



Editorial

POLITICAL ANALYSIS AND CORPORATE SECURITY UNIT

ANALYSIS OF THE CURRENT SITUATION

GLOBAL

How can Israel's assassination of a Hezbollah leader in Lebanon and the top Hamas leader in Tehran change the dynamics of the conflict?

REGIONAL

Homicide trends in Latin America: associated crime phenomena and countries with higher indicators.

LOCAL

Urban Total Peace: How has the National Government's project developed in the country's urban centers?





How can Israel's assassination of a Hezbollah leader in Lebanon and the top Hamas leader in Tehran change the dynamics of the conflict?

In the last few weeks, the Israeli Military Forces succeeded in eliminating two leaders of their most important rival groups. On the one hand, Hezbollah's military chief, Fuad Shukr, was killed in a targeted attack in southern Beirut. This individual had been responsible for the recent rocket attacks on the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights and also for the attack on the U.S. military base in Beirut in 1983, in which 241 American servicemen and 58 French citizens were killed. On the other hand, the political leader of Hamas, Ismail Haniyeh, was killed in an attack in Tehran while he was attending the inauguration of the new Iranian president. This was a devastating blow for Iran since such a military operation carried out on the territory of the Islamic republic seriously endangers its national sovereignty. For this reason, Iran's top leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei ordered a direct attack on Israel ([VOA](#), 2024). Despite this, two weeks have already passed since the attack and yet nothing has happened. For this reason, the region is in great tension as it awaits retaliation from Iran and its allies such as Hamas, Hezbollah, pro-Iranian militias in Syria and Iraq and the Huties in Yemen in what they have termed the Axis of Resistance. Given these circumstances, it is important to ask how each actor will respond and act accordingly, and at the same time how these actions will ultimately undermine the fragile stability of the region.



The war in Gaza has caused tensions between regional powers to become more evident, and thus to escalate. This was evidenced by the recent attacks between Israel and Iran over the past year. The bombing of the Iranian embassy in Syria and the subsequent drone attack on Israel is proof of this. The recent attack on the political leader of Hamas on Iranian soil complicates the current situation even further, as the Islamic Republic has vowed revenge. For this reason Israel has urged its population and its Military Forces to prepare for an imminent attack. Measures such as preparing a special bunker for Prime Minister Netanyahu to take refuge, or that all defense systems are on high alert make clear the concern of a violent response from Iran. At the same time, the major Western powers have also taken action to prevent more bloodshed than is currently taking place. For example, the U.S., Israel's great ally sent reinforcements to the region in the form of more aircraft carriers and destroyers to repel any attack that may arise from Iran or its proxies, as well as the deployment of more F-22 Raptor fighter jets, and the arrival of more Marines at military bases with interference in this territory (VOA, 2024). Along the same lines, nations such as Germany, France or the United Kingdom have issued an alert to their citizens to leave Lebanese territory promptly, due to the possible escalation of violence that could occur. Likewise, different airlines from all over the world have started to avoid the airspace of Israel, Lebanon and Iran. Jordan, for its part, has advised all commercial aircraft to maintain fuel reserves for 45 minutes (France 24, 2024).

Territories from where a combined attack against Israel could come from

Israel says it is under attack in a 'multi-arena war'



Resource: Financial Times, 2023.



As for the dialogues taking place in Qatar between Israel, representatives of the Palestinian Authority and Hamas, they have been in trouble because of this situation, as Hamas expressed that it would not attend the meeting agreed for Thursday, August 15, claiming that this would only validate the war actions taken by Israel in recent times. He added that the road map proposed in May by the Biden administration should be followed, and no more conditions should be inserted, as the Israeli government headed by Netanyahu is allegedly doing. The meeting took place despite the absence of the Palestinian armed group, since it was hoped that, with the mediating delegations of Qatar and Egypt, in addition to the Israeli delegation, consensus could be reached to resolve immediate issues of security concern in the region. U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken held separate talks with Qatari Prime Minister Mohammed bin Abdulrahman al-Thani and Egyptian Foreign Minister Badr Abdelatty to ensure that no regional actor takes action on this issue to preserve peace ([BBC](#), 2024).

Israel's attacks against the top leaders of its enemies on foreign soil have sent shockwaves through the international community because of their great impact in such a volatile and strategic region for the world. Iran and its proxies have a very high potential for response, both because of the perception left by this event and because of its military capabilities in terms of rockets, missiles and drones. This fact leaves serious concerns in the global powers for a large scale escalation between Israel and Iran that would lead to a collapse of security in the world. For this reason, measures have already been taken to mitigate the impact of this hypothetical situation, such as evacuating their citizens or even deploying their Armed Forces in the region. For these reasons, it is imperative to remain vigilant in the event of a retaliatory attack by Iran, and then evaluate the possible scenarios.

