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POLITICAL ANALYSIS AND CORPORATE SECURITY UNIT

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Middle East Conflict: new actors and escalation of tensions one year after the start of the war

One year after the outbreak of conflict in the Middle East, the region is facing unprecedented geopolitical complexity. What began as an escalation of tensions between nations and armed groups has given rise to the emergence of new actors and alliances that further complicate the situation. In this context, the role of regional and external powers has intensified, significantly influencing the dynamics of the conflict.

Since the start of the war in Gaza, hostilities have reached alarming levels, with a high human cost and an imminent risk of regional expansion. The Israeli offensive has resulted in tens of thousands of deaths, prompting a forceful response from Iran, which has increased its support for groups such as Hezbollah and Hamas. This support has translated into direct attacks, such as the launching of missiles towards Israel, evidencing the growing militarization and the possibility of an open conflict between military powers ([Aljazeera](#), 2024).

In addition, the involvement of non-state actors has grown exponentially. Militant groups such as Hezbollah and various factions in Gaza have adopted more aggressive postures, intensifying clashes. At the same time, the Iranian government has expanded its influence, providing military and financial resources to these organizations. This dynamic has weakened the established order and fragmented historical alliances. Iran has established itself as a key player in the conflict, supporting militias not only on its territory, but also in regions such as Yemen, where the Houthis have intensified their attacks in support of the Palestinian cause ([France 24](#), 2024).





Moreover, after the multiple attacks carried out secretly by Israel against Hezbollah in Lebanese territory by blowing up pagers and walki-talkies, the Iranian government responded forcefully by sending a new attack with missiles, rockets and explosive drones against the Jewish state causing US troops and military equipment to arrive in the region, increasing the tension (DW, 2024).

Israeli bombardment to Hezbollah in Lebanon



Resource: BBC, 2024.



The prolongation of the conflict has had devastating consequences for the civilian population. The war not only affects the direct actors, but also has global repercussions, spreading tensions further afield. This escalation has manifested itself in a series of violent clashes and acts of terrorism that have left thousands dead and wounded. Cities have become the scenes of bombings and air strikes, while the humanitarian crisis has reached alarming levels. The civilian population, caught between power struggles, faces a desolate panorama, characterized by shortages of food, medicine and shelter ([CNN](#), 2024).

The immediate future of the conflict is uncertain. The possibility of a regional war remains latent, especially if hostilities between Iran and Israel continue to escalate. U.S. military interventions could be decisive in containing or aggravating this situation. Also, the role of emerging actors such as China and Russia could open new opportunities for diplomatic mediations or unexpected alliances.

As the conflict progresses, the chances of a peaceful resolution seem increasingly distant. Negotiations have repeatedly failed and mistrust between the parties has deepened. However, some analysts suggest that the involvement of new actors could facilitate unforeseen dialogues. Arab countries that previously adopted a neutral stance have begun to show interest in mediating, driven by a desire to stabilize the region and mitigate the impact of the war on their own borders.

In summary, the conflict in the Middle East, one year on, reflects not only a territorial struggle, but also a complex interplay of local and global actors. The escalation of tensions, driven by the intervention of new actors and the failure of negotiations, presents significant challenges to peace and stability in the region. As the conflict escalates, the international community will need to rethink its approach to avoid further disaster and seek solutions that prioritize the welfare of the affected population. The conflict in the Middle East is in a critical phase, marked by the active intervention of new actors and a marked increase in tensions. The geopolitical dynamics are changing rapidly, posing complex challenges to both regional peace and global stability.

