



# Editorial

POLITICAL ANALYSIS AND CORPORATE SECURITY UNIT

## ANALYSIS OF THE CURRENT SITUATION

### GLOBAL

The Labour victory in the United Kingdom and its impact on European security policy.

### REGIONAL

Elections in Venezuela: impact of electoral results on security and regional migration.

### LOCAL

Forced displacement: a phenomenon that is worsening as a consequence of the Colombian conflict.



## The Labour victory in the United Kingdom and its impact on European security policy

On July 4th, general elections were held in the United Kingdom to form the House of Commons in the British Parliament, resulting in a historic outcome as the Labour Party secured 412 seats, thus winning the majority over the Conservative or "Tory" party and forming the government, a situation not seen since Tony Blair's government ended in 2007. With this result, Keir Starmer, leader of the Labour Party, assumes the position of Prime Minister of the United Kingdom until the next general elections in 2025 ([BBC, 2024](#)). This change in vision in one of Europe's powers raises concerns about relevant issues such as security, international cooperation, international trade, and migration. This is especially significant in Europe, as with the ongoing war in Ukraine, the constant Russian threat of a continental conflict, or the ongoing migration crisis, a country like the United Kingdom can have a significant influence on how these issues are addressed across the continent.

An issue urgently addressed by Starmer's new government was the United Kingdom's relationship with the European Union. After the 2016 referendum and the subsequent departure of the island nation from the Union three years ago, relations had become tense and complex on issues such as the free movement of Irish citizens through the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland, a country belonging to the United Kingdom. For this reason, the top leader of the British government met with Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission, reaching a commitment to accelerate talks between both entities to "reset" bilateral relations. These meetings make it clear that this government will try to resolve such disputes through the institutions of the European Union and not with individual governments, as its predecessor, Rishi Sunak, had done when he met with the Italian government of Georgia Meloni to discuss the Mediterranean migration crisis that will eventually impact the United Kingdom ([Financial Times, 2024](#)).



The new willingness shown by the British government to closely cooperate with Brussels may mean a closer alignment on complex issues that could threaten Western interests as a whole, thus establishing a more robust bloc against external threats.

### ***Ireland after Brexit 2016***

#### **What's the Deal?**

Northern Ireland keeps a foot in both systems after Brexit

All of the island of Ireland remains in the EU's "single market" for goods, with a customs border in the Irish Sea

Northern Ireland remains part of the U.K.'s customs regime but collects taxes and tariffs on behalf of the EU



Resource: Bloomberg, 2021.

In his first meeting with Joe Biden in Washington, both leaders expressed their satisfaction upon receiving the news of closer cooperation between the European bloc and the United Kingdom. The President of the United States also stated that a rapprochement with Europe meant a rapprochement with North America, as after the approval of Brexit, the United Kingdom withdrew and kept a low profile on international issues, focusing primarily on resolving domestic policy problems. Similarly, after a NATO conference, Prime Minister Starmer affirmed that the United Kingdom must be at the forefront of global affairs, and therefore, the path of dialogue with entities such as the European Union or NATO itself must be resumed. In this regard, one of the main objectives of this Labour government is to sign a defense pact with the European Union, in which defense industry companies have greater facilities to operate in British and European territory, thereby streamlining processes and exchanging information relevant to the security of both territories (POLITICO, 2024).



The UK Secretary of Defense, John Healey, stated that the British government is interested in becoming more involved in the European Union's Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) defense policy project. A senior NATO official affirmed that the organization supports this intention of rapprochement between Europe and the United Kingdom as long as it does not lead to greater protectionism by the security sector in this region. He also commented that it is beneficial for everyone that Europe takes a more active role in the continent's defense, always recognizing NATO as the example to follow in these matters. The Prime Minister stated that these agreements with the European Union will be complementary to NATO's actions for joint protection ([POLITICO](#), 2024).

Regarding the war situation in Ukraine, since the beginning of the election campaign, Keir Starmer has made it clear that the intention to support President Volodymyr Zelensky's efforts to repel the Russian invasion remains firm. Actions will be taken to continue supplying war material and intelligence to the Ukrainian armed forces. Actions will also be taken to seize Russian state resources in Ukraine's allied countries, in order to repurpose them in support of the Ukrainian effort. At the same time, support is proposed for the creation of a special tribunal for crimes of aggression to prosecute the main perpetrators of the invasion, as well as to help Ukraine have a clear path towards NATO membership ([Reuters](#), 2024).

The new British government places its trust in approaching its global and regional allies to have a safer region with a broader capacity for action in the face of today's challenges. Approaching the European Union also brings them closer to other strategic alliances to stay at the forefront of the international stage.



