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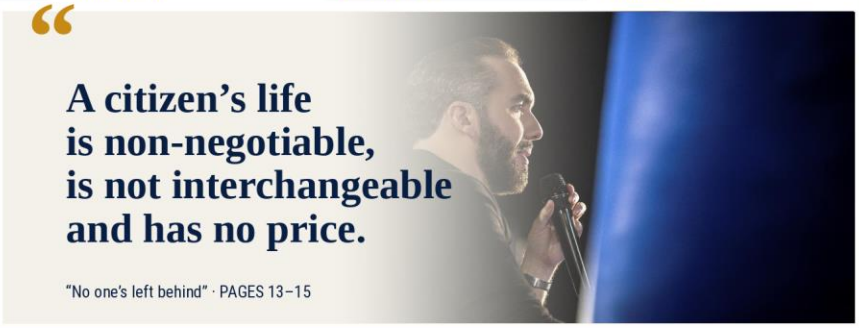
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Haiti: Brief History of the Country and Salvadoran Participation



1. Introduction

The island that Haiti shares with the Dominican Republic is known as Hispaniola. Christopher Columbus landed there for the first time in 1492 upon reaching the so-called "New World." The island had been inhabited by Taíno indigenous people, who called it *Ayiti*.

The first French colonists arrived in 1625, founding a settlement they called Saint-Domingue. Spain ceded the western territory of the island to France in 1697. Over the following century, Saint-Domingue traded half of the sugar and coffee consumed in Europe, as well as a third of the transatlantic slave trade.

With the French Revolution of 1789, voices emerged defending Haitian slaves; however, France repressed them violently, triggering the start of the Haitian Revolution in 1791, which was led by Toussaint Louverture. A descendant of African slaves, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, became one of his main lieutenants. Bonaparte sent troops that captured Louverture in 1802, deporting him to France, where he died in prison in 1803.

Dessalines resumed the fight against the colonizers, defeating them on November 18, 1803, and proclaiming Haiti's independence on January 1, 1804. He assumed the position of Governor General that same date and proclaimed himself Emperor Jacques I that same year. He is credited with massacres of the French, including civilians. He was assassinated in 1806, triggering a civil war between the north and south of the country that lasted until 1820. The reunification that subsequently occurred excluded Afro-descendants from power.

Independence from France cost the equivalent of 38 billion Euros today, which was reduced in 1838 to 23 billion with a high interest rate to foreign banks, estimated to have represented 80% of the country's annual budget, which finished being paid off only in 1947. (Amounts and percentages correspond to current equivalents).

Subsequently, Haiti had several fleeting presidencies, as well as border disputes with the Dominican Republic, and even a U.S. occupation (1915–1934). In 1937, the Dominican army is estimated to have killed 30,000 Haitians at the border, an event known as the Parsley Massacre. In 1954, Hurricane Hazel killed a thousand people and destroyed coffee and cocoa plantations.

Following two failed elections, in 1957 François Duvalier—or "Papa Doc"—took power, establishing in 1958 death squads called "Tonton Macoutes" as a paramilitary force with which he sowed terror among his opponents, and which would be the precursors to today's irregular armed groups. In 1964 he declared himself president for life until his death in 1971, when his 19-year-old son, Jean-Claude ("Baby Doc"), assumed the same position until his overthrow in 1986 by an uprising led by Henri Namphy.

Elections called in 1987 were delayed by the assassination of two candidates and a voter massacre. Leslie Manigat won the so-called "military elections" in January 1988, only to be overthrown six months later by Namphy. Namphy was ousted in September by General Prosper Avril, against whom protests were organized that forced his resignation.

The first democratic elections were won in 1990 by former Salesian priest Jean-Bertrand Aristide with 67% of the vote, until he was overthrown in 1991 by a coup d'état led by former Brigadier General Raoul Cedras. Aristide went into exile until Cedras went into exile in September of the same year.

Following a transition led by René Préval, Aristide returned in 1994, suffering several attempts to overthrow him, which provoked conflicts involving armed groups across the country. He went into exile in South Africa in 2004. An international peacekeeping force led by the United Nations arrived in the country to maintain security and stability.

2. Natural and Political Catastrophes, and the Beginning of International Participation

In early 2004, Haiti suffered floods, exacerbated in September by Hurricanes Ivan and Jeanne, which destroyed crops, caused the deaths of at least 3,000 people, and left another 250,000 homeless. Less than a year later, another hurricane, Dennis, left 56 dead and caused US$50 million in damage. In 2008, within a single month, the country suffered Tropical Storms Fay and Hanna, and Hurricanes Gustav and Ike, which destroyed 25% of the national economy.

On January 1, 2010, a magnitude 7.0 earthquake destroyed Port-au-Prince. International donors pledged US$5.3 billion for reconstruction, but many failed to deliver. Public discontent grew over a fund distribution that failed to achieve its intended purposes. The country fell victim to a cholera outbreak described as the worst in its recent history: 820,000 cases, with approximately 10,000 deaths.

Michel Martelly won the runoff elections in April 2011. At the end of his term, he designated Jovenel Moïse as his party's candidate, who assumed office in 2017. Prior to this, in October 2016, Hurricane Matthew became the strongest to strike Haiti since 1964, destroying crops, exacerbating the cholera epidemic, ruining infrastructure, and leaving over 200,000 families homeless.

Venezuela suspended its oil exports to Haiti in March 2018, causing a chain reaction of consequences. The government eliminated fuel subsidies, provoking price increases of up to 50% and generating sometimes violent protests that extended into 2019. They continued, culminating in the assassination of President Moïse in his home in July 2021, succeeded by Ariel Henry. The following month, a magnitude 7.2 earthquake affected the commune of Les Cayes in the country's western region.

