

## Government Programs and Policies to Eliminate the Worst Forms of Child Labor

The Government of Nicaragua has been a member of ILO-IPEC since 1996.<sup>3139</sup> In 1997, the government created the National Commission for the Eradication of Child Labor (CNEPTI).<sup>3140</sup> Through CNEPTI, the Government of Nicaragua, in collaboration with international organizations, NGOs and the private sector, has developed a strategic plan for addressing child labor in the country and organized programs to eradicate child labor.<sup>3141</sup> The government also created the National Council for the Integral Attention and Protection of Children and Adolescents (CONAPINA).<sup>3142</sup> CONAPINA is responsible for the implementation of national policies on children and adolescents and for the application of the Child and Adolescent Code.<sup>3143</sup> In response to concerns about increases in child prostitution, a National Forum against the Sexual and Commercial Exploitation of Children and Adolescents was established in 1999 to raise awareness and advocate for children's rights.<sup>3144</sup> CONAPINA has also been actively working on this issue, most notably by promoting policies against the commercial sexual exploitation of children and adolescents.<sup>3145</sup> The Ministry of Family has consolidated its work with urban youth at risk under the Program for Children and Adolescents at Risk (PAINAR), and coordinates the Social Protection Network for disadvantaged rural youth.<sup>3146</sup>

During 2003, the Ministry of Labor (MOL) worked with ILO-IPEC on several USDOL-funded projects to eliminate child labor, including projects for children working as garbage scavengers;<sup>3147</sup> on coffee farms;<sup>3148</sup> in

<sup>3139</sup> ILO-IPEC, *All About IPEC Programme Countries*, [online] August 13, 2001 [cited August 15, 2003]; available from [http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/ipecc/about/countries/t\\_country.htm](http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/ipecc/about/countries/t_country.htm).

<sup>3140</sup> The Minister of Labor is the head of CNEPTI and the First Lady serves as its honorary president. See ILO-IPEC, *Elimination of Child Labor in the Dump Yard of Managua, Acahualinca's Neighborhood "La Chureca" (Phase I)*, technical progress report, NIC/00/50P/USA, ILO-IPEC, Geneva, March 3, 2003, 2.

<sup>3141</sup> National Commission for the Progressive Eradication of Child Labor and Protection of the Adolescent Worker, *Plan estratégico nacional para la prevención y erradicación del trabajo infantil y protección del adolescente trabajador: Nicaragua, 2001-2005*, Managua, October 2000, 2. See also U.S. Embassy- Managua, *unclassified telegram no. 3312*, October 2003.

<sup>3142</sup> The First Lady also serves as president of CONAPINA. See Xanthis Suarez Garcia, *Labor de CONAPINA en el 2002*, in *Bolsa de Mujeres*, [database online] December 23 2002 [cited August 28, 2003]; available from <http://www.grupoese.com.ni/2002/bm/ed71/conapina70.htm>.

<sup>3143</sup> Law number 351 provides for the organization of the CONAPINA and lists responsibilities. See *Ley núm. 351 de organización del Consejo Nacional de atención y protección integral a la niñez y la adolescencia y la Defensoría de las niñas, niños y adolescentes*, (May 29, 2000); available from [http://ilis.ilo.org/cgi-bin/gpte/stbna/natlaxe?wq\\_fld=B380&wq\\_val=Nicaragua&wq\\_rel=AND&wq\\_fld=B250&wq\\_val=adolescencia&wq\\_rel=AND&wq\\_fld=B520&wq\\_val=&wq\\_rel=AND&wq\\_fld=B500&wq\\_val=&wq\\_rel=AND&wq\\_fld=B380&wq\\_val=](http://ilis.ilo.org/cgi-bin/gpte/stbna/natlaxe?wq_fld=B380&wq_val=Nicaragua&wq_rel=AND&wq_fld=B250&wq_val=adolescencia&wq_rel=AND&wq_fld=B520&wq_val=&wq_rel=AND&wq_fld=B500&wq_val=&wq_rel=AND&wq_fld=B380&wq_val=). See also Xanthis Suarez Garcia, *Labor de CONAPINA*. CONAPINA oversees the National Policy on Integral Attention for Children and Adolescents, considered public policy due to multi-sector involvement. See ILO-IPEC, *Evaluación rápida sobre niños, niñas, y adolescentes trabajadores/as urbanos/as en República Dominicana*, Santo Domingo, December 2002. As of Spring 2003, three controversial initiatives have been presented to the National Congress to revise the Child and Adolescent Code, which has interfered with the Code's implementation. See ILO-IPEC, *Elimination of Child Labor in the Dump Yard*, technical progress report, March 2003, 2.