## Elections in Venezuela: impact of electoral results on security and regional migration

On Sunday, July 28, the next presidential elections will be held in Venezuela. The day constitutes a milestone of remarkable importance as it is the first time in 25 years that there seems to be a chance for the opposition candidate. Since 1998, the Latin American country has been governed by “chavismo”, a movement of socialist origin that began with the election of Hugo Chávez and was perpetuated with the arrival of Nicolás Maduro to power (NYTIMES, 2024). In this opportunity, the current president Maduro will face opposition leader Edmundo González Urrutia, backed by the well-known “anti-Chavista” politician María Corina Machado. In past elections, the results have not been recognized by an important part of the international community, a situation that has impacted the social and political crisis in the country. Due to the above, the world is awaiting the development of the election and the international community is making efforts so that both parties commit to accept the result (El País, 2024).

The 2024 campaign has been framed in an environment of rumors, uncertainty and speculations. According to Luis Vicente León, president of Datanálisis, there are several possible scenarios for July 28. In the first instance, Maduro may win and the country may continue with the same trend it has maintained in the last years. Another option is that Gonzalez Urrutia emerges victorious.



In that case, Maduro could accept the election results. If the latter were accepted, a negotiation towards a transition with the current president could begin, a situation that would have a high impact at a national, regional and global level ([El País, 2024](#)).

Two of the issues that currently most concern the international community when talking about Venezuela are migration and security, factors that are likely to develop in a notably different way depending on who comes to power on July 28th. According to Ronal Rodríguez, member of the Venezuela Observatory of the Universidad del Rosario, “migration will be a factor of profound impact in the region with these elections in Venezuela, whoever the winner is” ([El País, 2024](#)). Rodríguez affirms that if a transition is not achieved, migration will continue to rise. The latest survey by ORC Consultores reported that more than 18% of those surveyed plan to migrate from Venezuela before the end of the year if Maduro wins ([CNN, 2024](#)). Approximately 7,774,494 Venezuelans have been forced to leave the territory, with Colombia being the largest receiving country. Maduro's victory would mean a continuation of the growing trend that has been evidenced so far, while the arrival to power of González Urrutia could reverse this behavior ([El País, 2024](#)).

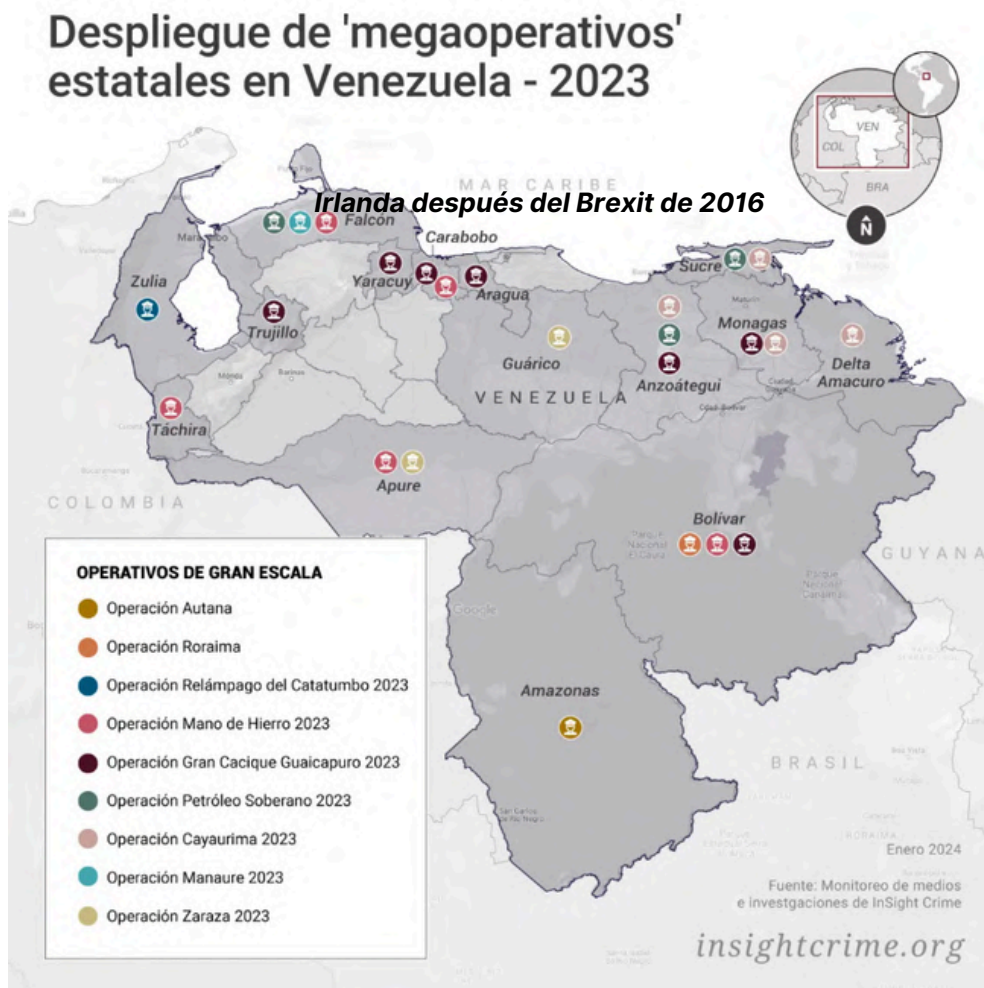
In terms of organized crime, the nation's situation is complex. Since becoming president, Maduro has built a system in which high-level officials have ties to organized crime. The government provides safe-conducts and support from state forces, while crime exerts social and territorial control in areas of influence. One of the organizations aligned with Maduro's regime is the Colombian ELN Organized Armed Group. For several years this structure has been cooperating and coordinating with elements of the Venezuelan state, which has allowed it to consolidate in the states of Bolívar and Amazonas through markets such as drug trafficking, smuggling and migrant smuggling. At the same time, the GAO has become a legitimate authority in the zone of Venezuelan interference, to the point that a large part of the inhabitants have a positive impression of it ([InsightCrime, 2024](#)).

