



Editorial

UNIDAD DE ANÁLISIS POLÍTICO Y SEGURIDAD CORPORATIVA

ANALYSIS OF THE CURRENT SITUATION

GLOBAL

How has the fentanyl crisis increased U.S. tensions with Canada and Mexico?

REGIONAL

What are the consequences of USAID's suspension for Latin America?

LOCAL

Chocó and GAO violence: What is the reason for the upsurge in violence in the department in early 2025?



How has the fentanyl crisis increased U.S. tensions with Canada and Mexico?

In early 2025, newly elected US President Donald Trump threatened Mexico and Canada with 25% tariffs on their exports to the United States if they do not do something about the passage of opioids such as fentanyl. The fentanyl crisis has generated significant tensions in international relations, albeit indirectly, as the main flow of fentanyl into the US comes from China and Mexico, and not directly from Canada. However, the situation has prompted the United States to take steps to pressure its trading partners, including Canada, to tighten border security and combat drug trafficking.

Fentanyl is an extremely potent synthetic opioid responsible for a large number of overdose deaths in the United States. The crisis began to escalate in the 2010s, when fentanyl became a key component of the illegal opioid market in the U.S. ([CNN](#), 2025). Although the majority of illicit fentanyl comes from China and is processed in Mexico, Canada has been involved in efforts to combat trafficking due to its geographic proximity and role in regional security.

Most common routes of fentanyl's entry into the U.S.



Resource: CNN, 2025.

Tensions between the US and Canada over fentanyl have focused more on cooperation to combat drug trafficking and precursor chemicals, rather than direct conflict. However, President Donald Trump proposed imposing tariffs on Mexico and Canada if border security was not strengthened and effective measures were not taken to combat drug trafficking ([Reuters](#), 2025). These tariffs were announced as a measure to pressure both countries to cooperate on border security and the fight against drug trafficking. Trump proposed a 25% tariff on most products imported from Mexico and Canada. For Canada, a 10% tariff on energy products such as oil and natural gas was also included. The main objective was to force Mexico and Canada to strengthen their border security to prevent drug trafficking, especially fentanyl, and illegal immigration into the United States ([The New York Times](#), 2025).

In response to the tariff threats, Mexico and Canada committed to take several measures. Mexico pledged to send 10,000 members of its National Guard to the northern border to combat drug trafficking, including fentanyl. Canada promised to invest in border security, create a "Joint Strike Force" with the U.S. to combat organized crime and fentanyl, appoint a "fentanyl czar," and collaborate to list cartels as terrorist groups ([CNN](#), 2025).

The current juncture is characterized by a focus on international cooperation to address the fentanyl crisis. While trade tensions have been a factor in relations between the U.S. and its trading partners, including Canada and China, the fentanyl issue has spurred greater collaboration on security and public health. After phone conversations with the leaders of Mexico and Canada, Trump agreed to suspend tariffs for at least 30 days, during which time they pledged to work together to improve border security and combat organized crime. While fentanyl has not generated direct tensions between the US and Canada in terms of trafficking, it has led to increased cooperation and coordination between the two countries to address the problem of drug and precursor chemical trafficking on a regional level. Trump's tariff threats served as a catalyst to strengthen this cooperation.

REGIONAL



What are the consequences of USAID's suspension for Latin America?