<sup>3144</sup> The Forum has held public forums and distributed publications. The Government has also instituted an awareness campaign specifically for border police and immigration officials and has formed an Anti-Trafficking in Persons Unit within the police. See U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices- 2002: Nicaragua*, Washington, D.C., March 31, 2003, Section 6f; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2002/18339.htm>.

<sup>3145</sup> Xanthis Suarez Garcia, *CONAPINA*, in *Bolsa de Mujeres*, April 8, 2002 [cited August 28, 2003]; available from <http://www.grupoese.com.ni/2002/bm/ed67/conapina67.htm>. See also Ministry of Labor, ILO-IPEC, and CNEPTI, *Encuesta Nacional de Trabajo Infantil y Adolescente*, ILO, 2003, 47.

<sup>3146</sup> U.S. Embassy- Managua, *unclassified telegram no. 3312*.

<sup>3147</sup> The project targets children and families working in La Chureca dump yard in Managua. See ILO-IPEC, *Elimination of Child Labor in the Dump Yard*, technical progress report, March 2003, 1.

<sup>3148</sup> This project focuses on children working in the rural areas of Matagalpa and Jinotega. It is scheduled for completion at the end of December 2003. See ILO-IPEC, *Prevention and Progressive Elimination of Child Labour in the Coffee Industry in Nicaragua (Phase I)*, technical progress report, NIC/99/05/P050, March 25, 2003, 3.

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farming and stockbreeding;<sup>3149</sup> and in commercial sexual exploitation.<sup>3150</sup> In addition, the Ministry of Labor, with technical assistance from ILO-IPEC's SIMPOC and funding from USDOL, has just completed and published a national child labor survey.<sup>3151</sup> Other ILO-IPEC projects in which the Government of Nicaragua is participating include action programs in the mining, tobacco and domestic service sectors.<sup>3152</sup>

In 2000, the Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture announced a 15-year National Education Plan.<sup>3153</sup> However, budget constraints have prevented sufficient funding for children's programs and primary education.<sup>3154</sup> In February 2002, the Government of Nicaragua and representatives from local and international NGOs launched a UNICEF-sponsored project to promote the rights of children, emphasizing a child's right to education and freedom from labor exploitation.<sup>3155</sup> Nicaragua's Extra Edad program targets children over 14 years old who wish to complete primary school.<sup>3156</sup> A Bilingual Education program supports students at 120 schools.<sup>3157</sup> International

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<sup>3149</sup> This project targets children working in farming and stock breeding in the Chontales Department. See ILO-IPEC, *Prevention and Elimination of Child Labor in the Farming and Stockbreeding Sectors in the Department of Chontales*, technical progress report, NIC/00/05/050, ILO-IPEC, Geneva, March 24, 2003. The project was renewed in FY2003 for a second phase. See ILO-IPEC, *Prevention and progressive elimination of child labour in agriculture in Central America, Panama and the Dominican Republic (Phase II)*, project document, RLA/03/P50/USA, ILO-IPEC, Geneva, September 17, 2003.

<sup>3150</sup> ILO-IPEC, "Stop the Exploitation" ("Alto a la explotacion") *Contribution to the Prevention and Elimination of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in Central America, Panama and the Dominican Republic*, project document, RLA/02/P51/USA, June 30, 2002, 13. Prior to the regional commercial sexual exploitation project, ILO/IPEC implemented a child prostitution project in Leon, which was completed in March 2001. See ILO-IPEC, *Elimination of Child Labor and the Risk of Sexual Exploitation of Girls and Teenagers in the Bus Station in the Municipality of Leon (Phase I)*, technical progress report, 090.73.204.064, March 8, 2001.

<sup>3151</sup> Ministry of Labor, ILO-IPEC, and CNEPTI, *Encuesta Nacional de Trabajo Infantil y Adolescente*, 3, 16.

<sup>3152</sup> Carmen Moreno, Sub-Regional Coordinator Central America, ILO-IPEC, electronic communication to USDOL official, September 22, 2002. See also Maria Chamorro, ILO-IPEC official, electronic communication to USDOL official, September 10, 2002.