Although throughout 2023 the government carried out numerous “mega-operations” against organized crime, experts and leaders agree that what was done was not a real attempt to weaken crime; rather, the government only focused on criminal organizations with which it had no alliance. Another problematic situation is crime originating from penitentiary centers. The Maduro government has not been able to mitigate this phenomenon, to the point that the “Aragua Train”, one of the transnational criminal organizations with the greatest impact today, was born in a Venezuelan prison and continues to consolidate itself there and in neighboring countries such as Colombia ([InsightCrime, 2024](#)).





**Map of massive displacement, confinement and disasters in Colombia**  
 (Forced displacement in blue)



Source: Insight Crime, 2024

The victory of González Urrutia, and with him of the democratic opposition, would entail an important change in regional and global geopolitics (CNN, 2024). Maduro's defeat would surely imply a halt in migration (NYTIMES, 2024) and in the system of alliances with criminal structures. Despite this, it should be noted that even if the opposition were to come to power, political, social and economic transformations would not happen overnight, as the nation has been under the same regime for more than two decades.



## Forced displacement: a phenomenon that is worsening as a consequence of the Colombian conflict

Forced displacement continues to be a high impact problem in Colombia, and statistics from institutions and non-governmental organizations agree that it is a growing phenomenon. There are currently 8.6 million victims of this scourge at the national level and, according to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), in 2024 there has been an increase of 37% ([W Radio](#), 2024). Globally, according to data from the Internal Displacement Observatory of 2023, Colombia is the fourth country with more records of this problem, surpassing countries such as Sudan, Syria and the Republic of Congo ([El Tiempo](#), 2024).