Violence increased after Moïse's assassination, continuing into 2022 and 2023—a year that recorded 2,490 kidnappings and 4,789 murders nationwide. By September 2023, 80% of the capital was under the control of armed groups, giving rise to the criminal organization self-named *Viv Ansanm*, which ironically means "Living Together," but consists of a coalition of previously rival armed gang federations: G9 and G-Pèp. That month, Kenya agreed to lead a multinational peace mission approved by the UN, named the Multinational Security Support Mission (MSSM).

President Henry resigned on March 11, 2024. The following month, a two-year transitional government was proposed, but—also the following month—its leader was ousted.

Violence intensified in late 2024, becoming—according to the UN—one of the deadliest years in the country's modern history. The International Organization for Migration estimated that in 2025 there were more than 5,300 homicides and over 700,000 people were forced to flee their homes.

In October 2025, Hurricane Melissa caused flooding in several regions. Human Rights Watch reported 43 deaths, including 10 children, aggravating the vulnerability of communities already suffering from displacement and shortages of basic services.

The MSSM Mission continued collaborating with the National Police in 2025. However, it faced shortages of personnel, resources, and funding, which limited its capacity to contain gangs operating throughout the country.

3. Aggravation of the Situation

Since 2025, Haiti experienced a deepening of its political crisis, especially concerning the economy, security, and humanitarian conditions—principally due to the territorial expansion of armed gangs, the weakness of

state institutions, the lack of democratically elected national authorities, and the difficulties faced by international intervention in restoring security.

Viv Ansanm consolidated its dominance over vast areas of Port-au-Prince and advanced into other departments. Human Rights Watch (HRW) estimated that gangs then controlled around 90% of the capital and its metropolitan area, hindering transportation, commerce, and the distribution of humanitarian aid. That year, massacres, kidnappings, clashes, and sexual violence forced 1.4 million people to abandon their homes by September, according to HRW; a figure equivalent to approximately 11.8% of the total population.

The situation of violence was not limited to the capital, extending nationwide and affecting highways, agricultural production, public services, and the population's access to food and medical care. The UN warned in October 2026 that violence continued to threaten elections.

Previously, in February 2026, the mandate of the Transitional Presidential Council (CPT) had concluded without reaching an agreement on a successor government structure. Prime Minister Alix Didier Fils-Aimé remained at the head of the Executive amidst political disputes and international pressures. The crisis left the legitimacy and organization of the transitional authority unresolved.

That same month, three U.S. warships arrived in the bay of Port-au-Prince. Washington backed the continuity of Fils-Aimé and had imposed sanctions on five members of the CPT. The naval presence was presented as support for security and stability amid the growing influence of foreign actors in the Haitian transition.

Between March and July 2026, attacks intensified in the lower Artibonite, and the presence of gangs consolidated in the Center department, with incursions reaching the Southeast. Clashes occurred between criminal groups that had previously cooperated under the *Viv Ansanm* coalition, provoking greater insecurity outside the capital and along supply routes. Also during that period, the new Gang Suppression Force (GSF) began its operational deployment with a mandate oriented toward combating criminal organizations. The initiative seeks to overcome the limitations of the previous multinational mission, but its staffing remains below authorized levels. In October, the UN reported that the force barely exceeded 2,000 personnel against an authorization of up to 5,500.

On October 19, 2026, the special representative for Haiti informed the UN Security Council that more than 1,000 people had died and over 100 had been kidnapped between July and September 2026. Although electoral preparations were advancing—with over 35 parties and 3,500 registered candidates—doubts persisted regarding the feasibility of holding elections under prevailing security conditions.

Internal displacement reached approximately 1.5 million people in 2026—according to the UN panel of experts published in September—meaning nearly 12% of the population. Sexual violence and difficulties in obtaining food, water, education, and healthcare continued to affect millions of Haitians. In summary, the main political and regional consequences are:

- **Weakening of the State:** The expansion of gangs reduces governmental capacity to exercise territorial authority and guarantee basic services.
- **Crisis of democratic legitimacy:** The prolonged absence of national elections and the end of the CPT mandate—without an agreed-upon succession—hinder institutional reconstruction.
- **Social emergency:** Displacement, hunger, and the closure of educational and health facilities deepen poverty and population vulnerability.
- **Internationalization of the problem:** The participation of the United States, Kenya, and the UN reflects that the crisis has repercussions for Caribbean security, migration, and transnational arms trafficking networks.
- **Uncertainty regarding a lasting solution:** Security operations can recover zones, but they do not guarantee stability by themselves.

4. Involvement of El Salvador

Salvadoran participation in Haiti has two dimensions: support for an international mission aimed at combating Haitian gangs and, since October 2026, a security crisis triggered by the disappearance of four Salvadoran personnel following an ambush.

The case is especially relevant because the four missing personnel belong to a unit specialized in aviation and medical support, and because the Salvadoran Government announced a military operation to locate and recover them.

Salvadoran participation had begun in March 2024, when the government offered to help Haiti confront gang violence, conditioning assistance on a UN Security Council resolution, Haitian consent, and financing for the Salvadoran mission. The main steps were as follows:

- **March 2024:** The Salvadoran government publicly expressed its willingness to contribute to security recovery in Haiti.
- **October 3, 2024:** Diplomatic representatives of El Salvador and Haiti signed the agreement regarding Salvadoran participation in the Multinational Security Support Mission (MSSM).
- **January 2025:** Eight Salvadoran aviation specialists arrive in Haiti.
- **February 2025:** A contingent of approximately 70 additional military personnel is incorporated into the *Libertad II* task force.
- **2026:** Salvadoran participation was integrated into the international framework of the Gang Suppression Force (GSF).