<sup>3153</sup> The plan outlines strategies for general improvements to the quality of education as well as strategies for making education more equitable among social classes, genders, and ethnic groups. See The Ministry of Education, Sport, and Culture, *Plan Nacional de Educación*, Managua, 2000, [cited October 16, 2003]; available from <http://www.mecd.gob.ni/plannac.asp>. See also Ministry of Labor, ILO-IPEC, and CNEPTI, *Encuesta Nacional de Trabajo Infantil y Adolescente*, 47-48.

<sup>3154</sup> Education received 14.7 percent of the National Budget in 2003. However, six percent of the annual budget is automatically allotted to university education. See U.S. Embassy- Managua, *unclassified telegram no. 3312*.

<sup>3155</sup> The project focuses on indigenous and multiethnic populations and provides teacher training and educational materials to 262 primary and secondary schools in the north Atlantic region. See UNWire, "Nicaragua: UNICEF-Funded Program Launched to Promote Child Rights", [online], February 7, 2002 [cited August 28, 2003]; available from [http://www.unfoundation.org/unwire/util/display\\_stories.asp?objid=23665](http://www.unfoundation.org/unwire/util/display_stories.asp?objid=23665).

<sup>3156</sup> Classes are offered after work to accommodate students' work schedule. See Drusilla K. Brown, *Child Labor in Latin America: Policy and Evidence*, Working Paper, Department of Economics at Tufts University, Medford, MA., February, 2001, 13. A teacher's guide has been published by the Ministry of Education, and endorsed by the Ministry of Labor, to assist teachers working with overage children and children engaged in child labor. See ILO-IPEC, *Prevention and Progressive Elimination of Child Labour in the Coffee Industry*, technical progress report, March 2003, 2.

<sup>3157</sup> Ministry of Public Education, *Bilingue Intercultural*, Managua, no date given.

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organizations and donors such as USAID,<sup>3158</sup> the World Bank,<sup>3159</sup> UNICEF,<sup>3160</sup> and the WFP,<sup>3161</sup> have also supported education projects in Nicaragua. In June 2002, the Government of Nicaragua became eligible to receive funding from the World Bank and other donors under the Education for All Fast Track Initiative, which aims to provide all children with a primary school education by the year 2015.<sup>3162</sup>

## Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

In 2000, a Ministry of Labor Survey on Child Labor estimated that 17.7 percent of children in Nicaragua between the ages of 5 to 17 years had worked at one time in their lives.<sup>3163</sup> The agriculture, forestry and fishing sectors constitute the largest employers of child workers, followed by work in business, restaurants and hotels, community and social services and manufacturing.<sup>3164</sup> Specifically, children work in the production of export crops such as coffee, bananas, tobacco, and sugar, as well as in fishing, stockbreeding and mining.<sup>3165</sup> Sixty percent of working children work in the informal sector.<sup>3166</sup> In Managua, children work on city streets, selling merchandise, cleaning car windows, or begging.<sup>3167</sup> Some children are forced by their parents to work as beggars and street vendors, and

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<sup>3158</sup> USAID supports basic education by funding teacher training, the development of new materials and teacher training modules. USAID has also made funds available for education reform and the expansion of the model school program. It is encouraging private donations through a matching funds program. See USAID, *Nicaragua: Data Sheet*, USAID, Washington, D.C., 2003.

<sup>3159</sup> The Second Basic Education Project for Nicaragua, which runs until 2004, increases coverage of preschool and primary levels, improves quality and efficiency of preschool and primary education and provides for the continued institutional strengthening and modernization of the Ministry of Education, Culture, and Sports. See The World Bank Group, "Nicaragua - Second Basic Education Project," *Documents and Reports*, 2003; available from [http://www-wds.worldbank.org/servlet/WDServlet?pcont=details&cid=000094946\\_99082508013483](http://www-wds.worldbank.org/servlet/WDServlet?pcont=details&cid=000094946_99082508013483). A Country Assistance Strategy was also approved including a Programmatic Structural Adjustment Credit to raise the coverage and quality of primary education, as well as attend to other social needs. See The World Bank Group, "Nicaragua: Country Assistance Strategy," (Washington, D.C.), March 13, 2003; available from <http://lnweb18.worldbank.org/external/lac/lac.nsf/0/4751254F621B340585256CE7007990F2?OpenDocument>.

