

## Nicaragua's Civic Alliance to Ortega: "Were Waiting for You at the Table"

By Ivan Olivares (Confidencial)  
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They insist on the obligation to free all political prisoners



Members of the Civic Alliance negotiating team, Carlos Tunnermann (c) and Azahalea Solis, back on March 4th when the now suspended second round of a National Dialogue began. Photo: EFE

### **They urge compliance with the resolution of the OAS Assembly in Medellin, to see if the dictator meets with High Level Commission**

HAVANA TIMES – The roles have changed. If before the regime officials were those who went every morning to the National Dialogue venue to wait for the members of the Civic Alliance, knowing that they would not show up until the previously reached agreements were fulfilled; now it was the Alliance members who went to the same place, to wait for a counterpart that they already knew would not show up.

“Today it was made completely clear that the Government has no willingness to negotiate. Everyone in Nicaragua knew it, but it had to be made clear,” said Azahalea Solis, member of the Alliance’s negotiating team.

“Unfortunately, the government counterpart has not presented itself, which demonstrates, once again, its unwillingness to resolve the current crisis through the

civic path that the international community also demands,” says a part of the statement drafted for the purpose of the failed appointment.

Besides demonstrating what any citizen knows, the Civic Alliance negotiators appearance at the INCAE business school venue served to remind that, since the nation will only overcome the political crisis with a political negotiation, every day that Daniel Ortega avoids the dialogue, deepens further the hardships for the population.

“The refusal to meet for talks and the failure to comply with the adopted agreements punishes the entire population, increases poverty, unemployment, the need to emigrate and despair,” said the text that was read by Luis Quiros, a student representative.

### **Everyone suffers equally**

Although the economic crisis does not distinguish between government followers and citizens in general, the repression of the regime against those who oppose it, is the cause of the “pain of the families of the victims, of the political prisoners and their relatives, the suffering of exiles, and of the households that have lost their jobs,” reads the statement.

“Everything that has happened in Nicaragua is the responsibility of the regime that has repressed and continues to indiscriminately repress popular discontent,” it adds.

Regarding political prisoners, Solis said that they are fine-tuning details of an action plan to continue demanding the release of 124 prisoners: the old, the new, the re-imprisoned, and those who are in their houses, but still have legal proceedings pending, or suffer harassment and police persecution, due to which they are in permanent communication with their relatives.

Solis recalled that the regime has simply breached all the agreements signed: from the disarming of irregular (forces) that accompany the National Police in their repressive action against citizens, to the return of liberties contained in the country’s political Constitution, which guarantee free mobilization, expression, organization, demonstration, among others.

Although the armed strength of Ortega includes the Army, National Police and paramilitaries, whose leaders have sworn personal loyalty to him, “Nicaragua has the will to get rid of the dictatorship, and that depends on the strength of the people, its unbreakable morale, despite the intimidation and repression by the regime,” Solis explained.

**“Calling the OAS...Calling the OAS...”**

When the Government refuses to continue searching to solve Nicaragua's problems, it hurts citizens, businessmen, everyone, because the solution will be found through negotiation, said scholar and Civic Alliance member Carlos Tunnermann Bernheim.

Although the absence of Ortega representatives stains the efforts of the Civic Alliance as fruitless, "we are sending a message to the regime, and it is that we are willing to continue the negotiation, because there are very important issues to resolve," said Tunnermann.

"Our commitment with the Table (dialogue) remains firm, and we await the regime's response," he insisted.

Apparently, that answer was already issued —beyond what Ortega says in the speeches he gives, trying to impress his followers and state workers who are forced to attend his events—, and delivered to the witnesses and companions (of the negotiations).

"It is possible that they [Luis Rosadilla, representing the Secretary General of the Organization of American states (OAS) and the Apostolic Nuncio Waldemar Sommertag], already have knowledge of the Government's reaction, which we do not know, and are waiting to receive," said Tunnermann.

The delegate also recalled that three communications have been sent to the president of the Permanent Council of the OAS, Yolande Yvonne Smith of Grenada, requesting that she summon the members, to select the Commission that should carry out high-level efforts before the Government of Ortega, to steer the negotiation, or proceed with more sanctions.

While the time frames of international diplomacy are being fulfilled, the Alliance finishes the details of its action plan to achieve the definitive release of all the political prisoners; meets with other multilateral entities; works to shape a great national coalition and to visit the territories. "We have a lot of work," said Tunnermann.