The purpose of Salvadoran participation is to provide capabilities the mission needed and El Salvador could supply: aviation, transport of the wounded, support for medical evacuations, and aircraft protection.

The GSF is a multinational operation involving several countries, authorized by the UN Security Council to support the Haitian National Police against criminal organizations. In September 2026, El Salvador agreed to expand the mission's objectives to include military support and defense equipment for the GSF.

5. The Capture of Salvadoran Personnel

According to the international press, the four Salvadoran flight mechanics were captured on Sunday, October 18, 2026, in the Santo area, belonging to the Croix-des-Bouquets commune on the outskirts of Port-au-Prince, following this sequence: a) **Displacement in an armored vehicle:** The Salvadorans were returning to their

camp. They had gone out to buy food. b) **Ambush:** They were ambushed and attacked with firearms and explosives. The latter struck the armored vehicle, which ended up catching fire. c) **Evacuation:** The four Salvadorans managed to escape the burning vehicle, after which contact with them was lost. d) **Confirmation and investigation:** The Haitian Government subsequently confirmed that the four had been kidnapped. However, no criminal organization has yet claimed responsibility. Investigative journalism indicated the area is under the influence of the *Chèn Méchan* and *400 Mawozo* gangs. e) **Search operations and Salvadoran reinforcements:** With Haitian authorization and international backing, the Salvadoran government dispatched a military operation to attempt to recover the four personnel and warned of a more forceful response if they are not released safe and sound. It subsequently sent additional forces, estimated by some sources at 2,000, while the GSF and Haitian authorities maintain search operations. President Bukele has insisted this is exclusively a rescue mission for the Salvadoran personnel, taking the opportunity to deliver a lesson to the gangs that captured them and cause suffering to the Haitian people: "like the hell we Salvadorans had to live through before... The Haitian people currently live as we used to live." He added: "we are not an invading or neocolonialist army... It is a rescue mission for our flight mechanics. They were doing humanitarian work, they are medical evacuation technicians and were not a valid military target... We have no intention of controlling Haiti. We are going to leave as we arrived, without asking for anything in return."

Several hypotheses exist regarding the reasons they may have been attacked, although the most widespread views the criminal action as a potential response to the international offensive. The GSF began operating in 2026 and represents a direct threat to territories and networks controlled by gangs. Analysts cited by the Associated Press suggest that retaining personnel could serve to deter incursions or exert pressure on the international force. This is an analytical hypothesis, not a confirmed motivation.

6. Situation of Salvadoran Personnel

Reuters broadcast a report—based on information published by *The New York Times* on October 24, unconfirmed—indicating that four charred bodies had been recovered that could correspond to the missing personnel.

On October 25, President Bukele rejected that those bodies belonged to the four Salvadorans. He noted that among them were the remains of a child and individuals whose characteristics and/or uniforms did not

correspond to the sought-after personnel. The GSF also indicated it had received unidentified human corpses and that verifications were ongoing.

In summary, the conclusion up to this date can be summarized as follows:

- The four Salvadoran personnel still lack a publicly confirmed whereabouts.
- Salvadoran authorities consider they were kidnapped following the ambush.
- The remains found have not been officially identified as belonging to the four Salvadoran personnel. President Bukele expressly denied the identification circulating in the media.
- Search operations continue, and the case has prompted a reinforcement of Salvadoran military presence.

In synthesis, the Salvadoran presence originated as a specialized contribution to an international mission with Haitian authorization. To date, the circumstances of the attack against the Salvadorans are partially documented, but the authorship and destination of the four personnel remain without confirmed public resolution.

El Salvador and Haiti: Two Distinct Missions in Times of Crisis



To say that El Salvador is making a political show by sending soldiers to another country would be incorrect. The country has previously participated in international support missions. An example is MINUSTAH, the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti.

El Salvador sent a contingent of 34 military personnel in 2013, which was incorporated into the Chilean battalion for six months; their duties included security and patrolling. Prior to that military contingent, El Salvador had also sent Salvadoran police officers to a peacekeeping mission in Haiti. This demonstrates that the country's participation there did not begin with the current situation.

However, it must be explained that today's mission is not the same as that of 2013. They are different international operations carried out at distinct moments of the Haitian crisis and with different tasks. Comparing them without clarifying this can lead one to believe that all Salvadoran military personnel sent to Haiti fulfill the same function.

The country's situation has become increasingly difficult. In July 2021, Haitian President Jovenel Moïse was assassinated, and since then Haiti has faced a deep political and institutional crisis. Armed gangs expanded their territorial control, and kidnappings, homicides, and sexual violence worsened. Many people have also had to leave their homes and displace themselves within Haiti or toward other countries, such as the Dominican Republic.

In the current mission, four Salvadoran military personnel working as aeronautical technicians disappeared on October 18, 2026. Although they have military training, their work was focused on aeronautical and support tasks, such as medical evacuations. They were not deployed to combat gangs.

Following their disappearance, El Salvador sent armed personnel to support search and rescue efforts. That deployment has another purpose: to find the four Salvadorans and ensure they return home. For this reason, it is also important to distinguish between technicians performing support duties and the armed contingent that arrived after the ambush.

Sending technical personnel is not the same as sending soldiers with more field operations experience and specialized equipment to combat the gangs affecting the Haitian population. The mission of these soldiers is to support efforts to recover security and help the population gradually return to normal.

When it is said that being four in number they could die or be wounded, a real risk is being discussed in an area where armed groups operate. But it is also about individuals who were sent to fulfill a mission and who have comrades and families waiting for their return. For many, going to look for them is a responsibility and a display of loyalty: a comrade is never abandoned.