<sup>3160</sup> Funding from the Netherlands and Sweden has enabled UNICEF to expand the "Healthy Schools Initiative" to improve the quality of education, and provide basic infrastructure, hygiene, health and nutrition. See UNWire, "UNICEF Expands Its \$2.1 Million Healthy Schools Initiative", [online], February 21, 2003 [cited August 28, 2003]; available from [http://www.unwire.org/unwire/20030221/32170\\_story.asp](http://www.unwire.org/unwire/20030221/32170_story.asp). See also Gonzalez/Olivias, *La Prensa* (Managua), February 20, 2003.

<sup>3161</sup> The WFP is working with the Nicaraguan Government to institute a national school feeding program. See UNWire, "WFP, Government Work To Keep Children In School", [online], March 20, 2003 [cited August 28,]; available from [http://www.unwire.org/unwire/20030320/32697\\_story.asp](http://www.unwire.org/unwire/20030320/32697_story.asp).

<sup>3162</sup> World Bank, *World Bank Announces First Group Of Countries For 'Education For All' Fast Track*, press release, Washington, D.C., June 12, 2002; available from <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/NEWS/0,,contentMDK:20049839~menuPK:34463~pagePK:34370~piPK:34424,00.html>.

<sup>3163</sup> Forty-four percent of children, who worked at one time in their lives, are under the age of 14 and 36.5 percent began working before they turned 10. According to the survey, 71.5 percent of children who have worked are boys and 28.5 percent are girls, although the survey acknowledges that these numbers may not present an accurate picture of the gender balance among working children due to the invisibility of work commonly done by girls. The total number of working children in Nicaragua is just over 314,000. See Ministry of Labor, ILO-IPEC, and CNEPTI, *Encuesta Nacional de Trabajo Infantil y Adolescente*, 16.

<sup>3164</sup> The most common economic activities involving children include agriculture, forestry and fishing (53.1 percent), business, restaurants and hotels (19.2 percent), community, social and personal services (11.1 percent), industrial manufacturing (10.7 percent), construction (3.7 percent), transport (1.6 percent), financial establishments (0.3 percent) mines and quarries (0.2 percent) and electricity, gas and water (0.1 percent). Most children working in these sectors begin work when they are 5 and 6 years old. However, children working in mines and quarries begin work at 13. See *Ibid.*, 60, 17.

<sup>3165</sup> National Commission for the Progressive Eradication of Child Labor and Protection of the Adolescent Worker, *Plan estratégico nacional para la prevención y erradicación del trabajo infantil*, 32-33. See also ILO-IPEC, *Prevention and Elimination of Child Labor in the Farming and Stockbreeding Sectors, technical progress report, March 2003*, 1. See also Ministry of Labor, ILO-IPEC, and CNEPTI, *Encuesta Nacional de Trabajo Infantil y Adolescente*, 60.

<sup>3166</sup> Ministry of Labor, ILO-IPEC, and CNEPTI, *Encuesta Nacional de Trabajo Infantil y Adolescente*, 17.

<sup>3167</sup> A 1996 study by the National Commission against Child Labor found 6,219 children working urban areas as beggars, car washers and parking attendants. See U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2002: Nicaragua*, Section 6d.

some are “rented” out by their parents to organized groups of beggars.<sup>3168</sup> Child prostitution is reported to have increased in Nicaragua, particularly in Managua, port cities, rural areas, along the Honduran and Costa Rican borders, and near highways.<sup>3169</sup> Nicaragua is considered to be a source and transit country for trafficking.<sup>3170</sup> Education is free and compulsory through the sixth grade (age 12) in Nicaragua; however, this provision is not enforced.<sup>3171</sup> The Committee on the Rights of the Child has expressed concerns about the gap between the age at which compulsory education ends and the minimum legal work age, and has recommended that the government increase the number of years of compulsory education from 6 to 9 years.<sup>3172</sup> For the 1997-1998 school year, the gross attendance rate was 105.1 and the net attendance rate was 73.1 percent.<sup>3173</sup> Forty-nine percent of working children do not attend school.<sup>3174</sup>

## Child Labor Laws and Enforcement

The Labor Code of 1996 sets the minimum age for employment at 14 years.<sup>3175</sup> Under the Labor Code, children cannot work over 6 hours a day or 30 hours a week.<sup>3176</sup> Children 14 to 16 years old cannot work without parental permission.<sup>3177</sup> The Labor Code prohibits young people under the age of 18 from engaging in work that endangers their health and safety, such as work in mines, garbage dumps and night entertainment venues.<sup>3178</sup> It also prohibits any employment of children or adolescents that could adversely affect normal childhood development or interfere with schooling.<sup>3179</sup> On October 15, 2003, Articles 130 through 135 of the 1996 Labor Code were amended in an effort to strengthen protections against hazardous child labor.<sup>3180</sup> The Child and Adolescent Code

<sup>3168</sup> Ibid., Section 6c. The Ministry of Labor survey also reported that at least 1 percent of working children are paying off debts and live in a highly vulnerable situation. See Roberto Fonseca, *Child Slavery in Nicaragua*, (Edition No. 52), in Angel de la Guarda, [online] July-August 2002 [cited September 4, 2003]; available from <http://www.angel.org.ni/2002-52/temacentral-i.html>.

