Statement [Of the Provincial of the Central American Province of the Society of Jesus - June 1, 2018]

"Happy those who work for peace, because they will be recognized as sons and Daughters of God " (Matt 5, 9)

As is the knowledge of public opinion, Nicaragua is going through a serious and growing political crisis. A peaceful exit from this crisis is the unanimous desire and the firm commitment of the people who demand democracy, liberty and justice. There are already more than 100 Nicaraguans who have been deprived of their lives in just over a month, because of that ethical and constitutional claim.

The company of Jesus, present in the country since 1916, has joined that clamor and that commitment. Our human, ethical and Christian conviction requires us to share, support and defend the peaceful way to overcome the conflict. Honest dialogue and sensible and viable negotiation are required to achieve this. We are still in time to avoid more polarization, more bloodshed, and more pain. One who wants peace does not make war, does not inflict violence or assaults, does not persecute or mistreat or Intimidate.

We have been informed by reliable sources that the physical integrity and the life itself of Father José Alberto Idiáquez SJ, Rector of the Central American University (UCA) of Nicaragua, is in grave danger. Father Idiáquez has been threatened because of his participation at the dialogue table convened by the Episcopal conference, his standing by the students, his defending the human rights of those who are peacefully and legitimately demanding their constitutional rights, his making continual calls to the Nicaraguan government to give concrete signs that the peace they claim to seek is the fruit of justice and democratic commitment, and his incorporating the university as such in the effort of the Nicaraguan people.

We have communicated this information to the Father General of the Company of Jesus, Father Arturo Sosa SJ, resident in Rome, and we count on his support. On behalf of all the Jesuits in Central America and all the lay people who are part of the forty institutions that together carry on with only the desire to serve the Central American people, we point out the responsibility the Nicaraguan Government for any aggression or attack that could be suffered by Father José Alberto Idiáquez SJ.

We call on national and international human rights bodies, the OAS, the UN, the European Parliament, all the Jesuit universities in the world, the various churches, and all people committed to the dignity of the human being, to support decisively a peaceful and negotiated exit to the tragic situation that is alive in the country, and to demand respect for the physical integrity of all Nicaraguans who -- like Father Idiáquez SJ, the Episcopal conference, the students and other members of the civil society -- are part of the dialogue table, where they are working for a peace that is the fruit of justice.

Rolando Alvarado SJ

Provincial of Central America