Statement on the Ongoing Violence in Nicaragua

As students, faculty, staff and alumni of a Jesuit university, we are called to take a stand for and with people who are working toward peace, justice and a humane and sustainable world. In solidarity with all other Jesuit colleges, Saint Peter's University stands beside the University of Central America (UCA) of Nicaragua, which calls its students to peaceful advocacy for social justice, even as government violence causes turmoil and unrest. In Nicaragua, the violent repression of peaceful protests is costing precious lives and creating devastating threats to democracy, peace, civility and hope to the people who reside there.

One leader at UCA has been on the forefront of the mission for justice. Fr. José Alberto “Chepe” Idiáquez, S.J., rector and president of the University of Central America (UCA) of Nicaragua, a Jesuit sister school, has called for peaceful negotiations between protesting groups and the Ortega Government. Due to his commitment to advocating for peaceful negotiations to address the crisis, Fr. Idiáquez is in danger. The UCA of Nicaragua has an obligation to protect its students, to speak for justice and shelter citizens who are under attack. We are proud of UCA for doing these things. Therefore, any attempts to silence or vilify Fr. Idiáquez and the students he protects represents an explicit abandonment of the ideals of democracy.

Members of the Saint Peter’s community are adding our voices to those of our Nicaraguan and Jesuit colleagues. We urge the Nicaraguan government to honor the constitutional rights of its citizens starting with the freedom of expression and right to peaceful protests. Saint Peter’s urges the Nicaraguan government and the dissenting voices to come together to search for a reasonable, fair and peaceful solution to the conflicts they face.

May we continue to pray for peace in Nicaragua and throughout the world.

Sincerely,

Eugene J. Cornacchia, Ph.D.
President of Saint Peter’s University

Click here to learn more about the situation in Nicaragua and the response by the Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities (AJCU).