Haiti and the Doctrine of Sovereignty: The Collapse of the Globalist Paradigm



The deployment of more than two thousand personnel from the Armed Forces of El Salvador (FAES) in Haiti transcends the tactical mission of rescuing four flight mechanics: it constitutes a doctrinal rupture against the "industry of chaos" administered for decades by transnational bureaucracy.

For twenty years, the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) squandered over $7 billion. The tangible balance was devastating: a cholera epidemic, absolute institutional degradation, and a power vacuum capitalized by criminal federations like *Viv Ansanm* and *400 Mawozo*. Globalist governance normalized anarchy as a business of permanent consultancies and inert welfarism. Faced with that inaction, Salvadoran determination exposes that territorial pacification depends not on multilateral rhetoric, but on political will and the legitimate use of force.

This rupture unleashed an immediate narrative counteroffensive. Ideological operators abroad have attempted to criminalize the Salvadoran deployment under accusations of "interference," seeking to attribute a fictitious internal electoral weakness toward 2027 to the Bukele administration. Nonetheless, empirical evidence

pulverizes that narrative: the latest CID Gallup measurement certifies a 94 percent approval rating for presidential management and an 86 percent irrestricta citizen backing for the military operation in Haiti.

El Salvador—which went from registering over 103 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants to positioning itself as the safest nation in the American continent, surpassing even Canada—is now transferring its experience against urban terrorism to the Caribbean. The true fear of defenders of the *statu quo* does not lie in the operational outcome in Croix-des-Bouquets, but in the consolidation of a sovereign model demonstrating that capitulation to organized crime was never inevitable.

"No One's Left Behind"



As we have maintained ad nauseam, the primary obligation of every real State is to effectively exercise its authority over its territory and protect its citizens. Security, liberty, and development do not arise through "spontaneous generation"; they are the direct consequence of the existence of institutions capable of imposing the rule of law over those who seek to replace it through violence. Wherever the State disappears, the domain of criminal organizations inevitably emerges.

The capture of four Salvadoran military technicians by Haitian gangs following an armed ambush does not constitute merely a grave security incident; it represents the most evident proof of the total non-existence of the Haitian State. A country where criminal groups are capable of attacking armored vehicles, harassing air operations, kidnapping international personnel, and openly challenging authorities demonstrates an unquestionable reality: the legitimate monopoly of force no longer fully belongs to the State.

Haiti has become the most dramatic expression of what happens when the Law ceases to govern and is replaced by brute force. The power vacuum does not remain empty for long. When the State retreats, gangs advance. When legitimate authority disappears, criminal authority emerges.

Salvadorans know this reality perfectly because we lived it for decades. Before the transformation spearheaded by President Nayib Bukele, extensive zones of the country were subjected to the effective control of criminal structures that imposed their own rules, restricted freedom of movement, collected extortions, and permanently challenged the State. The difference is that El Salvador decided to recover its country. Haiti still struggles to recover its own.

For that reason, President Bukele's decision to deploy a powerful military force to rescue four compatriots possesses a dimension transcending the military. It is a declaration of principles. It is the confirmation that for the Salvadoran State, the life of a citizen is non-negotiable, non-exchangeable, and priceless.

It is particularly significant that this operation is funded fundamentally with Salvadoran resources. From a strictly financial logic, one might argue that mobilizing such resources to rescue four people is costly. But precisely therein lies the political message: there are things a responsible State does not measure in terms of economic profitability. The life of its citizens is one of them.

Equally forceful has been the message directed at the captors: release the Salvadorans "the easy way or the hard way." This is not merely a warning. It is the expression of a political doctrine that Salvadoran criminals already know perfectly: the State does not back down against crime and never abandons its own.

The difference between Haiti and El Salvador is neither geographical nor cultural. It is institutional. In one, gangs pretend to replace the State. In the other, the State decided to defeat them.

Because a political truth exists that is as ancient as it is immutable: where the Law does not prevail, order cannot exist; where order does not exist, freedom cannot exist; and where the State renounces protecting its citizens, it ceases to fulfill the very reason for its existence. El Salvador has decided to demonstrate the exact opposite: that no Salvadoran will be abandoned or left behind, ever—"No one's left behind."

President Nayib Bukele's Promise to Bring Back His Armed Forces Collaborators



In the arena of international security, a State's credibility in this decade is measured not by declarations of concern or diplomatic resolutions, but by its logistical capacity and political will to defend its security personnel on the ground. President Nayib Bukele's decision to mobilize Salvadoran soldiers and equipment to Haiti to rescue four missing flight mechanics marks a decisive, tactical, and doctrinal event unprecedented in modern Latin American military history. We are not engaged in a routine search operation; we are witnessing the power projection of a nation that has decided its pact of loyalty with its troops is absolute.

From the perspective of national security, the Haitian scenario represents one of the most asymmetric and hostile operational environments on the planet. The criminal structures controlling the outskirts of Port-au-

Prince have prospered by devouring the vacuum of a failed state, consolidating firepower that challenges any intervention force. When the multinational mission's armored vehicle was ambushed on October 18, 2026, local gangs likely expected impunity. Instead, they triggered a fulminant response. President Bukele activated a massive and expedited deployment including helicopters, armored vehicles, and special forces units, assuming 90% of the operation's costs with domestic resources.

This move sends undeniable strategic messages. The first is deterrence through hard power. The gang eradication policy President Bukele institutionalized within his borders now demonstrates transnational reach. The ultimatum launched to Haitian criminal gangs, warning of a total offensive if soldiers are not returned alive, transfers vast Salvadoran urban warfare expertise to a foreign theater of operations.

