

NSC Annual Report January to December 2011

Nicaragua and the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of our America (ALBA)

The eurozone crisis presented an opportunity to promote ALBA as an example of another kind of trading relationship based on solidarity, co-operation, complementary action and respect for national sovereignty that serve to reverse inequality within and between countries. ALBA is one of the integration initiatives across Latin America and the Caribbean reasserting the region's sense of identity and unity as a growing epicenter of global power.

NSC carried out the following work:

- Published a special briefing entitled 'Another way is possible': Fair trade, co-operation and solidarity, published on NSC website, hard copies distributed to members and supporters and at the Latin America conference
- Commissioned David McKnight from Wales NSC to make a 10 minute video on ALBA based on an interview with Nick Hoskyns who works with an ALBA company, ALBANISA. The video is available on youtube and was shown at the Latin America conference and other events.
- Meeting with a representative of a Labour Party think tank on economic policy interested in learning more about ALBA.
- Articles based on the interview with Nick Hoskyns published in the Morning Star, the Latin America conference website, Labour Briefing, and Latin America Bureau and other websites.
- Participated in a workshop at the Latin America conference on ALBA attended by 80 people where we showed the video, and distributed the briefing.
- Wrote article on Nicaraguan, ALBA and the literacy programme published in Adelante, the followup publication to the 2010 Latin America conference. Twenty thousand copies were distributed mainly through the trade union movement

Environment/fairtrade solidarity linking and preparation for study tour

Partner organisations: Nicaragua Community Movement (MCN) Matagalpa, Union of Co-operatives SOPPEXCCA, Young Environmentalists (CJA)

NSC carried out the following work:

- prepared background materials on environmental issues and climate change affecting Nicaragua
- re-established links with the Community Movement (MCN) in Matagalpa in preparation for study tour visit
- established contact with the Young Environmentalists (CJA) in preparation for the study tour participation in the National Fair for the Environment
- through UK environmental and community organisations we promoted a environment study tour which took place in June 2012
- re-established contact with the Union of co-operatives SOPPEXCCA in preparation for a Fairtrade speaker tour which took place during Fairtrade Fortnight in March 2012
- supported a successful Environmental Network for Central America lobbying action in support of a Nicaraguan environmental organisation SELVA, whose land had been illegally occupied.
- spoke at two public meetings in London after the showing of the film 'Bananas' about the case of Nicaraguan banana workers poisoned by Nemagon supplied by Dole long after it was banned in the US.

Communications

- regular updates of NSC website with news and articles from Nicaragua and information about our solidarity events and activities in the UK
- publication of two issues of Central America Report with a variety of articles about developments in Central America and solidarity activities in the UK
- to counteract the rewriting of history at the time of an unveiling of a statue of Ronald Reagan in Grosvenor Sq, we wrote a briefing on the appalling suffering inflicted on Central America by the Reagan administration in the 1980s. The briefing was circulated to our members and supporters, placed on our website and an edited version was published in the Guardian. We also did an interview that was broadcast on Hispanictv.

- published briefings before and after the Nicaraguan elections, these briefings were used as background information for articles published by other journalists
- wrote an article on the history of the Nicaragua Women's Network which was published in the Central America Report 20th anniversary bulletin.
- published a briefing on Nicaragua and ALBA together with a video (see above)

Review of the work of NSC and NSCAG

In September 2011 a joint meeting 2011 the Executive Committees of both organisations agreed that we would contract a consultant to carry out a fundamental review of the work and functioning of both organisations. Because of delays in finding a consultant this work was delayed until the first quarter of 2012.

Collaboration with other organisations

We worked closely with other organisations that promote solidarity and/or have projects and undertake advocacy in relation to specific countries or regions. We worked with Cuba and Venezuela Solidarity Campaigns on a series of activities and events that included a Latin America fringe meeting at the TUC conference (see NSCAG report) and the Latin America conference in December. We contributed to the Central America Women's Network 20th anniversary celebrations, built a closer relationship with ENCA through our work on the environment and worked with Guatemala Solidarity Network on the production of Central America Report.

