

52nd session of the Human Rights Council

Item 2 – ID on report of Group of Human Rights Experts on Nicaragua (res. 49/3)

Benelux intervention

6th March 2023

Mister President,

I speak on behalf of Belgium, the Netherlands and my own delegation, Luxembourg. We fully align with the EU statement.

Firstly, let us express our relief that 222 political prisoners have escaped arbitrary detention. However we cannot accept that they and other dissidents have been deprived of their nationality and civil and political rights. It is a transparent attempt by the authorities of ridding themselves of opposition voices, as we see through the harsh penalization of those who refused to be exiled to gain their freedom, most notably Bishop Rolando Alvarez.

Deprivation of the nationality and political and civil rights of the expelled prisoners and of 94 other dissidents demonstrates the authorities' unwillingness to accept any opposition or dialogue. We categorically oppose the creation of stateless persons by such means, as it constitutes a blatant violation of the Nicaraguan Constitution and international law.

We should also not forget that arbitrary detention and the inhumane treatment of political prisoners are not the only instruments by which civil society and human rights defenders are persecuted in the country. We call on the authorities to put an end to any such measures, to restore the fundamental rights of denaturalized dissidents, to stop human rights violations, restore democracy and to re-engage with the international community.

Mr. Chair of the Expert Group,

Given the current developments, by what means can the international community support the expert group to continue and improve their mandate to ensure accountability for the crimes being committed?

Thank you very much.

(252 words)