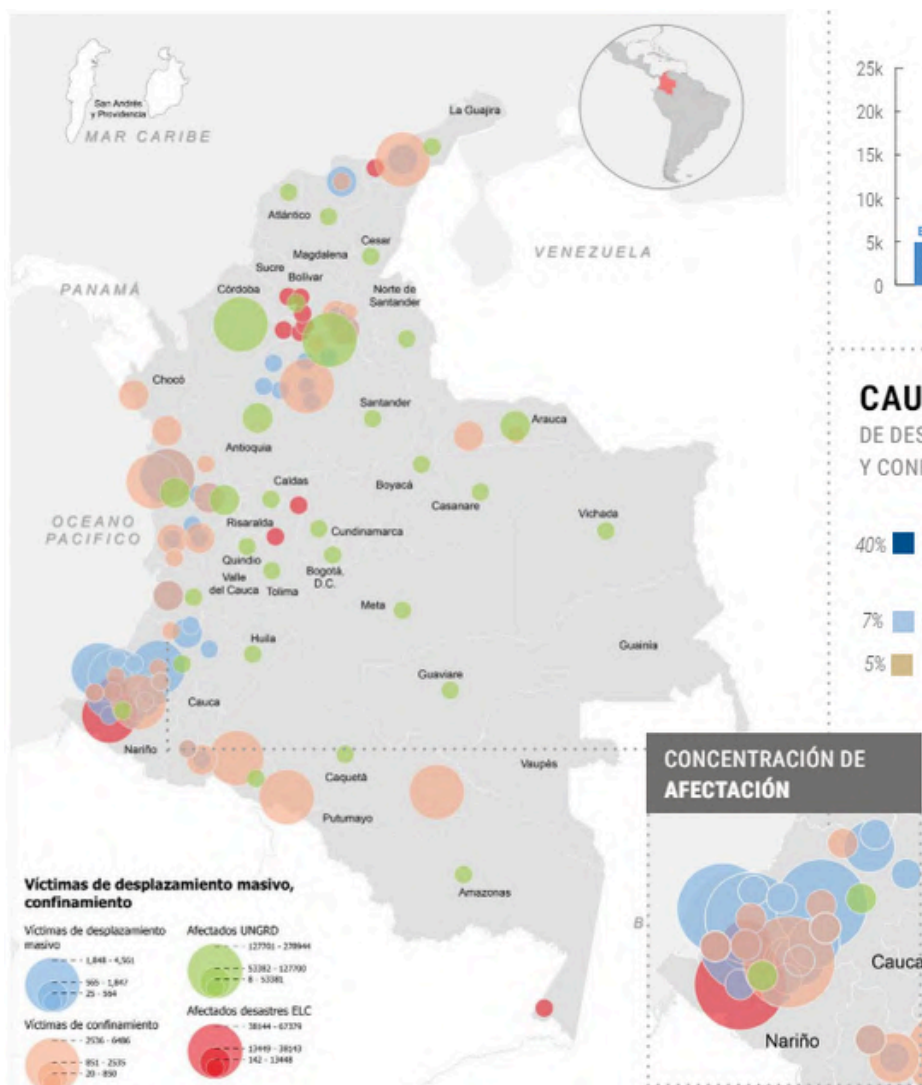
According to the IV National Verification Survey, conducted by the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR), the Consultancy for Human Rights and Displacement (CODHES) and the Unit for Victims (UARIV), forced displacement in Colombia has brought serious affectations to the human rights of the victims and has negatively impacted their quality of life ([Infobae](#), 2024). The above generates even more concern considering that the displaced population is among the most vulnerable demographic groups in the country.



In fact, 40% live in extreme poverty, 51% of people over 27 years of age have no or very low levels of education, the unemployment rate among victims is 17% and informality exceeds 80%. Overall, 6.9 million people affected urgently require assistance and effective redress of their rights ([Infobae](#), 2024).

The presence of the phenomenon is not generalized in the country; there are certain territories and departments where records of forced displacement are exponentially high. Chocó, Valle del Cauca, Nariño and Cauca are the areas with the greatest impact of the problem. A particular case is presented in the lower Cauca region of Antioquia, where around 18,000 people have been victims of displacement and confinement due to the strong interference of Organized Armed Groups (GAOs) ([Revista El Congreso](#), 2024). The Pacific is another area hard hit by displacement, specifically areas such as Buenaventura (Valle del Cauca) and Tumaco (Nariño) ([La Silla Vacía](#), 2024). These sectors are the scene of recurrent confrontations and disputes between armed actors for territorial and economic control of the areas in which they operate ([Revista El Congreso](#), 2024).

**Map of massive displacement, confinement and disasters in Colombia**  
(Forced displacement in blue)



Source: OCHA, 2024.



According to the Internal Displacement Observatory, the main drivers of forced displacement are violence and conflict. The latter currently affect 68 million people, while natural disasters affect close to eight million ([El Tiempo](#), 2024). In the Colombian case, the situation persists and intensifies due to the proliferation, consolidation and expansion of GAOs throughout the territory. Despite the fact that three of the four Organized Armed Groups present in the country are in some stage of negotiation and dialogue with the National Government, violence persists. According to the most recent report of the National Intelligence Directorate, in the last 125 days the illegal armed groups have carried out 1,237 armed actions. All this within the framework of the bilateral ceasefire between the government and the EMC, the Segunda Marquetalia and the ELN. The actions have been concentrated mainly in the departments of Antioquia, Arauca, Cauca, Huila, Nariño, Tolima, Caquetá, Guaviare, Meta and Casanare ([Cambio](#), 2024). These types of events result in social problems such as confinements and displacement.

As long as fighting, confrontations and threats from GAOs continue to intensify in the country, it is impossible to reduce the rates of forced displacement. Over the last year, at some points the figures have experienced a downward trend, coinciding with the first ceasefires established between the parties. This shows that there is a direct correlation between forced displacement and armed conflict; the greater the activity and violence of the armed structures, the greater the local population affected. Considering that the organizations continue to consolidate and that there is still no known effective mitigation plan from the National Government, it is expected that the displacement situation in the country will continue with the same trend.

**Note.** *The investigative work and analysis contained in this report is exclusive to 3+ Security Colombia. Therefore, it is recommended not to disclose the document in question. 3+Security Colombia Ltda., reserves the right to interpretation that may arise by the reader in the review and visualization of the information presented".*



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