Dear friends,

The United States has a long history of acting out of fear in Nicaragua.

For over four decades, our Cold War fears propped up the Somoza dictatorship -- our tax money paid for a National Guard that would hold the Nicaraguan people at gunpoint while the dictator robbed them dry. US-sponsored mercenaries sabotaged Nicaragua’s Revolution and terrorized its people in the 1980’s.

But, also during the 1980’s, small groups of people from New Jersey started traveling to Nicaragua to witness how the fears of a superpower had divided families, destroyed infrastructure and instigated the killing of more than 40,000 Nicaraguans. By 1990, six New Jersey-Nicaragua sister city projects had sprung into action, raising money and sending humanitarian aid shipments. In 1990 PeaceWorks began to take form.

But this is not just a stroll down memory lane. This is also about the past couple of weeks.

After the violence in Charlottesville, coupled with President Trump's remarkable talent for channeling hate for political gain, the flames of fear are burning strong in our country once again. So, like our brothers and sisters who jumped into action in the 1980's, we must remain vigilant and ready to stand with the people of Latin America.

Case in point, Venezuela. In that now infamous "on many sides" press conference at Bedminster, President Trump said he would "not rule out a military option" in Venezuela.

The situation in Venezuela is complicated, and delicate. But Trump's threat of an old-school invasion not only emboldens all sides to dig in deeper, it also sends our foreign policy back two decades. The threat sows discontent and mistrust with neighbors who, unlike us, cannot forget our past sins. An impulsive response could destabilize an already fragile region just coming out of war - like Venezuela's neighbor Colombia. So, no matter how you interpret the chaos in Venezuela, we must remain vigilant.

Another case in point, the TPS. Trump's fondness for whipping up fears about immigrants may include ending the Temporary Protected Status for some countries. The TPS now permits immigrants from about 22 countries to remain in the U.S. because war, environmental disaster or other conditions make it unsafe for them to return home. The threat of taking away TPS for El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua and Haiti is causing enormous anxiety for hundreds of thousands of people.

To help us remain vigilant, together, PeaceWorks is planning a series of events - starting with our September 9th Dinner Forum with Rosa Santana. Rosa will speak on the TPS and what the climate of fear means for

PeaceWorks, 1125 Woolley Ave., Union, NJ 07083
917-301-6967, peaceworks.org
immigrants and our country. She acquired the Temporary Protection Status when Hurricane Mitch ripped through Honduras in 1998. While other members of her family were held in detention, she used her time to get a degree in Criminal Justice and now defends the rights of immigrants with First Friends. Please join us at 6:30 for dinner at the Friends Meeting in Chatham.

The PeaceWorks community has remained vigilant helping our partner FEDICAMP, the Nicaraguan Federation for the Development of Rural Farmers. We asked you to help raise $15,000 to bridge a salary gap and keep staff working. For PeaceWorks, August is typically quiet, but this year there was an extra burst of energy. Not only did our community respond with about $3000 in direct aid for the salary gap, but Brooks Smith, Skip Winter and the First Presbyterian Church of Cranford donated another $14,000 for two FEDICAMP water projects, including money to pay people to get the job done! The $17,000 is already down in Nicaragua.

In the spirit of friendship and preparation for the work ahead, 19 of us met near Conway, New Hampshire for our first ever summer retreat. Sure, we worked a little, but the weather was great and Whitten Pond was exhilarating. When we weren't swimming, hiking or doing yoga, we participated in a series of conversations on social movements, the politics of Venezuela and Dorothy Day's Catholic Worker Movement. We are ready in mind, body and spirit for the work that lies ahead this fall!

How else can you stay vigilant with PeaceWorks? Help us prepare and load our 72nd humanitarian aid shipment to Nicaragua. Join us on Saturday September 30th for a pre-shipment workday. Or come out to pack the shipment on Saturday October 14th. Also, we'll be announcing our November 11th dinner forum shortly. Stay tuned.

We still have two spots open for our January 2018 delegation to Nicaragua. If you've never gone, we promise you will be inspired by the people of Nicaragua. Their stories of struggle and hard work are playing out in beautiful ways. See the attached flyer for details.

We look forward to connecting this fall. Thank you for making this past summer, our 25th, one of the best ever!