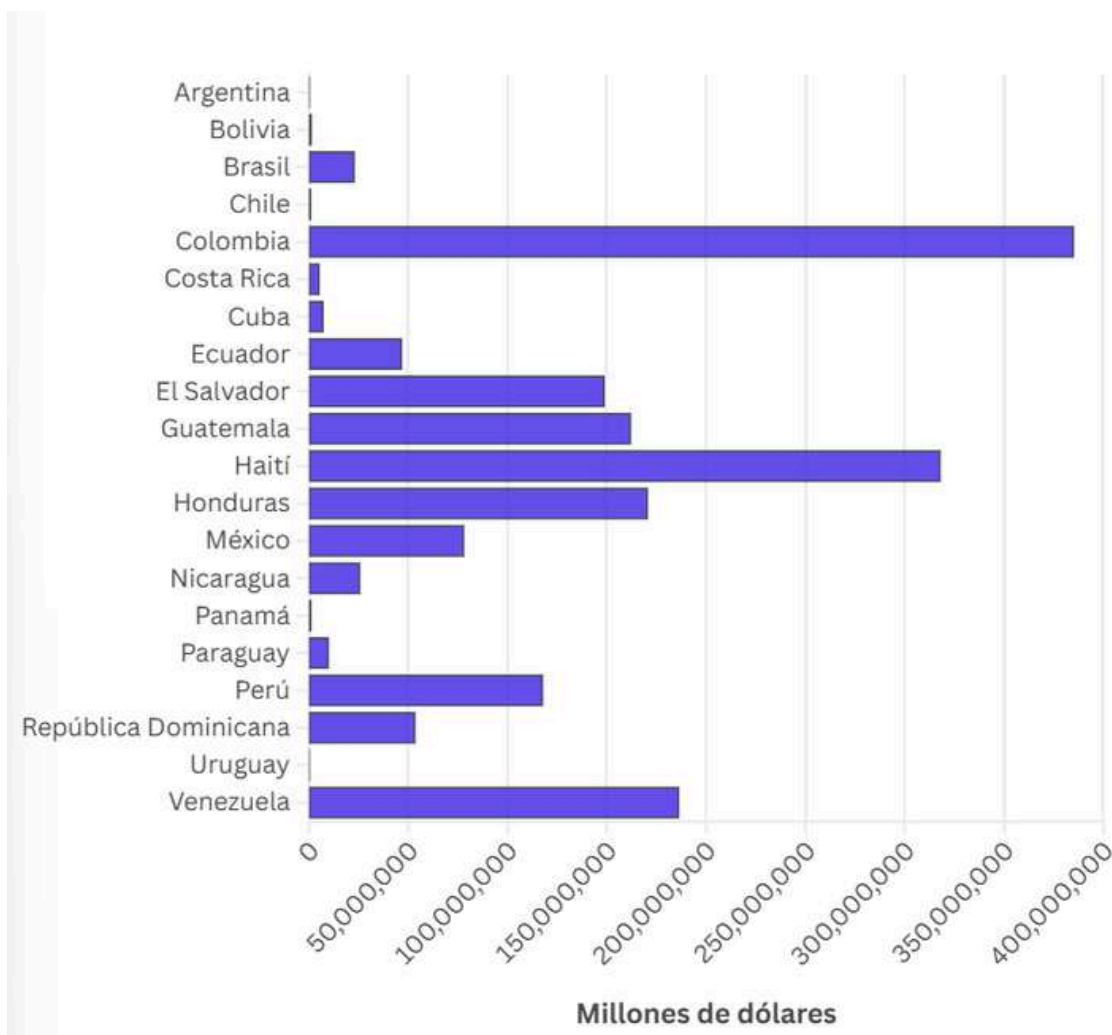
The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) was founded in 1961 within the framework of the post-war agreements. Through it, the U.S. sought to help the most unequal and underdeveloped countries to prevent the advance of communism and promote democracy. The agency deployed large amounts of humanitarian aid around the world, especially through NGOs, in fact several of the most recognized worldwide obtained their financial muscle from the United States. USAID, among other things, was key to the advancement of women's sexual and reproductive rights in countries such as Mexico, Colombia and Argentina, and actively contributed to the defense of the LGBTIQ+ population ([A Fondo, 2025](#)).

With the arrive of Donald Trump, more than 60 million dollars managed by USAID and destined for international aid were suspended for 90 days. The decree signed by the president establishes that this is a temporary measure to evaluate which programs will continue to be financed as “the foreign aid sector and the bureaucracy are not aligned with U.S. interests and in many cases are opposed to national values”.

According to Secretary of State Marco Rubio, the government will announce which programs will continue to receive aid once the suspension period expires. Despite this, highly influential figures such as Elon Musk have stated that Trump would agree to shut down USAID ([Volcánicas, 2025](#)).

In order to understand the flow of resources coming to the region from USAID, here are some statistics. According to figures from the Office of Foreign Assistance, Colombia was the Latin American country that received the most foreign aid money through USAID. In 2024, the United States provided the country with \$384,749,011 million dollars. It is followed by Haiti, with \$317,616,215 million, and Venezuela, with \$185,972,190. Mexico has been another major beneficiary. In 2024 Mexico received a total of \$120,246,940 million from the United States, of which \$77,744,247 was through USAID ([Volcánicas, 2025](#)).

USAID assistance received by countries in the region in 2024



Resource: Volcánicas, 2025.



While the financing represents an important source of income for the region and a fundamental contribution to its development in various aspects such as rights, security, migration, education, among others, the suspension brings with it major impacts in the short, medium and long term. The first consequences, which have already begun to emerge, are the loss of jobs and the closure of numerous organizations. In the longer term, the humanitarian and civil society impacts may be felt, as filling the funding gap is extremely difficult for Latin American countries ([BBC](#), 2025). Since the signing of the decree, world-class organizations such as Médecins Sans Frontières and the Migrant Attention Center have expressed their views on the seriousness of the lack of funding. In Colombia, the case of post-agreement tools such as the Jurisdicción Especial para la Paz (JEP) and the Agencia Nacional de Tierras (ANT) is of particular concern ([Volcánicas](#), 2025).



