outlets is that there were no foreign observers and journalists in Nicaragua for its 2021 elections. This is yet another massive distortion.

The Nicaraguan government did prevent the Organization of American States (OAS) from sending observers, given the US-funded group’s [well-documented role](#) in orchestrating a right-wing military coup in Bolivia in 2019.

But there were hundreds of foreigners accredited to accompany the elections, from more than two dozen countries, including:

- United States
- Canada
- Spain
- France
- Germany
- Britain
- Ireland
- Italy
- Belgium
- China
- Russia

- Argentina
- Peru
- Puerto Rico
- Dominican Republic
- Colombia
- Costa Rica
- Guatemala
- Honduras
- Mexico
- Uruguay
- Venezuela
- Cuba
- Panama
- Brazil
- Chile

In total, there were 232 foreigners accredited from 27 countries, 165 to accompany the election and 67 as journalists.

They monitored voting centers in all 10 departments of Nicaragua (Managua, Masaya, Estelí, Chinandega, León, Granada, Matagalpa, Rivas, Chontales, and Carazo), as well as both Caribbean Coast autonomous regions (RACCN and RACCS).

The Nicaraguan government chose to use the term *acompañante* (meaning someone who accompanies) to refer to these international monitors, rather than “observer,” because of the history of so-called observers from the OAS and EU meddling in the country’s internal electoral process on behalf of the anti-Sandinista opposition.

225 people accredited to accompany Nicaragua's election have visited voting centers in 10 departments; Esteli, Chinandega, León, Rivas, Chontales, Matagalpa, Masaya, Granada, Carazo and Managua, and two Autonomous Regions; RACCN and RACCS. pic.twitter.com/YIGX04euG4

— Kawsachun News (@KawsachunNews) [November 7, 2021](#)

The final misleading charge spread by the New York Times and other corporate media outlets to delegitimize the 2021 elections is that Nicaragua barred parties from holding large public rallies. This is technically true, but not because of political reasons, but rather due to Covid-19 health restrictions.

In fact, the [Sandinista Front itself has not held an official rally since March 2020](#), before any cases were discovered in the country. Many foreign nations have imposed much harsher restrictions, while [banning protests](#) and [attacking demonstrators](#) with no outrage from the self-declared “international community.”

Latin American left warns of US-OAS coup attempt in Nicaragua

The United States has a long history of blood-soaked meddling in Nicaragua. The US military invaded and occupied the Central American country numerous times in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Then Washington helped install the right-wing dictatorship ruled by General

Anastasio Somoza, which it subsequently propped up until the Sandinista Revolution of 1979.

In the 1980s, the CIA waged a terrorist war on Nicaragua, arming and training far-right Contra death squads that, as one of their former leaders admitted, “[burn down schools, homes and health centers](#) as fast as the Sandinistas build them.”

Since the violent coup attempt failed in 2018, the US government has been escalating its economic warfare on Nicaragua. Late that year, the Donald Trump administration implemented the NICA Act, which imposed aggressive sanctions on the small Central American nation.

Several more rounds of US sanctions on Nicaragua followed in the next two years. Then, on November 3, in a flagrant form of election meddling, just four days before the 2021 election, the House of Representatives voted 387-35 to pass the RENACER Act, which will hit Nicaragua with a new round of economically punishing sanctions.

The Grayzone reported on a September [Congressional session hosted by neoconservative lawmakers](#), where participants made it clear that Washington had been preparing a brutal campaign of economic warfare against Nicaragua, while also planning to expel the country from the Central America Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) and Organization of American States (OAS).

On November 9, the OAS officially announced that it had rejected the results of Nicaragua’s elections, branding them “illegitimate.”

This declaration was published almost exactly two years to the day after the OAS did the same in Bolivia, spreading false accusations of “fraud” in order to justify a military coup against the country’s democratically elected president, Evo Morales.

We reject the results of the illegitimate elections in [#Nicaragua](#).

I urge countries of the OAS to respond to this clear violation of the Democratic Charter during its [#OASassembly](#).

Report of the Secretariat for Strengthening of Democracy: [@Almagro_OEA2015 https://t.co/8CBUz303Dp](#)

— OAS (@OAS_official) [November 9, 2021](#)

In a clear reflection of its ulterior motives, the OAS held a neoliberal “Private Sector Forum” calling on foreign corporations to invest in Latin America on the same day it denounced Nicaragua’s elections.

The conference perfectly encapsulated the corporate priorities of the coup-sponsoring OAS. Among its most notorious participants was the [far-right president of Colombia, Iván Duque](#), who only came to power thanks to the illegal vote-buying scheme of a drug lord named [Ñeñe Hernández](#), at the orders of political kingpin and US asset Álvaro Uribe.