The second factor is analytical rigor and intelligence superiority on the ground. The fact that strategist Nayib Bukele personally discarded that human remains handed over by an NGO belonged to his soldiers—pointing out critical forensic inconsistencies such as the presence of foreign uniforms and evident biometric discrepancies—proves that the Salvadoran command will not yield to distraction operations, disinformation, or premature case closures dictated by external pressure. The mission is one of rescue, and the military machinery will not stop without irrefutable evidence.

This crisis redefines El Salvador's geopolitical weight in the region. Operating in the Haitian collapse with international backing while maintaining total tactical autonomy distances the country from the role of a passive secondary actor. Although the president has been emphatic in disclaiming any neocolonial intention, framing the operation strictly as an extraction operation and a lesson to criminal structures, the strategic impact is clear. El Salvador today projects the operational capabilities of a State willing to mobilize its entire defense apparatus to protect its citizens.

In elite military doctrine, the morale of an armed force rests upon an unbroken promise: no man is left behind. By turning this principle into a large-scale infantry and aviation mobilization, the Salvadoran government sends a global warning. The lives of four flight mechanics justify deploying the full weight of the State, demonstrating that in the new Salvadoran security architecture, the protection of its own is not negotiated—it is imposed.

From the Círculo de Reflexión Política Siglo XXI, we pray to God to meet President Bukele in his decision to bring home the four members of the Armed Forces of El Salvador. Thank you very much, President Bukele, for this lesson to the world.

The Rescue of Four Men Who Represent Millions



From a sociological perspective, the decision of a government or group to launch complex and daring rescue missions that appear "costly" to save a few soldiers (it could even be just one) is not something that should be analyzed as a financial cost-benefit operation—that would be extremely rustic. It is an imponderable and invaluable symbolic act in sociocultural terms, because it is a tangible and intangible fact that stands as an engine of national identity and dignity, building a new and endearing form of social relationship between the State and the individual, in the sense that it manages and personifies the importance that each holds for the other, and vice versa.

In that sense, the decision of President Nayib Bukele's government is a fundamental-symbolic act to prevent the emergence of gaps or hesitations in the cohesion and social motivation of citizens, to avoid preying on the collective identity and sense of belonging founded on organic solidarity, and, even less, to allow the culturally

constructed social and state dignity to be degraded or belittled after having been an atomized society under the threat of gangs.

As an ethical, political, and cultural foundation for the decision to go and rescue four Salvadorans kidnapped in Haiti, lies the validity of the new implicit social contract being drafted in the country within the framework of institutional and sociocultural reciprocity. This reciprocity fosters and is sustained by social solidarity—both among individuals (horizontal solidarity) and between individuals and the State (vertical solidarity).

Indeed, if we view the modern State as a form of social relation (and not as a bureaucratic, impersonal, and strictly formal instrument), we understand the elementary logic of the rescue mission: if a soldier is asked to risk their life—which is the most valuable thing they possess—the State and society assume the absolute and unconditional commitment not to abandon them under any circumstances.

That unshakeable commitment has no mitigating factors: the few will be rescued because that provides the confidence that the many are protected. In colloquial terms, the soldiers (or citizens) who possess the absolute confidence that they will be rescued from any type of danger will say: "we knew you would come for us." The former must not admit even a shred of doubt, as that is what maintains discipline and what leads to accomplishing feats.

The rescue mission ordered by President Nayib Bukele honors and makes tangible the pact of absolute trust, which is the mark of good health in institutional legitimacy. For if a government (or, in a broad sense, a society) leaves behind its soldiers (or civilian citizens) because they are "few" or because the rescue "is too expensive" (the latter being the argument of opponents), the pact breaks and, with it, the social contract subscribed between ruler and ruled breaks as well. If that occurs, both the military institution and the State (and its maximum figurehead, the president) lose legitimacy.

On the other hand, the rescue mission is an institutional form and a sociocultural version of the social dignity of the Salvadoran people which, as a benchmark, confers a sacred value upon the collective individual, whether expressed as one or as many when it comes to giving it a face. In that sense, rescuing four is an unequivocal demonstration that today's El Salvador does save its people because it values human life above economic cost or tactical calculation. The president's implicit message is clear and strong in this regard: our compatriots (military or civilian) are not dispensable pieces at any time, place, or geopolitical game; rather, they are the indispensable engine and fuel for the reinvention of our society.

In sociological terms, the way a society—through its government—treats its most vulnerable members (as during the pandemic conjuncture) or those in imminent danger (in this case, the four soldiers captured by Haitian gangs) is a reflection of the notion it has of its own civility, its own moral quality, and its own sense of ethics summarized in the "identity of us, the Salvadorans." Therefore, the rescue mission is, in these times, the ideal mechanism of social integration, whose bonds are sought to be broken only by extreme opponents and the sophists who draft their narrative.

Such social integration, as an enabler of "we are one," is sustained by the premise that: today all resources will be mobilized to search for the four captured soldiers, and tomorrow or the day after tomorrow it will be done to search for or save any Salvadoran in danger, no matter where they are. This gives meaning to shared identity, to an unshakeable sense of belonging, and to an ever-high morale that leads to pride, both individual and national.

Undoubtedly, for cultural sociology, rescue missions like the one led by President Nayib Bukele are rituals of constant citizen initiation which are those that, in the end, construct the indestructible myths of the most beautiful feats: heroism, solidarity, loyalty, justice, and camaraderie.

The Shield of the Americas, the Case of Haiti, and El Salvador's Role



Photo: AFP/ Illustrative image, taken from *Diario El Salvador*

The deep political, social, and security crisis facing Haiti represents one of the greatest challenges to the stability of the Western Hemisphere. In this context, the initiative named the Shield of the Americas acquires special relevance as a regional cooperation mechanism oriented toward combating transnational organized crime, strengthening security, and promoting democratic stability.