In peace,
Denis, Diane and the entire PeaceWorks Board

----------------------------------

I’d like to contribute to the general PeaceWorks Fund for aid shipments, partner support, etc.

$__________

_____ Please add me to the PeaceWorks email list for meeting reminders and events announcements.

Name: _________________________ Email: __________________________

PeaceWorks, 1125 Woolley Ave., Union, NJ 07083
917-301-6967, peaceworks.org
ANOTHER BRICK IN THE WALL?
FEAR AND UNCERTAINTY FOR IMMIGRANTS: A CONVERSATION WITH ROSA SANTANA

The U.S. Government’s Temporary Protection Status (TPS) permits immigrants from about 22 countries to remain in the U.S. because war, environmental disaster or other conditions make it unsafe for them to return home. The Trump Administration is threatening to take away TPS for some countries, like El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua and Haiti – causing enormous anxiety for hundreds of thousands of people. What can we do?

Join us for a dinner forum with immigration expert Rosa Santana. Under TPS, when Rosa was unable to return to Honduras after hurricane Mitch, she earned a degree in criminal justice and now works for First Friends.

Saturday June 9th, 2017
Dinner at 6:30. Program at 7:30pm.
Summit-Chatham Friends Meeting, 158 Southern Blvd, Chatham, NJ.
$10 adults. Kids free. RSVP to smsteiner100@gmail.com
More than simple acts of kindness..

Your solidarity builds strength!

When PeaceWorks 71st humanitarian aid shipment arrived in Nicaragua in July, the donations meant so much more than just a bike or a sewing machine or crib for somebody in need - like the dozens of women and children from the Axyacatl Center for Women in the photos above. Your donations are an act of friendship and kindness felt throughout Nicaragua -- hundreds of people strengthened by your solidarity, knowing the hard work of building peace is not done alone.
PEACEWORKS
JANUARY 2018 DELEGATION TO NICARAGUA

THE JOURNEY BEGINS WHERE THE PAVED ROAD ENDS.

You’ll hike to mountain villages to see sustainable farming and water conservation projects. By boat you’ll glide through mangrove forests to participate in sea turtle conservation. You’ll visit a community nestled between volcanos and see how they produce organic coffee. From city slums to rural cooperatives, you’ll be greeted with friendly faces and the open arms of our partners who are working to overcome extreme poverty, environmental degradation and economic exploitation—everyday Nicaraguans working to build peace.

PEOPLE TO PEOPLE, PUEBLO A PUEBLO

While enjoying pleasant accommodations & good food, you’ll be part of a small team meeting with our project partners—experts in rural development, wildlife conservation and human rights. In translated conversations you’ll speak to Nicaraguan families and project beneficiaries who’ll invite you into their homes and places of work. You’ll ask questions, observe, and learn while helping PeaceWorks think about priorities and future work. Our delegation is the foundation of our solidarity building work—people to people, pueblo a pueblo.
13 DAYS OF FRIENDSHIP, SOLIDARITY & LEARNING.

PEACEWORKS DELEGATION TO NICARAGUA

JANUARY 2018 (EXACT DATES TBD)

Managua
Inhijambia Program for Street Kids. Learn about the realities for street children and how Inhijambia restores hope and love to these young people who live at the dangerous margins of Nicaraguan society.

Masaya
Axyacatl Women’s Collective Experience how the collective supports local women through literacy training, counseling and self-support groups, legal assistance, community advocacy, and micro-credit and farming projects.

Northern Nicaragua
The Federation for the Development of Rural Farmers (FEDICAMP). Visit reforestation, water conservation, and organic gardening projects in areas threatened by desertification and climate change in rural Nicaragua.

El Porvenir Coffee Co-op
See how forty-three families, living high atop a volcanic mountain range, plant, pick, and process the organic coffee that provides their livelihood which PeaceWorks sells at our events.

Beauty and Culture
A visit to Nicaragua would not be complete without visiting the smoldering Masaya volcano, a breathtaking ecological reserve, the historic old city of Grenada, a Pacific ocean beach — and so much more!

SIGN UP BY SEPTEMBER 31st, APPROX. COST $1750 (INCLUDING AIR)
SIGN UP EARLY, SPACES ARE GOING FAST.
Contact: Diane Sterner at (609) 259-8093 or dsterner14@gmail.com

peaceworks.org