Support for Wales NSC and twin towns in UK and Nicaragua

We supported Wales NSC and twinning groups in Edinburgh, Bristol, Islington, Leeds, Leicester, Norwich, Oxford, Reading, Tavistock, Sheffield, Swindon, the Nicaragua English for Sustainable Tourism (NEST), and the Nicaragua Education, Cultural and Arts Trust (NECAT) by facilitating transfers of funds, providing information, publishing articles in CAR about twin towns and providing practical support in Nicaragua for towns without representatives. We conducted and collated a survey of Wales NSC and twin towns in order to provide an overview of solidarity activities being carried out across the country. This provided background for a twin towns meeting in November which included a discussion on the purposes of twinning, sharing ideas and experiences, ways of getting more younger people involved, and plans for 2012.



Fundraising & sales 2011

The total raised through fundraising and sales was £ 26,361, 92% of that raised in 2010. A further £7,300 was made through Gift Aid.

- Once again income from sponsored events rose (London marathon and Royal Parks Half Marathon) and we had a successful film showing of "La Yuma" (*pictured*) and two shorts. A new fundraising initiative, albeit minor, was the Give-a-Car scheme. Spanish classes, Loteria and Workers Beer Company continued to do well
- Sales profit was down by 19% despite successful catalogue inserts into a WDM mailing but far more worrying was appeal profit, down by

44% (total profit was only £3,145).

- £455 raised through the Gift for Nicaragua on the 2010 sales catalogue was spent on reforestation around the Masaya Lagoon and a backyard fruit and vegetable project in the community of Guadalupe Abajo in Matagalpa coordinated by the Community Movement (MCN).
- A further £858 raised by runners in sponsored events was given to the MCN project mentioned above.
- £435 was sent to La Concha following the floods in October.

Membership 2011

All members receive regular mailings including Central America Report, news from Nicaragua and information about our activities in the UK. We also email the Nicanet News Hotline to members who request this service

- Income from affiliations and related donations was £24,080, £951 more than in 2010.

- We are continuing efforts to ensure greater income stability through standing orders and at the end of 2011 74% of individual members were paying by standing order which is excellent.
- During the year there only 14 new members compared with 25 in 2009. The diminishing number of people going on delegations and study tours continues to have a negative effect but it is also the case that so much information is available online that fewer people want to pay to join an organisation. Most of the new members came via the website or were hopeful festival volunteers.

Membership	Dec 08	Dec 09	Dec 10	Dec 11
Individuals	579 (some lapsed members included in error)	522	505	470
Local groups & Wales NSC	14	14	14	14
Project-based groups	3	3	3	2
Trade Unions: national, branches & regions, TUC's	92	92	92	76
Overseas affiliations (libraries)				4
All groups	109	109	109	96
TOTAL	688	631	614	566

See the NSCAG Annual Report for more detailed information on trade union affiliations.

Board of Trustees: NSC is governed by a voluntary Board of Directors/Trustees, which develops NSC's overall strategic plans and monitors activities and outcomes.

2011 Board members: Carmen Barreda, Debbie Clarke, Ruby Cox (chair), Matthew Dodd, Rita Drobner, Pauline Fraser, Bob Hardie, Christine Oddy, James Poke (treasurer), Jessica Russell, Helen Stathers.

NSC Staff: *London Office:* Stella Embliss, Mathews Chanza, Helen Yuill
Managua Office: Julian Guevara, Gill Holmes (until June), Liz Light (from June).

NSCAG staff: Victor Figueroa Clark (from November), Gabriela Quevedo (from May), Mark Jackson (from November)

Note that all staff are employed on a part-time basis.

Nicaragua Solidarity Campaign (NSC), 86 Durham Rd, London N7 7DT
email: nsc@nicaraguasc.org.uk tel: 020 7281 4836 www.nicaraguasc.org.uk
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