**SECURITY
COLOMBIA**

Let us accompany you with the
service you deserve.

www.3securitycol.com



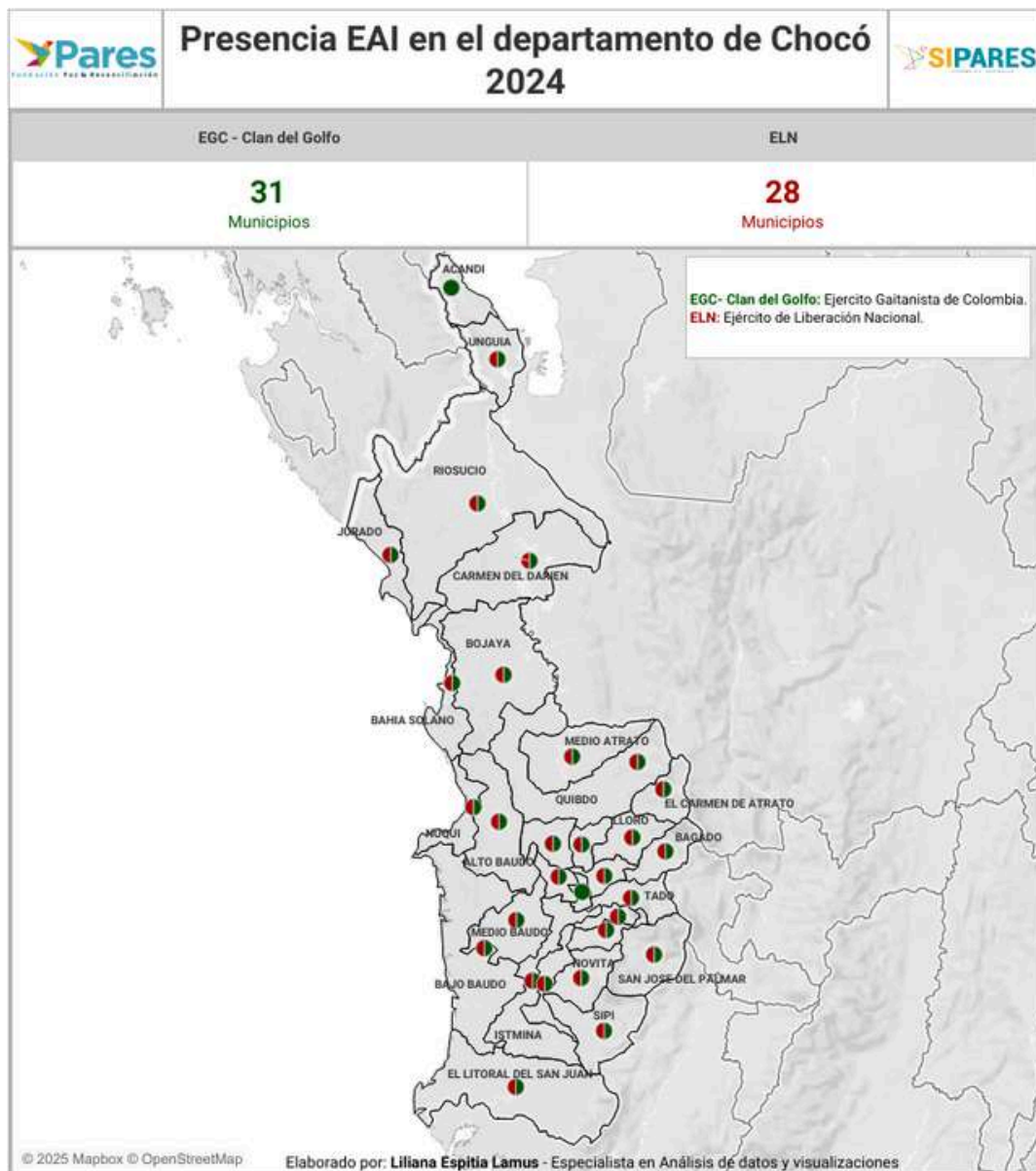
Chocó and GAO violence: What is the reason for the upsurge in violence in the department in early 2025?

In the first two months of 2025 Chocó has experienced an increase in its levels of violence. Historically, the department has been a territory in conflict. The now extinct FARC-EP dominated the area until 2016. Subsequent to the agreement, the ELN came to occupy the territory that had been vacated after the negotiations. However, the department's strategic position and wealth in terms of resources have attracted new criminal actors, such as the Clan del Golfo (AGC or EGC), to the scene. In this context, in the last three years Chocó has become one of the centers of confrontations between the two Organized Armed Groups (GAOs) for the control of illegal economies ([Semana](#), 2025).

Although Chocó has never been a safe and calm territory, so far in 2025 it has experienced an upsurge in violence due to the intensification of the dispute between the criminal actors involved. This is due to various factors, such as: the constant absence of the state in the territories, the consolidation of armed groups at the national level and the search for new areas of interference and domination by the organizations.

