

**The Nauraushaun Presbyterian Church asks the presbytery to concur with the Overture from the Presbytery of New York City:**

**Overture #3: On welfare of neighbors in the region of Central America**

**On a study of the current socio-economic and political realities in Central America**

**The Presbytery of New York City overtures the 223rd General Assembly (2018) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to direct the Advisory Council on Social Witness Policy to develop a comprehensive study of the current socio-economic and political realities in Central America and report its findings and recommendations to the 224<sup>th</sup> General Assembly (2020).**

Rationale:

The PC(USA) has mission and partnership relationships in Central America since 1882.

The PC(USA) engaged in study and action regarding Central America during the crisis years of the 1980's but has not updated its policies since 1988.

The 1987 Esquipalás Peace accords brought an end to the regional civil wars and initiated a turn towards democracy, however,

- a) Corruption remains widespread throughout the region;
- b) Poverty remains a major reality;
- c) Organized crime and gangs have created a deadly reality throughout Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras;
- d) Resulting waves of migrants have impacted both the US and other Central American countries;
- e) The government of Nicaragua has become increasingly authoritarian and the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) reports a steady "democratic deterioration"; concerns have been expressed over a potentially devastating interoceanic canal and treatment of indigenous people; (1) and
- f) The United States House has before it a Nicaraguan Investment Conditionality Act that would "oppose loans at international financial institutions for the Government of Nicaragua unless the Government of Nicaragua is taking effective steps to hold free, fair, and transparent elections." (2)

There are numerous ongoing church mission projects in Nicaragua. The Presbyterian Hunger program, for example, has hosted annual mission trips focused on building "Just Relationships." (3)

There is need for theological reflection on the contemporary reality in Central America as well as recommendations for the church, the U.S. government, and the international community regarding the impact of U.S. social and economic policy on the region and specific recommendations for each country.

Notes

1. <http://www.refworld.org/docid/5a8aedf6fd.html>
2. <https://foreignaffairs.house.gov/legislation/h-r-1918-nicaragua-investment-conditionality-act-2017/>
3. <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/compassion-peace-justice/hunger/trips/>

