

## **Letter to the European Parliament Regarding Women's Health in Nicaragua**

March 12, 2008

President Hans Gert Poettering  
President of the European Parliament  
President@europarl.europa.eu

Dear President Poettering:

A February 26 letter apparently being sent on behalf of a few members of the European Parliament (Eva-Britt Svensson et al.) to other members is part of a larger effort in Europe to discredit Nicaragua's law prohibiting so-called "therapeutic" abortion. We believe there is a great deal of misinformation regarding this issue which needs to be corrected.

The facts:

In November 2006, following massive support of the people of Nicaragua and their elected representatives, legislation went into effect removing an outdated, phony so called "therapeutic" abortion exception which was constantly abused and incompatible with modern medical, moral, and legal principles.

In the year, since this legislative change went into effect in November of 2006:

- 1) Maternal deaths have declined.
- 2) Not a single woman has died in Nicaragua for not having a so-called "therapeutic" abortion.
- 3) As before, women with complications of pregnancy must be offered necessary treatment, even if such treatment may indirectly cause the death of her unborn baby. The law allows such medical procedures, and physicians failing to provide such care are liable.

The above positive results are similar to some other Latin American countries, such as El Salvador and Chile. It is our understanding that in Europe, Ireland, Malta, and Poland have also had positive results with legislation attempting to better protect both mother and child, before as well as after birth.

Another positive result, not in any way to be minimized, is that more Nicaraguan children have escaped the abortionists' knives, poisons, and suction machines.

---

The *Linacre Quarterly* 78(2) (May 2011): 188–189.

© 2011 by the Catholic Medical Association. All rights reserved.

0024-3639/2011/7802-0006 \$.30/page.

We believe the February 26 MEP letter helps fuel the unprecedented international interference in Nicaragua's national life. For over a year, our country has been subjected to intense pressure, not only from the usual radical feminists and misguided human rights internationalists, but also from some European governments who have threatened to cut off their financial aid to our country if we do not change our law to suit their pro-abortion views. We view the February 26 letter as an intrusion in Nicaragua's internal affairs and our right and duty to protect all Nicaraguans, including our unborn children.

Thankfully, up to now, Nicaragua has been able so far to resist this pressure. The entire free world needs to look up to Nicaragua as an example of courage and strength in the face of a never-before-seen effort to strip Nicaragua of its sovereignty and dignity.

We would also like to point out that our legislation is consistent with the American Convention on Human Rights signed and ratified by all member states of the Organization of American States.

It is publicly stated that the European Union has no competence to intervene in matters related to abortion because abortion is considered to be under the exclusive competence of each State. Yet, initiatives such as the February 26 letter create confusion in Nicaragua regarding the European Parliament's official position.

We would request from you as president of the European Parliament to ensure that the European Parliament does not overpass its mandate. We would ask you to use your leadership in cooperation with supportive MEPs to ensure that Nicaragua's exclusive competence and rights on this issue related to abortion are respected by all members of the European Parliament.

We are waiting for your answer regarding the official position of the European Parliament on abortion competence in development aid as well as the competence of the European Parliament to interfere into national legislations of a third country. We would also like to know if the European Parliament has any mandate to control, check, and monitor third countries' international UN commitments.

Thank you for your prompt attention to our concerns.

Sincerely,

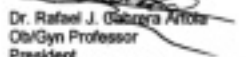


Lucia de Bohemer

President  
Asociación Nicaragüense de la Mujer  
[lucia@cablenet.com.ni](mailto:lucia@cablenet.com.ni)  
Managua, Nicaragua



Dr. Walter Mendieta Bricelto  
Ob/Gyn Professor  
President  
Asociación Médica Nicaragüense  
[walter@cablenet.com.ni](mailto:walter@cablenet.com.ni)  
Managua, Nicaragua



Dr. Rafael J. Cabrera Arriba  
Ob/Gyn Professor  
President  
Universidad de Ciencias Médicas  
[rafcabrera3@netscape.net](mailto:rafcabrera3@netscape.net)  
Managua, Nicaragua