The coalition, spearheaded by the United States and integrated by several Latin American countries—among them El Salvador—proposes three fundamental pillars: security, economic cooperation, and multilateral coordination. Its joint declaration contemplates actions against criminal organizations such as *Viv Ansanm* and *Gran Grift*, armed structures that maintain significant territorial influence in Haiti.

The Haitian reality, however, is dramatic. After the assassination of President Jovenel Moïse in 2021, the country experienced a progressive institutional deterioration. Gangs expanded their territorial control,

weakened public institutions, and subjected millions of citizens to conditions of violence, displacement, and poverty. Currently, nearly 1.5 million people have been displaced, and millions face food insecurity.

The crisis has acquired a new dimension for Central America. El Salvador has expanded its participation in security operations, sending approximately two thousand military personnel to Haitian territory following the disappearance of four Salvadoran flight mechanics linked to an international mission during an ambush on October 18, 2026.

This scenario raises questions regarding the scope and operational capacity of the Shield of the Americas. Military cooperation can contribute to recovering territories, combating criminal structures, and re-establishing security conditions.

Haiti also needs to rebuild its institutions, recover governability, and generate economic opportunities for a population battered by decades of instability.

The role of El Salvador led by President Nayib Bukele stands out as a phenomenon, as the smallest country in America, with limited resources, is now setting an example for the world: as of this date, it has the gangs of Haiti in a state of retreat.

El Salvador: a small country executing large operations. An example to the world.

The Fallacies of The New York Times



Media outlets that live off disinformation are tasking themselves with launching false narratives about the reality occurring in various countries around the world, following the script of the international left to protect victimizers rather than victims, criminals rather than the defenseless population, coordinating with NGOs that profit from violence—NGOs that claim to protect human rights, but never raise their voice against the massacres suffered by the innocent and unarmed population.

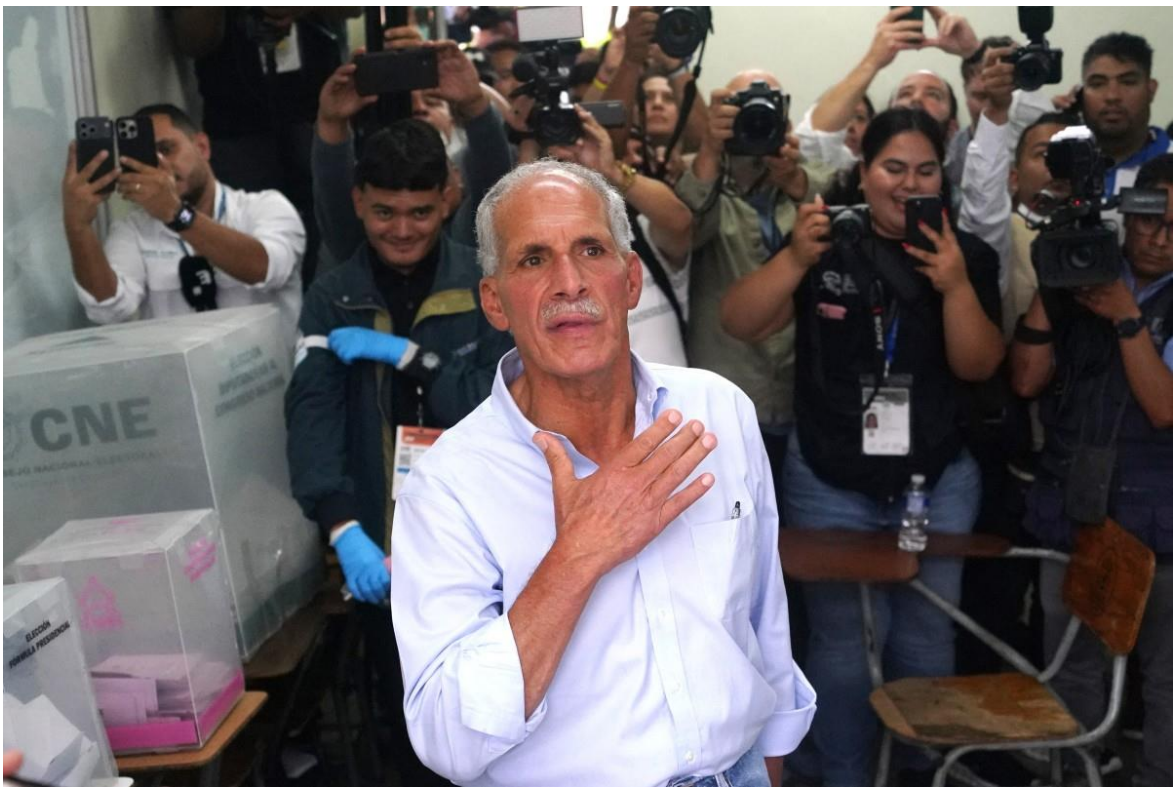
An example is the specific case of the ambush and kidnapping suffered by the aeronautical technicians of El Salvador who formed part of the humanitarian gang suppression forces operating in Haiti with the endorsement of the United Nations and the UN Security Council. These media outlets have tasked themselves with throwing out false information regarding the situation of the Salvadoran soldiers—who were not combat personnel—publishing nefarious reports about having found their charred bodies, simulating evidence, and spreading false information that had to be debunked by President Nayib Bukele himself.

Where are the statements from these NGOs and media outlets condemning that act of barbarism? Yet they quickly pronounce themselves against the actions being carried out on the ground by Salvadoran troops recently sent to the rescue, striving to launch sarcastic narratives and predicting defeats with the sole purpose of invalidating the humanitarian action of the multinational forces in Haiti and those of the Salvadoran army.

