

# *Nicaragua Celebrates Anniversary of Sandinista Revolution*

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Managua, July 20 (teleSUR-RHC)-- Thousands of people across Nicaragua continue celebrations on Sunday to commemorate the 36th anniversary of the Sandinista Revolution, a movement that sprung up in the 1970's to oust the oppressive U.S.-backed Somoza dictatorship.

The revolution changed the lives for thousands of people across the country, especially the poorest sectors, Elijah Chevez, Nicaraguan Ambassador to Bolivia, told Prensa Latina news agency.

Troops from the Sandinista National Liberation Front, or FSLN, entered the capital city of Managua on July 19, 1979, declaring victory and control of the government.

Anastasio Somoza Debayle had resigned two days earlier, ending the violent 43-year rule of the Somoza family dynasty, from 1936 to 1979.

According to Chevez, the Sandinista Revolution paved the way for the creation of free education and healthcare in the country, which has benefited millions. The Sandinistas, named after the anti-imperialist leader Augusto Sandino, also created farm cooperatives for small farmers using land confiscated from

Somoza and his close supporters, and started a Literacy Crusade that over the years has reduced literacy by 37 percent.

“We can say that the poor population of the country has full confidence in the Sandinista Revolution,” said Chevez.

The Sandinista government soon was faced with a violent, U.S.-sponsored counterrevolution which wreaked havoc in the country, carrying out more than 1300 terrorist attacks and engaging in widespread human rights violations.

Thousands of people also took to the streets and celebrated on Friday to mark the 36th anniversary of when Somoza resigned, also known as The Day of Joy (el Dia de Alegria). Cuban Vice President Miguel Diaz-Canel, former Nobel Peace Prize winner Rigoberta Menchu, former Paraguay President Fernando Lugo and former Honduran President Manuel Zelaya also joined the festivities.

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