REGIONAL

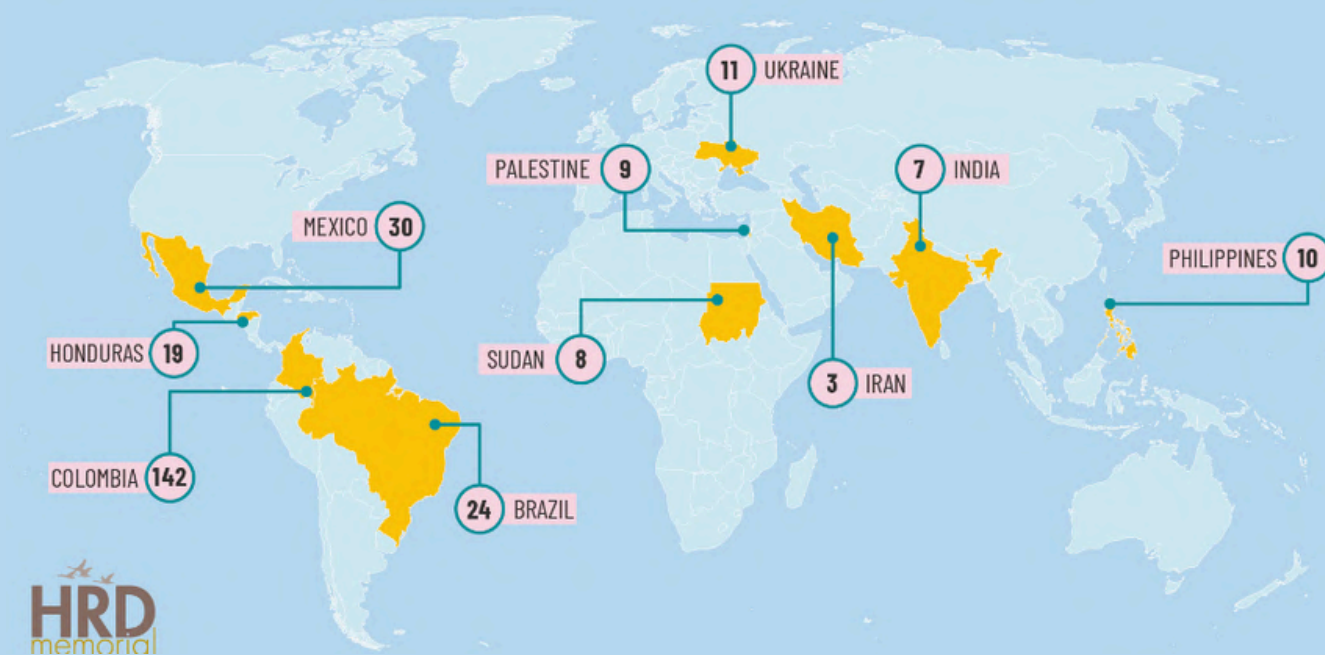
Homicide trends in Latin America: associated crime phenomena and countries with higher indicators.

Crime rates are quite effective variables for understanding urban security landscapes. Specifically, homicide is a very useful indicator since it is the most serious crime category and the one that is most rigorously recorded. The Homicide Monitor is one of the largest public registries capable of processing and organizing data from cities with at least 250,000 inhabitants. In its latest report, the system identified that Latin America and the Caribbean continue to have particularly high homicide rates, although the situation is not homogeneous across the territory, as some countries have experienced a deterioration, others an improvement and others remain the same. An unsafe environment brings with it multiple consequences that range from the degradation of the quality of life of citizens to the decrease in foreign investment ([El Tiempo](#), 2024).

According to the Homicide Monitor, Latin America and the Caribbean are home to more than 40 of the 50 cities with the highest murder rates worldwide. The countries with the most cities on the list are: Brazil (13), Mexico (11), the United States (7), South Africa (6), Ecuador (5) and Colombia (3), followed by Venezuela, Guatemala, Jamaica, Haiti and Lesotho, with one case each. The study highlights that the cities of the region are those that lead the ranking, although in parallel, due to the new dynamics of organized crime and some of the measures used to counteract the situation, notable changes are taking place in the territory ([El Tiempo](#), 2024).