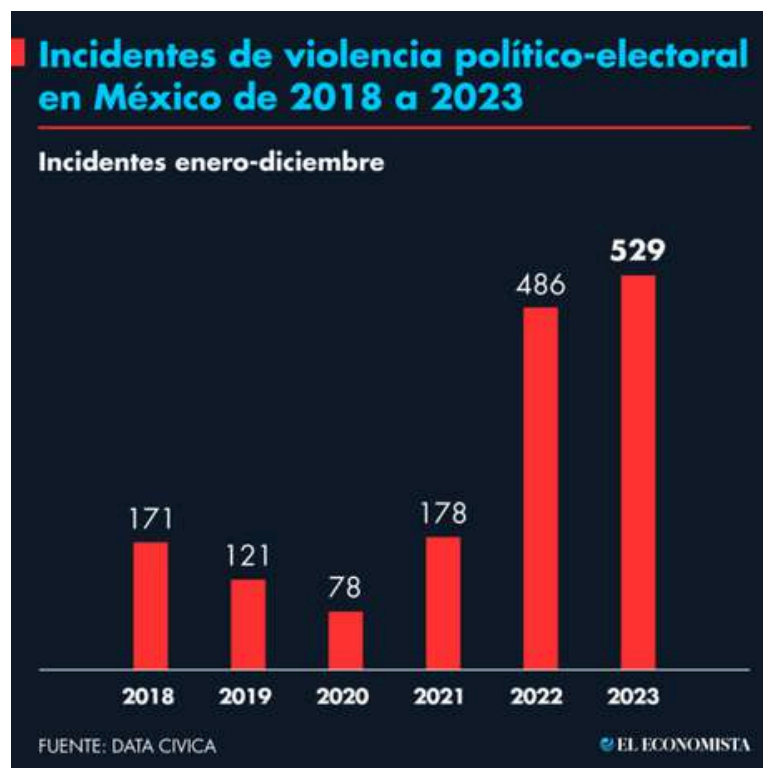


New president in Mexico: What is the security background? What can we expect from Claudia Sheinbaum's security policies?

After a wide victory in the elections held in June, last Tuesday, October 1st, Claudia Sheinbaum was sworn in as President of Mexico. The former mayor of Mexico City will head the country's executive for the next six years, from where she will have to reinforce one of the weakest points of the past mandate: insecurity and violence caused by the consolidation and expansion of organized crime. According to the consulting firm World Population Review, 14 of the 50 most violent cities in the world are in Mexico, with Tijuana and Acapulco topping the list. In addition to the above, it is estimated that during the years of Manuel López Obrador's (AMLO) government, 180,000 homicides were registered, 30,000 more than in the administration of his predecessor Peña Nieto, and cases such as the Ayotzinapa massacre remain unsolved due to the influence of organized crime in the state system ([Le Grand, 2024](#)).



The security situation in Mexico is complex. In the country there is a multiplicity of illegal groups that fight for the control of rents from criminal markets such as drug trafficking, extortion, human trafficking, among other crimes, in order to consolidate and expand in the territory. At the same time, different institutions have been permeated by crime and corruption, creating an interweave between legality and illegality, where the latter is strengthened. Although this is an old problem, the emergence of new criminal cells, the magnitude of the power of existing groups and the transnational character that organized crime has acquired have deteriorated the country's security situation in recent years. Proof of this is that the June elections have been some of the most violent in Mexican history, leaving around 36 candidates murdered and more than 100 candidates withdrawn due to threats (DW, 2024).



Resource: El Economista, 2024.



Against this backdrop, Sheinbaum has stated that she will not resort to “mano dura” and “war on drugs” approaches, such as those used by then-President Felipe Calderón between 2006 and 2012 ([France24](#), 2024). Instead, he will use the same security strategy that he implemented during his term in Mexico City and which succeeded in reducing homicides in the city. The Integral Security Plan consists of four points: support young people so that they do not become involved in crime, improve police training and working conditions, implement intelligence strategies focused on high-impact crimes and specific regions, and establish effective coordination between the police and the prosecutor's office. As can be seen, the plan is comprehensive in that it includes prevention and reaction strategies ([BBC](#), 2024).

As a structural problem that has not received due attention for so many years, mitigating the levels of crime and insecurity in Mexico is an extremely complex task. In addition, although the points of Sheinbaum's plan seem to be appropriate to attack crime in the country, it should be taken into account that the strategy was previously implemented in the capital, a city that has particular and differentiated characteristics compared to the rest of the Mexican territory. Therefore, it is not enough for the president to replicate what was implemented in Mexico City, but she must adjust the measures to the general Mexican context, not to the main city of the country. However, even if the necessary actions are taken, one must not lose sight of the immense obstacles that exist when talking about mitigating crime in Mexico, for example the enormous economic resources available to outlaw groups that are attractive to young people. Reflecting the magnitude of the problem, five days after the president gave her inaugural speech, the mayor and the town hall secretary of Chilpancingo, Guerrero state, were assassinated ([Democracy Now](#), 2024).



