



Nicaragua

Catholics

Catholic clergy and laypeople face severe repression in Nicaragua. The government of Nicaragua has arbitrarily imprisoned clergy and laypeople on bogus charges, eliminated Church-affiliated organizations, and placed restrictions on religious observances. Catholics also endure hate speech, and clergy are often denied entry back into the country.



[Alex Javier Gómez Bustos](#)

ARRESTED:
August 5, 2023
REASON FOR PERSECUTION:
Calling for the release of imprisoned Catholic clergy



[Emmanuel Gutiérrez](#)

ARRESTED:
April 5, 2023
SENTENCE:
8 Years' Imprisonment
REASON FOR PERSECUTION:
Participating in a Catholic procession



[Adela Tercero](#)

ARRESTED:
August 19, 2023
REASON FOR PERSECUTION:
Association with a Catholic university



[Gabriela Morales](#)

ARRESTED:
August 19, 2023
REASON FOR PERSECUTION:
Association with a Catholic university



[Freddy Quezada](#)

ARRESTED:
November 29, 2023
REASON FOR PERSECUTION:
Criticizing religious freedom conditions



[Evelyn Guillén](#)

ARRESTED:
August 5, 2023
REASON FOR PERSECUTION:
Calling for the release of imprisoned Catholic clergy



[Victor Ticay](#)

RELIGION OR BELIEF:
Unspecified
ARRESTED:
April 6, 2023
SENTENCE:
8 Years' Imprisonment
REASON FOR PERSECUTION:
Recording a banned Easter celebration and posting the footage online

Journalists Covering Religious News

The Nicaraguan government does not respect the freedom of the press and targets journalists whose reporting is perceived to threaten the regime. While journalists reporting on any topic are susceptible to harassment, those who cover religious issues are especially at risk.

FoRB Victims List Stats 68 out of 2,282

Religion or Belief	# of Victims
Catholic	47
Protestant	11
Unspecified	10
Total	68

Type of Abuse	# of Victims
Detained	47
Imprisoned	21
Total	68

Average Prison Sentence 9 Years, 3 Months

Reports of	# of Victims
Torture	0
Medical Neglect	1
Total	1

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Frank R. Wolf FoRB Victims List Background

The International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (IRFA), as amended by the Frank R. Wolf International Religious Freedom Act of 2016, requires USCIRF to:

make publicly available, to the extent practicable...lists of persons it determines are imprisoned or detained, have disappeared, been placed under house arrest, been tortured, or subjected to forced renunciation of faith for their religious activity or religious freedom advocacy by the government of a foreign country that the Commission recommends for designation as a country of particular concern [CPC]...or by a nonstate actor that the Commission recommends for designation as an entity of particular concern [EPC].

USCIRF developed the Frank R. Wolf Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB) Victims List—an online public database—to implement this provision for countries USCIRF recommends for Country of Particular Concern (CPC) or Special Watch List (SWL) status. The list also includes such victims located in the de facto territories of nonstate actors that USCIRF recommends for Entity of Particular Concern (EPC) status, according to the same criteria.

Due to limited resources, USCIRF is unable to identify and document all victims that meet the statutory requirement to be included on the FoRB Victims List and generally relies on receiving submissions from outside individuals and organizations. As such, the information contained in the database does not reflect country, regional, or global trends. Furthermore, percentages highlighted in this section should not be used for extrapolation purposes nor interpreted as a particular group experiencing greater violations than another or a particular country committing violations at a greater rate than others. To support this project, USCIRF invites those with credible information on victims to submit information using the Victims List Intake Form at www.uscirtf.gov/form/uscirtf-victims-list-intake-form.

FoRB Victims List Stats Overall

Perpetrator	Victims Documented
Algeria	5
Azerbaijan	11
Burma	5
China	798
Cuba	11
Egypt	18
Eritrea	61
Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS)	2
Houthis	3
India	55
Indonesia	9
Iran	351
Iraq	2
Islamic State in West Africa Province (ISWAP)	1
Kazakhstan	16
Malaysia	4
Nicaragua	68
Nigeria	9
North Korea	11
Pakistan	87
Russia	488
Saudi Arabia	50
Sri Lanka	1
Tajikistan	16
Turkmenistan	31
Uzbekistan	88
Vietnam	81
Total	2,282

Religion or Belief	Victims Documented
Adivasi	1
Ahmadi Religion of Peace and Light	3
Baha'i	169
Bon	1
Buddhist – Hoa Hao	6
Buddhist – Theravada	3
Buddhist – Tibetan	93
Buddhist – Unspecified/Other	32
Christian – Catholic	79
Christian – Church of Almighty God	240
Christian – Jehovah's Witness	283
Christian – Orthodox	21
Christian – Protestant	150
Christian – Unspecified/Other	65
Duong Van Minh	4
ECKist (Eckankar)	1
Erfan-e Halgheh Practitioner	3
Falun Gong	217
Hindu	10
Humanist	1
Jewish	1
Muslim – Ahmadiyya	20
Muslim – Qur'anist	1
Muslim – Shi'a	40
Muslim – Sufi	64
Muslim – Sunni	412
Muslim – Unspecified/Other	233
Santeria	5
Scientologist	1
Shaman	1
Sikh	1
Yarsani	38
Unknown/Unspecified	83
Total	2,282

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Not Released

Alex Javier Gómez Bustos
Evelyn Guillén
María Asunción Salgado
Salvador Paguaga
Freylin Axarael Moreno Ponce
Francisco Odorico Castilblanco
Ervin López
Marisela de Fátima Mejía Ruiz
Walner Omier Blandón Ochoa
César Facundo Burgalin Miranda
Orvin Alexis Moncada Castellano
Juan Luis Moncada
Juan Carlos Chavarría Zapata
Álvaro Daniel Escobar Caldera
José Luis Orozco Urrutia
Manuel de Jesús Ríos Flores
Harry Lening Ríos Bravo
Marcos Sergio Hernández Jirón
Emmanuel Gutiérrez
Jimmy Antonio Bonilla
Freddy Quezada
Mariví Andino
Freydell Andino
María Verónica Herrera Galeano
Bladimir Pallés
Julio Berríos
Julio Sevilla
Gabriela Morales
Adela Tercero
Victor Ticay

Released

Tony Palacios
Alester Sáenz
José Gustavo Sandino Ochoa
Ismael Serrano
Jader Hernández
Miguel Mántica
Gerardo Rodríguez
Raúl Zamora
Mykel Monterrey
Marcos Díaz Prado
Fernando Calero
Carlos Avilés
Héctor Treminio
Silvio Fonseca
Pablo Villafranca
Óscar Escoto
Isidro Mora
Yesner Cipriano Pineda Meneses
Ramón Esteban Angulo Reyes
Álvaro Toledo
Cristóbal Gadea
Iván Centeno
Julio Ricardo Norori
Osman José Amador Guillén
Fernando Zamora Silva
Leonardo Guevara Gutiérrez
Eugenio Rodríguez Benavides
Jaime Iván Montesinos Saucedo
Enrique Martínez
Oscar Benavidez
Sergio Cárdenas
Melkin Sequeira
Darvin Leiva
José Luis Díaz
Raúl Antonio Vega
Sadiel Eugarríos
Ramiro Tijerino
Rolando Álvarez