

Prayer Diary: Nicaragua

1-7 September 2024



‘Currently in our country, Nicaragua, the general population is under repression, direct and indirect threats and persecution. They have silenced us and our voices...’ – Nicaraguan defender of freedom of religion or belief.

Sadly, there has been no positive change to the situation in Nicaragua over the last year. Under the leadership of President Daniel Ortega and his wife, Vice-President Rosario Murillo, violations of freedom of religion or belief have continued to grow – in both number and severity. Hope seems hard to come by as the stories of individuals paint a dire picture.

However, we believe in the power of prayer, and so we lift up this nation with hope and faith. Find out more at csw.org.uk/nicaragua

Sunday 1 September

Pray that the international community will speak up and strengthen independent voices speaking out about the situation in Nicaragua. May links be made between those inside and outside the country, standing in solidarity for the defence of human rights.

Monday 2 September

Many people, including religious leaders, have been separated from their communities and loved ones over the past year due to arbitrary detentions, forced exile or migration. Pray that all affected would find comfort in the shadow of his wings, and that the disaster will soon pass (Psalm 57:1).

Tuesday 3 September

As of January, over 600,000 Nicaraguans have fled the country, some under threat. Their journeys can be fraught with danger. Ask God to have mercy and keep them safe from harm. May he pave their way with peace, and change the situation so that no more Nicaraguans feel they have no choice but to abandon their country.

Wednesday 4 September

Civil society networks continue to work underground in Nicaragua to document and inform the world of human rights violations. Ask the Holy Spirit to uphold them, reminding them that the Lord sets a table in the presence of enemies (Psalm 23). Pray that they would be able to carry out their work without government harassment or fear of being detained.

Thursday 5 September

Pray for the political prisoners, including many Christians, both Roman Catholic and Protestant. In some cases, they are blocked from receiving the medication they need or they aren't allowed to keep their medicine refrigerated. Some have experienced serious infections due to the unsanitary conditions in prison and lack of medicine.

Friday 6 September

Conditions in La Esperanza Women's Prison are poor. Cells lined with bunk beds hold up to 75 prisoners, and there are shortages of drinking water, beds, medicine and medical care. What's more, political prisoners aren't allowed a Bible or any writing materials. Pray for the release of all political prisoners and improved conditions in the prisons.

Saturday 7 September

Lord Jesus, you are the one who leads justice through to victory (Matthew 12:19-21). You are the God of miracles, who is making all things new. Bring freedom where freedom seems impossible! Awaken the consciences of men and women in positions of power, and hold them to account for their actions. Amen.

Prayer Diary: Our work in national and international arenas.

8-14 September 2024



Where local solutions may be ineffective – or even biased against religious minorities – we can use our expertise to urge the international community to exercise the pressure required for change.

Claire and Jonathan are instrumental in bringing CSW's research and recommendations into international spheres like the UN and EU. Meanwhile, Chibuzor equips UK Members of Parliament so that they can confidently speak out against situations of injustice.

We give thanks for every opportunity, and especially for the positive changes seen in Pastor Lorenzo's case. Our team has consistently raised his case across different arenas, and as a result, UN experts and EU representatives have raised his case directly with the Cuban authorities. Pray that we would see many more wins like this.

Sunday 8 September

Pray Galatians 6:9 over CSW advocates working in national and international arenas. May they be strengthened, and may our cause find favour and respect in the eyes of authorities.

Monday 9 September

'The Human Rights Council, the UN's foremost body for addressing human rights issues, begins a new session today. It will be discussing important issues including a report from the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Sudan. Please pray for energy, strength and wisdom for the CSW team as we engage with diplomats, UN staff members and other key stakeholders.' – Claire, CSW's UN Officer

Tuesday 10 September

CSW's office in Brussels remains as vital as ever. They're working hard to brief key diplomats, inform policy decisions and advocate ahead of key human rights dialogues and trade deals. Join us in praying that human rights would be prioritised in all EU dialogues and trade deals.

Wednesday 11 September

'Last week, newly-elected Members of the European Parliament arrived in Brussels, along with their advisors and assistants. As we work to engage with this group, pray for minds and hearts that are receptive to the cause of freedom of religion or belief; to a European Union that pursues justice and human rights abroad, as well as at home.' – Jonathan, CSW's Senior EU Advocate.

Thursday 12 September

Closer to home, CSW is engaging with both new and returning UK MPs as they resume work after the elections and summer recess. Pray that these MPs will faithfully represent their constituents and use their positions to speak up for religious minorities around the world.

Friday 13 September

'I am deeply committed to enhancing CSW's presence and advocacy in UK Parliament.' – Chibuzor, CSW's Parliamentary Liaison Officer. Give thanks and pray for Chibuzor as you read about her role on p.7 of Response.

Saturday 14 September

Thank you, Lord, for everyone working to promote and protect the right to freedom of religion or belief in international arenas. Give them courage and strength and bless the work of their hands as they strive to bring about justice. Amen.

Prayer Diary: Eritrea

15-21 September 2024



Prayer and protest vigil for Eritrea, 2024

The People's Front for Democracy and Justice, headed by President Isaias Afwerki, is the sole political party in Eritrea. It has been in control since 1991. The situation today is a far cry from the nation its citizens dreamed of when they voted joyfully and overwhelmingly in favour of independence 30 years ago.

In January 2024, over 30 evangelical Christians were arrested at a child's birthday party. In March, three families were detained. In April, over 30 Christians were arrested. In May, 83-year-old Rev Ghirmay Araya died after almost three years in prison. The reverend's son has been detained arbitrarily for seven years. Each of these illustrate the government's merciless, continuing and comprehensive crackdown on the rights of citizens.

Sunday 15 September

Today is the International Day of Democracy. Pray earnestly for peaceful, free and fair democratic change in Eritrea, as well as for the 1997 Constitution to finally be implemented.

Monday 16 September

Pray for all people of faith who are unjustly imprisoned on account of their religious beliefs in Eritrea – including six Christian leaders who are marking their 20th year detained incommunicado. Ask God to strengthen and console them, and return them to their loved ones.

Tuesday 17 September

As devastating news emerges from Sudan of refugees dying due to lack of food, pray for protection, provision and deliverance for Eritrean refugees there and in Ethiopia. Remember especially Eritrean women and girls in Sudan who are particular targets for sexual and gender-based violence.

Wednesday 18 September

On this day in 2001, the Eritrean government closed all independent media outlets and arbitrarily detained 11 independent journalists, as well as 11 of the 15 prominent ruling party members who had called for democracy, along with their family members. On the anniversary of their enforced disappearances, pray that justice would prevail.

Thursday 19 September

Praise God for the longstanding CSW team members who are tirelessly committed to advocating for the rights of Eritreans, including our Africa and Middle East Team Leader, Dr Khataza Gondwe. Pray for her as she undertakes her work and speaks truth to power with knowledge, excellence, wisdom and compassion.

Friday 20 September

'See...I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland.' Pray Isaiah 43:19 over Eritrea today.

Saturday 21 September

Lord Jesus Christ, on the International Day of Peace, we pray for all Eritreans, and especially remember those who have been forcibly conscripted. Be their strength and shield, we pray, and their very present help in times of trouble. Amen.