The city that occupies the first place in the ranking is Durán, Ecuador. Ecuador's national homicide rate went from 5.7 per 100,000 inhabitants in 2018 to 45.1 in 2023, a situation that has positioned the country as the most violent in South America. The scenario responds to the escalation of the drug trafficking war between Ecuadorian gangs and Colombian, Mexican and Albanian criminal groups, who are disputing cocaine trafficking. Meanwhile, although the national homicide rate has been declining since 2017, the situation remains problematic in certain areas of Brazil. This is due to a boom in cocaine trafficking from Colombia, Bolivia and Peru. Camacari, Feira de Santana and Salvador are some of the cities whose homicide rate exceeds 65 per 100,000 ([El Tiempo](#), 2024).

Countries with the highest number of assassinations of social and environmental leaders



Resource: Mongabay, 2023.



In Mexico, the outlook is worrisome; during the last six years there have been more than 30,000 homicides nationwide. In addition, in the last electoral cycle, the country recorded the highest number of political assassinations in modern history. In one of the most recent public safety surveys, 61% of respondents stated that their cities were not safe. Conversely, in Colombia, assassinations have experienced a large-scale decline. Cities such as Medellín and Cali, which years ago were on the list of most dangerous territories worldwide, have seen considerable improvement. Despite this, since 2017 Colombia registers between two and four cities on the list ([El Tiempo](#), 2024). In addition, it is worth highlighting that the security situation in some cities and municipalities has seriously deteriorated, as is the case of the Pacific coast. Likewise, in 2023 Colombia was the country with the highest number of murders of social and environmental leaders in the world ([Mongabay](#), 2024).

The regional security context finds its causes in the changing dynamics of organized crime and violence. In the words of Nathalie Alvarado, coordinator of the IDB's citizen security and justice area: "it is a complex phenomenon, involving a diversity of crimes and in which many risk factors converge, some of which are structural in the region, such as the lack of socioeconomic opportunities, low institutional weakness, including individual or community factors such as living in violence. All of these are factors that have been identified as favoring organized crime" ([El País](#), 2024).

Organized crime is constantly transforming to adapt and take root in new situations. In this sense, it is a broad and complex phenomenon. To mitigate and counteract its actions, it is necessary to understand its logic. Understanding the context in which it operates, contributing to the reduction of opportunities for groups to expand and building resilience in the public and private sectors to face this phenomenon are some of the actions that could contribute to mitigate organized crime ([El País](#), 2024).



Urban Total Peace: How has the National Government's project developed in the country's urban centers?

In November 2022, the Petro government began implementing its Urban Peace policy in Buenaventura, a project that from the beginning was aimed at expanding Total Peace to urban levels, in order to mitigate the violence caused by organized crime in the territories ([El Tiempo](#), 2024). Although currently, the project has added Quibdó, Medellín and Valle de Aburrá, the situation of dialogue, negotiation and construction at the urban level is still uncertain, the processes have been wearing out and there is no clear legal framework that allows the development of the negotiation tables ([El País](#), 2024).

Buenaventura has been the scenario with the most progress in the framework of Total Peace, however, concrete agreements have not yet been reached. The situation has been limited to the establishment and promulgation of truces between the two most consolidated criminal organizations in the territory: “Los Shottas” and “Los Espartanos”. The dialogues have seen numerous obstacles, however, the materialization of the truces between groups has been reflected in the reduction of homicides in the port of Valle del Cauca ([El Tiempo](#), 2024). In a few months it will be two years since the beginning of the first truce and, although some indicators show a better situation for civil society, the truth is that the process does not seem to be moving forward. In fact, the truce contexts have been taken advantage of by the structures to strengthen themselves on more than one occasion ([El Tiempo](#), 2024).