<sup>3169</sup> A 1998 study found that 40 percent of the prostitutes in Managua were under 14 years. UNICEF has also noted an increase in prostitution among children between the ages of 12 and 16 in towns where taxi drivers serve as middlemen. OAS noted an increase in prostitution among girls as young as 10. See U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2002: Nicaragua*, Sections 5, 6d and 6f. See also The Protection Project, “Nicaragua,” in *Human Rights Report on Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children: A Country-by-Country Report on a Contemporary Form of Slavery*, 2002; available from <http://www.protectionproject.org/main1.htm>.

<sup>3170</sup> Children have been trafficked for prostitution from Nicaragua to El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, and Belize as well as to other countries north and south of Nicaragua. See International Human Rights Law Institute, *Modern Bondage: Sex Trafficking in the Americas*, DePaul University College of Law, DePaul, October 2002, 4, 47. See U.S. Department of State, *Trafficking in Persons Report- 2003: Nicaragua*, Washington, D.C., June 11, 2003; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2003/21276.htm>.

<sup>3171</sup> *Constitución de Nicaragua*, (1987), Article 121 [cited October 6, 2003]; available from <http://www.asamblea.gob.ni/frameserviciosinformacion.htm>. See also Article 43 in *Código de la Niñez y la Adolescencia, Ley. No. 287*, (May 1998); available from <http://www.asamblea.gob.ni/frameserviciosinformacion.htm>. See also U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2002: Nicaragua*, Section 5.

<sup>3172</sup> UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Concluding Observations: Nicaragua*, Consideration of Reports Submitted by States Parties Under Article 44 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, CRC/C/Add.108, August 24, 1999; available from <http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/385c2add1632f4a8c12565a9004dc311/a60af0697af839428025679700483778?OpenDocument>.

<sup>3173</sup> USAID, *Demographic Health Survey 2002* [CD-ROM], Washington, DC, 2002.

<sup>3174</sup> Ministry of Labor, ILO-IPEC, and CNEPTI, *Encuesta Nacional de Trabajo Infantil y Adolescente*, 18.

<sup>3175</sup> *Código del Trabajo*, Ley. No. 185, Article 131; available from <http://natlex.ilo.org/txt/S96NIC01.htm#11t6c1>. See also *Código de la Niñez y la Adolescencia*, Article 73.

<sup>3176</sup> *Código del Trabajo*, Article 134. However, 13 percent of working children have been found to work more than eight hours a day. See Ministry of Labor, ILO-IPEC, and CNEPTI, *Encuesta Nacional de Trabajo Infantil y Adolescente*, 17.

<sup>3177</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2002: Nicaragua*, Section 6d.

<sup>3178</sup> *Código del Trabajo*, Article 133. Recent amendments to the Labor Code expand the list of conditions under which adolescents are forbidden to work and grant CNEPTI the authority to further amend the list. See U.S. Embassy- Managua, *unclassified telegram no. 3312*.

<sup>3179</sup> *Código del Trabajo*, Article 132.

<sup>3180</sup> The amendment eliminates the legal loophole previously allowing children under 14 to work under special circumstances and strengthens provisions for adolescent workers. U.S. Embassy- Managua, *unclassified telegram no. 3312*.

prohibits adolescents from engaging in work in unsafe places, work that endangers their life, health, or physical, psychological, or moral integrity, work in mines, underground, in garbage dumps, night clubs, work with dangerous or toxic objects, or night work in general.<sup>3181</sup> An inter-ministerial resolution on the Minimum Forms of Work Protection prohibits contracting children under 16 for work in the ocean and another Ministerial Regulation prohibits contracting work with children under 14 years in the Free Trade Zones.<sup>3182</sup> The Constitution prohibits slavery and servitude and also provides protection from any type of economic or social exploitation.<sup>3183</sup> Penalties for violating the rights of child workers include a fine of between Nicaragua Cordoba Oro 500 (NIO 500) (USD 33.11) and NIO 5000 (USD 331.13).<sup>3184</sup>

