

*Représentation permanente de la Belgique auprès des Nations Unies et auprès des institutions spécialisées à Genève*

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| **WG UPR – Nicaragua*****Belgian intervention***15th May 2019 |

Mr. President,

Belgium welcomes the delegation of Nicaragua and wishes it every success in the exercise of its third Universal Periodic Review. Belgium is concerned about the continuous deterioration of human rights and freedoms in Nicaragua since the start of the political crisis one year ago.

Therefore, we would like to formulate the following recommendations:

**R1.** Release all students, human rights defenders, journalists or other protestors who are arbitrarily detained for exercising their rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly, without resorting to house arrests and ensure that their right to due process is fully respected.

**R2.** Refrain from creating or misusing legislative or administrative measures with a purpose to silence civil society organizations active in the field of human rights and democracy

**R3.** Re-establish full cooperation with international and regional human rights mechanisms such as the OHCHR and the IACHR, including by granting them again unrestricted access to the country and facilitating their work in the discharge of their mandate.

Thank you, Mr. President.