
Luis Almagro Calls for Foreign Intervention in Nicaragua Again

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Even over the holidays things didn’t calm down for Nicaragua. During the break the Secretary General of the Organization of American States, Luis Almagro, has tried to begin proceedings against Nicaragua under the Inter-American Democratic Charter. He cited Article 20 of the Charter, which states it can be activated when a “member state produces an alteration in the constitutional order that seriously harms democratic order” ([see here](#) for a typical report on the story, which was taken from Associated Press coverage).

Nicaragua’s Foreign Minister Denis Moncada responded immediately, writing to his fellow ministers in the OAS. He said: “The Inter-American Democratic Charter does not empower Secretary General Luis Almagro to support coup groups against the State and the legally constituted Government of Nicaragua, as Luis Almagro has done in violation of the Charter of the OAS.”

A full radio interview with Denis Moncada is [available here](#) on a U.S. public radio station.

The aim of the move by Almagro is not to expel Nicaragua from the OAS (though that is possible), but to speed up the sanctions against Nicaragua proposed by the United States in the recently signed off NICA Act.

Nicaragua clashed with Almagro earlier this autumn, when the OAS secretary general called for military intervention in Venezuela. His remarks came days after U.S. Senator Marco Rubio (who has been the main cheerleader for the Nicaraguan opposition during the attempted coup) called for military action to remove President Maduro, and also called for the international community to “asphixiate the dictatorship which is being installed in Nicaragua” ([see here](#)).

Almagro’s remarks were widely condemned, even as he tried to say he had been misquoted. However he still drew criticism for his increasingly hawkish views ([see here](#) for a response from the OAS Ambassador from Antigua and Barbuda – No Vigilante Action in the Americas).

The Nicaraguan opposition visited Washington this autumn after Almagro’s military intervention. Violeta Granera, an ex-vice presidential candidate with the PLI and a former minister in the Bolanos Government 2000-7, joined fellow Liberal Jose Pallais (a former deputy foreign minister during the Chamorro Government 1990-97) to lobby Almagro to activate the Democratic Charter ([see here](#)).

The pair are no strangers to Almagro, or indeed in calling for the activation of the Democratic Charter. In 2016, three days before the presidential elections which Daniel Ortega won with over 70 percent of the vote, the pair travelled to Washington to meet with Almagro. On his return Jose Pallais said their dialogue with the OAS was “the first step before the activation’ of the Democratic Charter” ([see here](#)).

The OAS meeting will take place next week. Almagro’s call can expect support from Trump’s United States and the Brazilian government led by President Jair Bolsonaro, widely described as a fascist. The U.S. Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo, travelled to Brazil on January 2 to attend Bolsonaro’s inauguration.

Their agenda, and indeed the agenda of Almagro, is clear. Pompeo said Venezuela, Cuba and Nicaragua were countries that do not share the democratic values that unite the United States and Brazil. “We have an opportunity to work alongside each other against authoritarian regimes,” he said at a news conference ([see here](#)).
