

Revolution and Human Development

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Three years ago, at the Summit on Sustainable Development Goals on September 25, 2019, [the Nicaraguan representation observed](#):

"In order to comply with the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, it is necessary to establish a new economic and financial model, and create new production and consumption patterns consistent with sustainable lifestyles and friendly to Nature ... the lack of resources and the slow pace of the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in general are worrying, running the risk of not fully complying, globally, with all the goals set."

With that intervention Nicaragua indicated a fundamental reality, namely, that for the majority world the main obstacle to its development is the bad faith of the United States and its allies, who are never going to agree to give up their historical advantages built on colonial conquest, genocide and slavery. Another clear example of this reality was presented last week when the Russian Federation offered to donate 300,000 tons of fertilizers to the countries most in need, on ships currently stalled in European ports due to financial sanctions affecting insurance and shipping companies. Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov explained at the UN General Assembly,

"We have been reminding the European Union for weeks that there are 300,000 tons of fertilizers being held at European ports, and we have long offered to transfer them free of charge to needy countries in Africa, but the EU has not responded."

This is yet one more shameful example of the West's endless war against the majority world in which the system of wealth accumulation for the benefit of an elite obsessed with dominating the world collides against a multilateral vision and practical solidarity focused on the development of the human person in a multipolar world. So when Nicaragua called in 2019 for a new economic and financial model, it was preaching an imperative which is currently being imposed with great urgency. This clash between different visions of development has always characterized international relations. Perhaps its most elaborate

expression was the Declaration on the Right to Development adopted in December 1986 with 146 votes. The United States voted against.

Currently that historic declaration exists mostly as a ghost haunting the bad faith of the world's rich countries which have done everything possible to bury it because it set very inconvenient precedents for the United States and its allies. The Right to Development defends the principle of the self-determination of peoples, requires decisive interventions on the part of national governments and its obligations are binding on all actors who may affect human rights by their actions or omissions. Clearly, these characteristics make the Declaration completely unacceptable to Western elites.

The United States and its allies constantly act to deny the right to self-determination of peoples. They have never accepted prioritizing the human person over the accumulation of wealth. Western capitalism seeks to minimize the role of the national state, reducing the public sector to a minimum. The Declaration's recognition of the large number of actors affecting human rights challenges the Western biased interpretation that only States can violate human rights, another way of undermining the importance of social and economic rights.

The Declaration requires that developed countries provide effective cooperation to impoverished countries and that all States promote international peace and security. It also insists that States protect their populations from foreign interference and threats of aggression, something particularly relevant in the case of Nicaragua. The Declaration not only affirms the right of Peoples to self-determination but also to sovereignty over their natural wealth and resources. It stipulates the right and duty of States to formulate national human development policies promoting the constant improvement of their populations based on active participation and an equitable distribution of resources.

It is important to remember these principles in the current international and regional context because the 1986 Declaration on Development in effect established the norms of the multipolar world that is emerging now. And this largely explains why the elites of the United States and the governments they buy every four years are so obsessed with the destruction of the Sandinista government in Nicaragua. Because only with the governments of the Sandinista National Liberation Front has Nicaragua had successful National Human Development Plans.

The plans have been implemented from 2007 to 2011, from 2012 to 2016 and, despite the multi-million losses caused by the failed coup attempt, from 2017 to 2021. Now in the period 2022 to 2026 the current National Plan for the Fight against Poverty and for Human Development is being implemented. These plans have complied in an exemplary manner with the principles embodied in the Declaration on the Right to Development of 1986, and have been successfully implemented in a very adverse regional and international context. The mere fact of having a National Human Development Plan is deeply revolutionary because its implementation committed to an unalterable focus on the human person represents a radical challenge to the ideological status quo of capitalism in its neoliberal phase.

It is easy to list the social and economic achievements of Nicaragua led by President Comandante Daniel Ortega and Vice President Compañera Rosario, especially in relation to poverty reduction. These are achievements recognized by various international institutions,

from the World Bank to the Pan American Health Organization, UNESCO and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). The focus of human development policies on poverty reduction has consisted of a broad democratization of the economy so as to integrate, as actively productive subjects, large sectors of the population previously effectively excluded from participation in the economy, especially women.

A natural and logical progression can be seen in Nicaragua's National Human Development Plans. Poverty reduction through economic democratization requires the expansion and modernization of road and port infrastructure, electricity, water and sanitation, and also the guarantee of universal access to quality health services and education. But this is also a revolutionary practice in the context of the dominance of international speculative financial capitalism. The massive investment in public infrastructure to promote and facilitate national production and productivity contradicts the logic of financial extraction of neoliberal capitalism that has destroyed productive sustainability in the United States and elsewhere.

The human development policies in Nicaragua effectively reaffirm the revolutionary value of the principles of the Declaration on the Right to Development, especially in the face of the virulent reactionary and xenophobic policies of the United States and the European Union. The cynical elites that dominate those countries have never intended to promote the development of their historical victims. Nicaragua offers a model example to the countries of the region of how a small country, historically exploited and impoverished, can guarantee unprecedented levels of human development to its population when it has a government motivated by genuine revolutionary commitment.

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