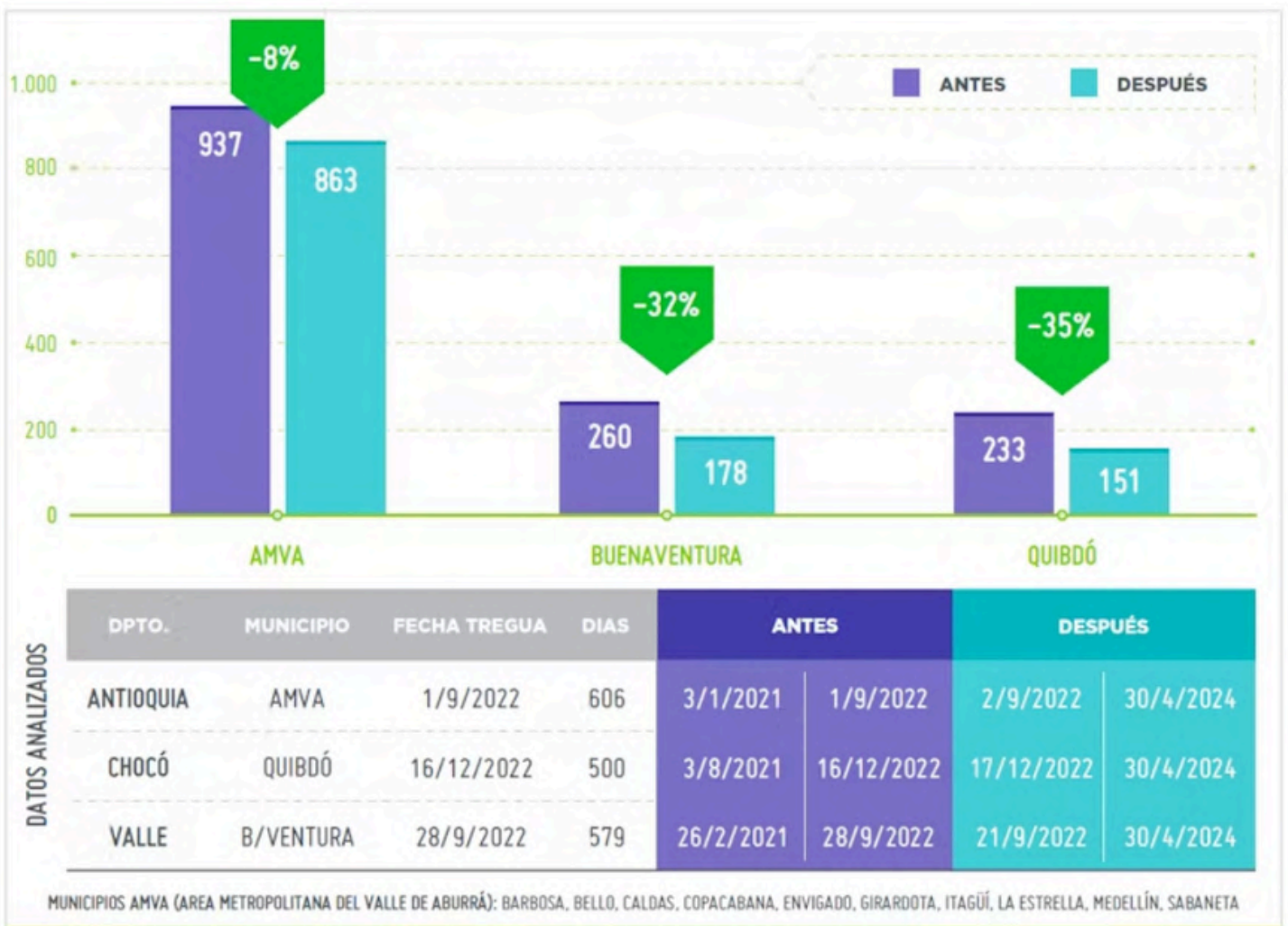
In April, government delegates to the Urban Peace process in Buenaventura stated that since December 2023 it had been impossible to arrange a meeting with the peace advisor, Otty Patiño. According to the signatories, the delegation had no knowledge about the financing and operation of the project, a situation that has negative implications for the peace process ([El Tiempo, 2024](#)). Contrary to what has been happening in Buenaventura, Quibdó is the process of which the least public progress is known. The truce began in December 2022, however, to this day the public does not know how it works or its validity. In fact, in March, a massacre took place in the middle of the truce, which has called into question the legitimacy of the process ([El Tiempo, 2024](#)).

In the Caribbean, negotiations between the National Government and groups such as the “Clan del Golfo” and the “Autodefensas Conquistadoras de la Sierra”, the most influential structures that have generated the greatest humanitarian impact at the regional level, have not taken off. This situation has resulted in a continuity of criminal phenomena resulting from the dynamics of drug trafficking, crimes such as extortion and homicides strongly impact cities such as Santa Marta, Barranquilla and its metropolitan area. According to Governor Eduardo Verano, 80% of the homicides in the capital of Atlántico are related to the fight for control of territory waged by the “Clan del Golfo”. In addition, an important part involves smaller gangs that fight for the income from micro-trafficking and arms trafficking, among other illegal markets. According to Luis Fernando Trejos, an expert in armed conflict, both the “Clan del Golfo” and the “Autodefensas Conquistadoras de la Sierra Nevada” have expressed their intention to negotiate, but not to submit to justice, a situation that is complex for the National Government ([El Tiempo, 2024](#)).