COP16 in Cali: What security implications can this event bring to the country?

The 16th edition of the Conference of the Parties (COP) will be held in the city of Cali from October 21 to November 1. The COP is the governing body of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), an international treaty signed by leaders of 150 countries during the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, whose objective is to promote sustainable development. In this order of ideas, the COP16 will be a scenario for discussion and decision making on issues such as conservation, biological diversity, and the use of energy resources, among others. In addition, the 18,000 representatives from approximately 200 countries will be offered a broad cultural and tourist experience in the capital of Valle del Cauca ([Infobae](#), 2024).

The city of Cali is located in one of the regions of the country most impacted by violence and conflict. The departments of Cauca and Valle del Cauca are strategic zones where different illegal structures have settled and managed to consolidate. The Clan del Golfo, the ELN, the Estado Mayor Central and the Segunda Marquetalia are active in territories adjacent to the capital of Valle del Cauca. This has raised concerns about the security of the COP16 as, in recent months, there have been numerous offensive actions and public order phenomena related to the presence of GAOs.



One of the structures with the greatest presence in the area is the Central General Staff, led by alias “Ivan Mordisco. In recent months, this illegal group has increased its criminal activity in the department of Cauca and in the south of Valle del Cauca, very close to Cali, which is why the authorities remain alert to any possible situation that may arise. Although at first alias “Iván Mordisco” published a video in which he affirmed that his organization would not attack the COP16 as a sign of willingness for peace, in recent days after the execution of Operation Perseus by the Military Forces, the GAO made a call to the guests of the COP16 to abstain from participating in the event ([Pares, 2024](#)).



Benefits for Cali and Colombia

The development of COP16 in Cali makes the city and the country visible as a biodiverse and cultural center. In addition to boosting tourism and positioning Colombia as a benchmark for the protection of biodiversity.



What security measures have been implemented for COP16?

23%

Increase in police force (1,104 uniformed personnel will be transferred to Valle del Cauca for a total of 4,831)

4.987

Soldiers from the Third Brigade of the National Army will join the strategy, as well as a Gauja Militar



512

Soldiers with rural and semi-urban training

150

Police officers will be dedicated exclusively to the security of the United Nations.

If you will be part of this event, these are our recommendations:

- Identify and do not transit through the areas of Cali with the highest crime rates, such as localities 13, 14, 15 and 21.
- If possible, stay within the perimeter where the event will take place. Try not to visit neighboring municipalities; areas such as Jamundí have registered several terrorist events by Organized Armed Groups.
- Have the necessary security measures and personnel to stay protected.
- Try not to have detailed or sensitive information about your family members or the organization you work for on your cell phone.

Resource: Own elaboration based on information provided by institutional sources and media.



Faced with this scenario, the National Government has taken different measures to respond in a timely manner to any situation that may jeopardize the security of the attendees. Local and national authorities announced that during the COP there will be 10,000 police officers, 1,600 Army troops and three Unified Command Posts (two in Cali and one in Bogota), which will aim to coordinate and supervise the actions of the country's security forces ([La República](#), 2024). In addition to the above, the use of anti-drones, the presence of Special Urban Forces of the National Army, the collaboration of the Colombian Air Force, the creation of "safe zones" and the participation of international actors ([Infobae](#), 2024).

The scenario is complex. Cali is part of the Pacific region, a territory with high rates of terrorist actions, massacres, armed confrontations, kidnappings, harassment, forced displacement and the presence of illicit crops. Although in Cali, the presence of the State is unquestionable, in nearby municipalities the institutions have never arrived. This explains why the GAOs have settled, expanded and consolidated in these areas. In spite of this, the authorities seem to be prepared for any action that could put COP16 attendees at risk; the large force, together with new technologies and international support are elements that, although they cannot prevent crime from having the will to intervene, they can hinder the materialization of this intervention. Additionally, it should be noted that, according to institutional statistics (National Police), this year different high impact crimes, such as homicides, have seen a decrease in the capital of Valle del Cauca, which reflects an even more favorable outlook.

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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