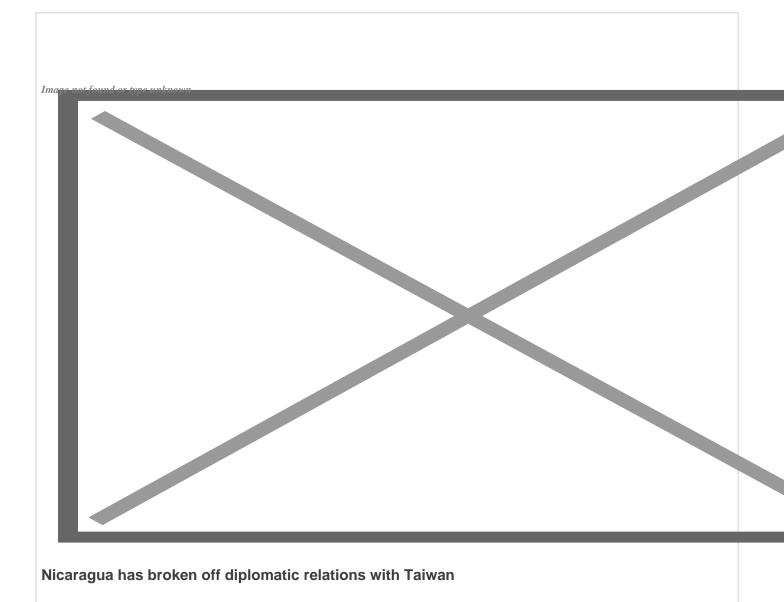
Nicaraguan government breaks diplomatic relations with Taiwan



Managua, December 10 (RHC)-- Nicaragua has broken off diplomatic relations with Taiwan, leaving the self-ruled democratic island with just 14 formal diplomatic allies amid ongoing pressure from China, which claims the island as its own.

The Central American country made the announcement in a brief statement on Thursday from its foreign ministry, and cited Beijing's One China policy.

"The Government of the Republic of Nicaragua declares that it recognizes that in the world there is only one single China," the statement read. "The People's Republic of China is the only legitimate government

that represents all of China and Taiwan is an inalienable part of Chinese territory. The Government of the Republic of Nicaragua today breaks diplomatic relations with Taiwan and ceases to have any contact or official relationship."

Taiwan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said early on Friday that it "deeply regretted" the decision of Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega to "disregard the friendship" of the Taiwanese people. Taiwan also said that it was breaking off relations with Nicaragua, although the decision is widely seen as unilateral by Nicaragua.

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