Palabras del Presidente de Colombia [@IvanDuque](#) en el XIII Foro del Sector

Privado de las Américas en [#AsambleaOEA](#)

"Por una América renovada: el rol del sector privado en la recuperación económica y social"

▯ <https://t.co/CenV5VdCjp>

▯ <https://t.co/YOgQAQjAOY> [pic.twitter.com/Bas8vZLdvj](https://t.co/Bas8vZLdvj)

— OEA (@OEA_oficial) [November 9, 2021](#)

As a victim of US-OAS meddling, Evo Morales immediately recognized the warning signs in Nicaragua, and cautioned about the coming coup.

In statements on Twitter after the vote, [Morales congratulated](#) “the honorable people of Nicaragua, which in a demonstration of courage and democratic maturity chose brother Daniel Ortega as constitutional president, despite a campaign of lies, blackmail, and threats by the US.”

The former Bolivian president said the United States is attacking “the democratic will and sovereignty of Nicaragua,” and, “The victory of Ortega is the defeat of yankee interventionism.”

When US President Joe Biden demonized Nicaragua’s 2021 vote as an “electoral pantomime,” Morales retorted, “The only ‘pantomime’ is acted out each day in the White House, where so-called ‘presidents,’ instead of serving their people, follow the orders of transnational corporations, the weapons industry, and the CIA.”

Con insultos, [#EEUU](#) intenta desconocer la voluntad democrática y soberana de Nicaragua. La única "pantomima" se actúa cada día en la Casa Blanca donde los llamados "presidentes" en lugar de atender a su pueblo siguen órdenes de transnacionales, industrias armamentistas y la CIA.

— Evo Morales Ayma (@evoespueblo) [November 8, 2021](#)

While Cuba, Venezuela, and other leftist leaders in Latin America congratulated the Sandinista Front and Ortega for their victory, warning of US destabilization efforts, there is a new generation of young, NGO-cultivated, liberal reformist leaders in the region who are much softer on imperialism.

In Chile, Gabriel Boric – the face of the liberal nonprofit-industrial complex – condemned the Sandinistas and [affirmed his “solidarity”](#) with right-wing oligarch Cristiana Chamorro, a scion of the most powerful dynasty in Nicaragua, and the daughter of Violeta Barrios de Chamorro, the first neoliberal president to take power after the Sandinista Revolution thanks to a massive CIA meddling campaign.

Similarly, the [foreign ministry of Peru](#) issued a statement denouncing Nicaragua’s elections. It was the latest sign of the debilitation of the country’s newly inaugurated left-wing President Pedro Castillo, whose proudly anti-imperialist Foreign Minister Héctor Béjar was forced by the military to resign just weeks after entering office.

Béjar warned the forced resignation and the right-wing takeover of Castillo's foreign ministry was "[a soft coup](#), or the beginning of it."

So while progressive forces enjoy a resurgence in parts of Latin America, the left is also divided between an older generation of revolutionary anti-imperialists and a newer generation of NGO-backed, media-friendly social democrats who acquiesce to US empire.

President Ortega vows resistance against US meddling

For his part, President Daniel Ortega has vowed to continue resisting US and European attempts to meddle in his country's internal affairs.

The Nicaraguan leader [delivered a fiery speech](#) on November 8, the day after the elections, commemorating the 45th anniversary of the killing of Sandinista Front founder Carlos Fonseca Amador by the US-backed Somoza dictatorship.

"It is impossible for Nicaraguans – and I would say for Latin Americans and Caribbeans – it is impossible to stop talking about the interventionist policies, the expansionist, colonialist policies of the United States of America and the European countries," Ortega said.



Sandinista Youth activists at President Ortega's speech on November 8, 2021

"We are under the threat of the yankee empire, under the aggressions of the yankee empire, and under the threats of the European colonialists. And I'm not the one saying that; they're saying it," the Nicaraguan president added.

"They believe that we are their colony, and they want to tell us how to behave, and they

want to decide what type of democracy we should practice,” Ortega continued. “They continue with their colonialist practices, to dominate these lands. But not for good, but rather to subjugate them and exploit them, and involve them in their expansionist and warmongering policies.”

Reflecting on his country’s long history of resistance, the Nicaraguan leader declared that its people would not give in to another foreign conquest.

“In the end, they could not defeat Sandino,” he declared. “Whichever [US] president came to power, whether Democrat or Republican, he came to try to oppress Nicaragua. But he always was met with resistance, with heroism, with the fighting spirit of the Nicaraguan people.”



President Ortega with musicians after his speech on November 8, 2021

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Ben Norton is a journalist, writer, and filmmaker. He is the assistant editor of The Grayzone, and the producer of the [Moderate Rebels](#) podcast, which he co-hosts with editor Max Blumenthal. His website is [BenNorton.com](#) and he tweets at [@BenjaminNorton](#).

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