President Bukele categorically denied *The New York Times* report regarding the charred bodies that its sources claimed belonged to the Salvadoran flight mechanics kidnapped by Haitian gangs.

This U.S. newspaper based its version on sources close to the security mission, claiming the bodies were handed over to a Salvadoran military team, even though they later acknowledge that identities still need to be confirmed. The truth is: how is it possible that, in such a delicate situation for the families of these soldiers and during a high military emergency, they dare to publish information without a credible investigative source, solely driven by the desire to cause sensationalism and tarnish the actions Salvadoran troops are carrying out in the field? President Bukele was emphatic that his primary mission is to recover the kidnapped Salvadoran soldiers and bring them home, and if the gangs resist, they will receive the appropriate punishment.

Honduras:
Three Heads, a Single Baal



Baal represents idolatry, treason, the abandonment of principles and responsibilities, the denial of one's own acts despite the evidence, the destruction of human values, and the use of wealth for interests foreign to the common good. This is the metamorphosis of the three heads of political power that have governed and govern Honduras: the Liberal Party and its two historic offspring, the National Party and LIBRE.

The permissiveness of these three heads in failing to attack the root of the country's and Hondurans' problems—which, of course, lies within their own political bosoms—has led them to cross the threshold of brazenness and abuse without return.

Public speeches promising to build bridges where there are no rivers; contradictions, political negotiations, and actions that deepen the crisis in which the Honduran people are submerged. Corruption and impunity are colossal; deterioration is accelerated. Citizen rejection is expressed in exhaustion before rulers who are increasingly distant from Hondurans.

And thus operate the three heads: President Nasry Juan Asfura Zablah secures business for his partners from the Liberal and LIBRE parties, colleagues, and friends who contributed to his campaign. The President of Congress, José Tomás Zambrano Molina, runs a parallel government while protecting his colleagues from LIBRE and the Liberal Party, using the Legislative Branch as an open political campaign platform. That is to say, in Honduras there are two executive presidents: one governing from the Presidency of the Republic and another who, outside the law, is in full political campaign mode from the National Congress.

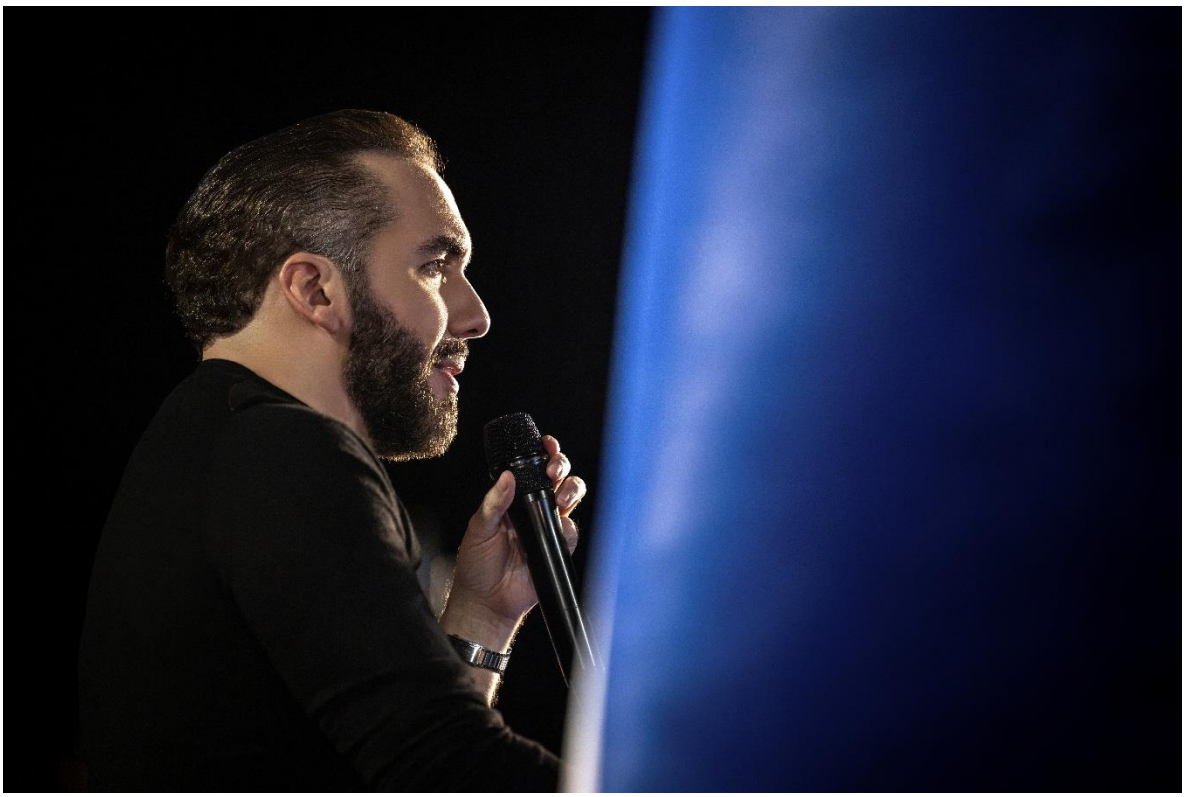
The President of the Court, Wagner Vallecillo Paredes, only collects the useless scraps sent to him by Tito Asfura and Tomás Zambrano, handing out release papers, dismissals, and conditional release measures while they do their part... The Attorney General, Pablo Emilio Reyes Theodore, looks for someone to pay for it rather than the actual culprit. The Solicitor General, Dagoberto Aspra, former criminal defense lawyer for Tito Asfura, remains blind, deaf, and mute. Ministers and deputies, with their perks and salaries up to date...

