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Human rights violations in Nicaragua: Federal Council to impose targeted sanctions

Bern, 24.06.2020 - On 24 June, the Federal Council decided to impose coercive measures in response to the current situation in Nicaragua. Switzerland is therefore joining the European Union in imposing sanctions on Nicaragua due to ongoing violations against human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The corresponding ordinance will come into force on 24 June.

On 24 June, the Federal Council will impose financial and travel sanctions against six persons with ties to Nicaraguan president Daniel Ortega: their assets will be frozen and they will be banned from entering or travelling through Switzerland. The measures are currently aimed at two personal advisors to President Ortega, and four high-ranking representatives of Nicaragua's judicial system and police force who are accused of serious human rights violations. Assets affected by the freeze must be reported to SECO immediately. These sanctions are not directed against the people of Nicaragua.

The Federal Council is very concerned by the increasing undermining of democracy, the rule of law and human rights in Nicaragua, and is urging the country's authorities to respect and protect national and international laws on human rights, in particular those on freedom of expression and assembly. The Federal Council is also urging the Nicaraguan government to respect its citizens' fundamental rights as defined in two agreements made with the opposition in March 2019, and to implement genuine electoral reform. Continuing on its 40-year commitment to the development of Nicaragua, Switzerland is prepared to support efforts to find a peaceful solution to this socio-political conflict.

With its Ordinance of 24 June 2020, Switzerland is joining the EU in imposing sanctions in response to the situation in Nicaragua. The measures will come into force at 6pm on 24 June 2020.

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