In Medellín, the negotiation tables were set up in the La Paz prison in Itagüí about a year and a half ago. Those involved in the process are the National Government and the spokespersons of the armed structures of Medellín and the Aburrá Valley ([El Tiempo, 2024](#)). Although the parties have not ceased to express their desire for peace and there is already a pre-agenda with issues to be addressed, so far the talks have had no concrete results, the main obstacle being the absence of a legal framework to regulate the subjugation of the leaders. Added to this is the lack of support from local authorities for the process, especially Mayor Federico Gutiérrez, who has stated that the dialogues with the organizations could be a door for them to be strengthened ([El Colombiano, 2024](#)).

As can be seen, taking into account the time elapsed, the progress of the Urban Peace projects is scarce. The processes have not only been complex due to the nature of the criminal actors with whom they are dealing, but also because of the attention, organization and achievement provided by the National Government. It is possible to observe that there has not been a good articulation, as local governments and the National Government do not seem to be cooperating and coordinating activities, and at the same time the delegates are not aware of the execution of the project itself. In this sense, Urban Peace will continue to be one of the great challenges of the Petro administration for the remainder of its term, and achieving a resolution of the violence and criminal dynamics with the Organized Criminal Groups is still a distant goal.

Comparison of homicides before and after the truces



Resource: FIP, 2024.

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".



Let us accompany you with the service you deserve.

www.3securitycol.com

REFERENCES

Arciniegas, Y. (5 de Agosto de 2024). Israel, en alerta ante un posible ataque iraní tras la muerte del líder político de Hamás. Obtenido de France 24:

<https://www.france24.com/es/medio-orient/20240805-israel-en-alerta-ante-un-posible-ataque-iran%C3%AD-tras-la-muerte-del-l%C3%ADder-pol%C3%ADtico-de-ham%C3%A1s>

BBC. (14 de Agosto de 2024). Hamas will not join Gaza ceasefire talks, senior official says. Obtenido de:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c0e8gzyp8e2o>

El Colombiano. (14 de junio 2024). Líderes de bandas le piden a Federico Gutiérrez entrar a la mesa de Paz Urbana. Obtenido de:

<https://www.elcolombiano.com/medellin/paz-urbana-lideres-de-bandas-llaman-a-federico-gutierrez-DJ24789921>

El País. (14 de marzo de 2024). La paz total urbana, eclipsada y estancada. Obtenido de:

<https://elpais.com/america-colombia/2024-03-15/la-paz-total-urbana-eclipsada-y-estancada.html>

El País. (08 de marzo de 2024). Seguridad en América Latina: los desafíos para dejar de ser la región con la principal tasa de homicidios en el mundo. Obtenido de:

<https://elpais.com/america/cumbre-bid/2024-03-08/seguridad-en-america-latina-los-desafios-para-dejar-de-ser-la-region-con-la-principal-tasa-de-homicidios-en-el-mundo.html>

El Tiempo. (12 de agosto de 2024). ¿Qué tanto ha beneficiado a las regiones la propuesta de 'paz total'? así le ha ido a las mesas en Itagüí y Buenaventura; panorama difícil en el Caribe. Obtenido de:

<https://www.eltiempo.com/colombia/otras-ciudades/que-tanto-ha-beneficiado-a-las-regiones-la-propuesta-de-paz-total-asi-le-ha-ido-a-las-mesas-en-itagui-y-buenaventura-panorama-dificil-en-el-caribe-3371199>

El Tiempo. (10 de agosto de 2024). Las tendencias que revelan las tasas de homicidios en América Latina. Obtenido de:

<https://www.eltiempo.com/mundo/latinoamerica/las-tendencias-que-revelan-las-tasas-de-homicidios-en-america-latina-3370698>

El Tiempo. (17 de junio de 2024). Experimento de 'paz urbana' en Buenaventura, Medellín y Quibdó se enfrenta a avances nulos y a dudas frente al escenario jurídico. Obtenido de:

<https://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/experimento-de-paz-urbana-en-buenaventura-medellin-y-quibdo-se-enfrenta-a-avances-nulos-y-a-dudas-frente-al-escenario-juridico-3353134>

Mongabay. (06 de junio de 2024). Violencia en Latinoamérica: el 80 % de los asesinatos contra defensores de derechos humanos ocurrió en la región | INFORME. Obtenido de:

<https://es.mongabay.com/2024/06/violencia-latinoamerica-asesinatos-contra-defensores-informe/>

Voice of America. (3 de Agosto de 2024). Fears of Middle East war grow after Hamas leader's killing. Obtenido de VOA:

<https://www.voanews.com/a/fears-of-middle-east-war-grow-after-hamas-leader-s-killing-/7728857.html>