Meanwhile, the population, seeing this entire party-political strategy to remain in power, has moved from repudiation to hatred.

For those who have governed Honduras, biblical texts seem to serve only as tools to persuade the voter during political campaigns, while the public and private conduct of some leaders—the majority of whom are currently part of the Government—contradicts the values they proclaim. Moral deterioration, family ruptures, and the personal consequences of their decisions have dragged Honduras and its people today into an abyss from which only Hondurans can rescue it.

And yes: Baal ends up collecting every bill. The question is: how much more will the Honduran people have to pay for the decisions of those who have governed in their name?

¡Nostrum bonum est regimen, et si perget audire, memoria eius immortalis erit!



It has always been said in the world of political science and doctrine that governing is an art and a discipline requiring wisdom, understanding of reality, objective observation, a statistical mind, critical thinking, and human quality. Well then, all of the above is a reality beyond doubt, but to it must also be added something fundamental: the fact that without allies of every kind (honest and humane), little or nothing can be achieved in this complex world of politics.

Hence, the bonds of work, friendship, and the common good must be indissoluble for anyone who intends to reach and stay in power to serve; for it is not enough for a people to agree—throughout history we have seen how a grateful population quickly loses that gratitude. Therefore, good political communication, good work

carried out in pursuit of the vast majorities, and solid, strategic relationships must be, above all, the inescapable formula for governing success.

Thus, as the humanist U.S. President Abraham Lincoln expressed: "No man is good enough to govern another man without that other's consent." Precisely that consent implies not only that the governed approve, but that economic, social, religious, and international sectors of power know how to walk alongside that government which is willing to listen and allow itself to be accompanied, in order to achieve a successful mandate for the good of the population.

Therefore, as the contractualist Jean-Jacques Rousseau expressed: "Government had its origin in the purpose of finding a form of association that defends and protects the person and property of each individual with the common force of all." Thus, common agreement is the foundation of all socio-political ordering known as government. Hence the importance, I insist, of the holder of political power taking alliances seriously and not cloistering themselves, for then they will not be able to go far in their honest aspirations to improve the quality of life of their people.

Nostrum bonum est regimen, et si perget audire, memoria eius immortalis erit!

A good government is ours, and if it continues listening, its memory will be immortal!

Political Opposition Criticizes Out of Rancor



Being an opponent in El Salvador stopped long ago from being an exercise in responsible criticism and became, in many cases, an act based on and originating from human rancor.

It had been almost normal for years when people spoke of political polarization between the left and the right (ARENA-FMLN), but since President Nayib Bukele took the leadership of the government and pushed a peaceful revolution in El Salvador, an opposition has emerged or intensified that does not analyze, does not propose, does not contrast data, and, above all, does not measure the reality and feelings of the population.

They express opinions from the gut; their starting point is not whether a work is useful, whether a security measure works, or whether a trade agreement benefits the country. Their starting point is *who* did it: if this government did it, it is automatically bad, it is authoritarian, it is suspicious, there is no reason to apply that measure, there is no transparency, it is populist—in short, discontent with everything is the template for "criticizing."

It is a critique that stems more from prejudice than from reason; they are more bothered by the origin of the decision than by the decision itself. For example, if a loan is obtained for a mega-project strategic for driving

the country's development, they point out the government's indebtedness and fail to see the strategic potential and future benefits the work will bring.

If prisons are organized with labor such as the *Cero Ocio* (Zero Idleness) program, they do not see rehabilitation or the contribution made to society; they see "labor abuse, modern slaves, human rights violations"—it is not analysis, it is a conditioned reflex.

The problem is not being against, nor is it not criticizing or correcting—a government needs counterweights, critical voices, serious debate. The problem is when the opposition confuses criticizing with hating, when hatred becomes their sole agenda: they lose credibility, they lose audience, and, above all, they lose the opportunity to be a real alternative.

Criticizing as a sport, out of resentment over having lost privileges, quotas of power, or media prominence, does not build; it only wears down the person expressing it, and people notice it—they no longer hear arguments, they hear resentment disguised as opinion.

Admirable Corruption?



The release of former President Elías Antonio Saca after serving a ten-year prison sentence for corruption crimes has generated reactions that warrant reflection. The greetings of admiration, the cheers, and the expressions from some people highlighting his "bravery" for having confessed to the crimes raise a question: to what extent have the ethical criteria used to judge the conduct of those who exercised public power been weakened?

Corruption is not a victimless crime. The diversion of public funds means subtracting resources that should have been allocated to addressing collective needs, strengthening public services, and improving the living conditions of the population. Furthermore, corruption erodes civic culture. If illicit enrichment ends up being tolerated, justified, or even admired, the message transmitted is that dishonesty can be compatible with social recognition. The damage is then double: collective resources are lost and the values that make coexistence and civic responsibility possible are deteriorated.

Serving a judicial sentence is not a feat that turns the convict into an object of admiration. Confessing to crimes can have relevance, although in this case it was part of a strange agreement with the Attorney General of that time aimed at reducing the sentence. In no case does confession erase the consequences of the crimes nor does it convert criminal liability into a virtue. The possibility of a second chance must be understood in the realm of personal life, but never as a rehabilitation for political life.

What is disturbing is not that a convict regains his freedom, but that there are people who seem ready to celebrate someone who betrayed the trust placed in him. One can respect reintegration, but corruption must be absolutely rejected. Failing to do so means renouncing an elementary requirement of any society aspiring to live with dignity: that public power be a service, never an opportunity for personal enrichment.

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