In this case, the Clan del Golfo and the ELN have used different repertoires of violence to settle and expand in the department. The situation has reached such a point that in February the ELN declared a four-day armed strike, while at the same time confronting factions of the AGC (Infobae, 2025).

Presence of GAOs or EAI (Illegal Armed Structures) in the Chocó



Resource: Pares, 2024.



As a consequence of the fighting between GAOs, as of February 14, approximately 400 families were displaced and nearly 15,000 victims of confinement were registered. The inhabitants of the department were affected by threats, installation of explosive devices and restrictions to mobility, education and health, among other criminal phenomena ([Semana](#), 2025). Alerts from the Defensoría del Pueblo have warned about the particular risks faced by the populations living in the territories affected ([Defensoría del Pueblo](#), 2024). The areas most impacted by the conflict are Istmina, Medio San Juan, Nóvita, Sipí and Litoral del San Juan ([Semana](#), 2025). Particular attention should also be paid to the Garrapatas canyon, which borders Valle del Cauca and has served crime as a strategic corridor for drug trafficking ([El Tiempo](#), 2025).

The situation in Chocó does not seem to be improving any time soon. In addition to being one of the territories most affected by the conflict since the last century, the GAOs continue to grow and government strategies to mitigate the problem have so far been insufficient. In addition to the above, the Governor of the department recently stated that it was evident that in the last of the ELN's armed strikes, the illegal armed structure had the intention of making itself more aggressively visible. In this context, the GAO intensified the materialization of threats and the presence of flags, cylinder bombs and explosive devices ([Infobae](#), 2025). The above highlights the levels of complexity in terms of security that affect the territory.

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".

Is your company prepared to face the challenges and opportunities that the country offers?

Get the **essential guide** to security in Colombia.



Buy it now!

REFERENCIAS

A Fondo. (2025). La caída de USAID. Obtenido de:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d2TxQPwfvdC>

BBC. (03 de Febrero de 2025). Qué consecuencias tendrá en América Latina la paralización de la ayuda al desarrollo ordenada por Trump. Obtenido de:
<https://www.bbc.com/mundo/articulos/c1ez3qd9zpdo>

CNN. (11 de Febrero de 2025). El impacto del fentanilo en EE.UU. en gráficos y mapas. Obtenido de:
<https://cnnespanol.cnn.com/2025/02/11/eeuu/impacto-del-fentanilo-en-ee-uu-graficos-y-mapas-trax>

Defensoría del Pueblo. (2024). Alertas Tempranas. Obtenido de:
<https://alertastempranas.defensoria.gov.co/?orden=&criterioBusqueda=choc%C3%B3&anioBusqueda=2024>

El Tiempo. (11 de Febrero de 2025). El cañón de Garrapatas, entre Valle y Chocó que tiene en disputa al 'clan del Golfo' y al Eln. Obtenido de:
<https://www.eltiempo.com/colombia/california/el-canon-de-garrapatas-corredor-para-drogas-del-valle-disputado-por-el-clan-del-golfo-y-el-eln-grupo-armado-busca-expandirse-con-miembros-de-antioquia-cordoba-y-choco-3425425>

Infobae. (23 de Febrero de 2025). Gobernadora del Chocó afirmó que “la escala de las acciones de violencia del ELN y del Clan del Golfo no se ha detenido”. Obtenido de:
<https://www.infobae.com/colombia/2025/02/23/gobernadora-del-choco-afirmo-que-la-escala-de-las-acciones-de-violencia-del-eln-y-del-clan-del-golfo-no-se-ha-detenido/>

Reuters. (24 de Febrero de 2025). Trump says Canada, Mexico tariffs on schedule despite border, fentanyl efforts. Obtenido de:
<https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/canada-mexico-step-up-fentanyl-border-talks-this-week-avoid-trumps-tariffs-2025-02-24/>

Semana. (10 de Febrero de 2025). “Lo del Catatumbo será menor”: dura advertencia sobre inicio de la guerra en Chocó. Obtenido de:
<https://www.semana.com/nacion/articulo/lo-del-catatumbo-sera-menor-dura-advertencia-sobre-inicio-de-la-guerra-en-choco/202547/>

The New York Times. (03 de Febrero de 2025). Canadá logra posponer los aranceles de EE. UU. un mes y promete enfrentar el tráfico de fentanilo. Obtenido de:
<https://www.nytimes.com/es/2025/02/03/espanol/estados-unidos/trump-aranceles-canada-trudeau.html>

Volcánicas. (04 de Febrero de 2025). Miles de trabajos perdidos y decenas de organizaciones desfinanciadas: las consecuencias de la suspensión de ayudas humanitarias de Trump. Obtenido de:
<https://volcanicas.com/miles-de-trabajos-perdidos-y-decenas-de-organizaciones-desfinanciadas-las-consecuencias-de-la-suspension-de-ayudas-humanitarias-de-trump/>