

# LASA's Statement on the situation of the academic community and society in Nicaragua

February 2022

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The cancellation without due process of the legal status of seven universities and sixteen associations and foundations linked to universities by the Nicaraguan government, and their subsequent nationalization in less than two months (between December 13, 2021 and February 2, 2022) alarms our association as it implies the cancellation of the values of academia: autonomy, freedom of thought and space for critical thinking.

Taking control of universities, and associations linked to them, contravenes the basic standards of academic freedom and university autonomy. Added to this are the harms to students and professors, fundamental members of this community.

These violations of academic freedom and human rights are taking place in a broader context of authoritarianism, as illustrated by the exile of Sergio Ramírez and Gioconda Belli, among many others; the imprisonment and conviction of historian Dora María Téllez, political scientist José Antonio Peraza, professor Arturo Cruz, journalist Cristiana Chamorro, and student Léster Alemán, sentenced to 15 years in prison without the right to defense.

The Latin American Studies Association, LASA expresses its serious concern to the international academic community about what is happening in Nicaragua and rejects the violation of the bases of academic freedom and the violations of the human rights of its members and the Nicaraguan population.

## About LASA

The Latin American Studies Association (LASA) is the world's largest professional association constituted by individuals and institutions devoted to the study of Latin America and the Caribbean. LASA currently has over 12,000 members from around the world and a committee that defends academic freedom and human rights.

If you wish to interview a LASA Executive Council member, you can send an email to [lasa@lasaweb.org](mailto:lasa@lasaweb.org).

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