The Penal Code prohibits the promotion of prostitution and assigns the maximum penalty for those who recruit children under 14 into prostitution.<sup>3185</sup> In addition, Article 69 of the Children and Adolescents' Code forbids any person from promoting, filming or selling child pornography.<sup>3186</sup> A statute specifically prohibits trafficking and imposes 10 years imprisonment on those found in violation of the statute.<sup>3187</sup> The Public Prosecutor of the Republic is responsible for initiating criminal action for the crimes of rape, procuring and trading in persons, and sexual abuse.<sup>3188</sup>

The government established a Child Labor Inspector's Office within the MOL's Inspector General's Office in 2001.<sup>3189</sup> A total of 31 labor inspectors operate nationwide, including 4 child labor inspectors.<sup>3190</sup> Although there is no specific evidence of corruption in regard to trafficking, corruption in government is a problem and trafficking victims often carry false documents obtained through legitimate processes.<sup>3191</sup>

The Government of Nicaragua ratified ILO Convention No. 138 on November 2, 1981, and ILO Convention No. 182 on November 6, 2000.<sup>3192</sup>

<sup>3181</sup> The Code also threatens sanctions for those who exploit children (and especially those who profit from the exploitation of children), reinforces restrictions against involving children under 14 years old in work, and reaffirms the responsibility of the Ministry of Labor to ensure compliance with these laws. See *Código de la Niñez y la Adolescencia, Ley. No. 287*, October 4, (publicado en la Gaceta No. 97, 27 Mayo 1998), Articles 26, 74, and 75; available from <http://www.asamblea.gob.ni/frameserviciosinformacion.htm>.

<sup>3182</sup> Ministry of Labor, ILO-IPEC, and CNEPTI, *Encuesta Nacional de Trabajo Infantil y Adolescente*, 43. See also U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2002: Nicaragua*, Section 6d.

<sup>3183</sup> *Constitución de Nicaragua, 1986*, (1986), Article 40, 84; available from <http://www.right-to-education.org/content/consuarant/nicaragua.html>. Prohibitions against forced labor in the Constitution do not specifically address forced or bonded labor by children. See U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2002: Nicaragua*, Section 6c.

<sup>3184</sup> *Código del Trabajo*, Article 135. See also FXConverter, [online] [cited August 18, 2003]; available from <http://www.carosta.de/frames/convert.htm>. After fining businesses in violation of child labor laws three times, inspectors have the authority to close offending businesses. Revenues for fines are assigned to CNEPTI. See U.S. Embassy- Managua, *unclassified telegram no. 3312*.

<sup>3185</sup> Although prostitution is legal for persons 14 years and older, laws prohibit the promotion of prostitution. See U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2002: Nicaragua*, Section 6f. The Penal Code also penalizes forced prostitution of females who are 12 years or older with 1 to 5 years imprisonment. See U.S. Embassy- Managua, *unclassified telegram no. 2462*, September 2000.

<sup>3186</sup> *Código de la Niñez y la Adolescencia*, Article 69.

<sup>3187</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2002: Nicaragua*, Section 6f.

<sup>3188</sup> *Penal Code*, Article 205; available from <http://209.190.246.239/protectionproject/statutesPDF/NicaraguaF.pdf>.

<sup>3189</sup> The office currently has 4 child labor inspectors. Thirty-one general labor inspectors also investigate child labor violations. Inspectors focus almost exclusively on the formal sector. See U.S. Embassy- Managua, *unclassified telegram no. 3312*. The Ministry of Labor has initiated a pilot project to monitor nightclubs and other businesses where children are sexually exploited. See International Human Rights Law Institute, *Modern Bondage*, 63.

<sup>3190</sup> U.S. Embassy- Managua, *unclassified telegram no. 3312*.

<sup>3191</sup> Trafficking north from Nicaragua is made easier by the free transit agreement between Central American countries and weak border controls. See International Human Rights Law Institute, *Modern Bondage*, 44, 48. See also U.S. Department of State, *Trafficking in Persons Report- 2003: Nicaragua*.

<sup>3192</sup> ILO, *Ratifications by Country*, in ILOLEX, [database online] [cited July 30, 2003]; available from <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/english/newratframeE.htm>.