

Central America & the Caribbean

Security, sovereignty and survival



GIS Dossier



Central American and Caribbean countries have long struggled under the weight of crime and corruption. As a consequence, they now face a more overtly interventionist posture from the United States.

Contents click to go to chapter

- 05** Introduction
- 06** **Timeline:** From Cold War to narco-states
- 07** **Big picture:** Crime and corruption impede stabilization
- 13** **Trade focus:** U.S.-China rivalry shapes regional economies
- 17** **Deep dive:** Trump capture of Maduro creates shockwaves
- 20** Actionable insights

Experts



James Jay Carafano

Leading expert in America's national security and foreign policy challenges, the Washington-based Heritage Foundation's former vice president for foreign and defense policy studies, and director of the Kathryn and Shelby Cullom Davis Institute for International Studies.



Alejandro Peña Esclusa

Venezuelan engineer, writer, analyst, political consultant, former presidential candidate in Venezuela's 1998 elections and founder of UnoAmerica, the first organized effort to counter the influence of the Sao Paulo Forum.



Prince Michael of Liechtenstein

Executive chairman of Industrie- und Finanzkontor Ets., a leading trust company with expertise in the long-term, multigenerational preservation of wealth, family values and businesses. Among other ventures, he is also the founder and chairman of Geopolitical Intelligence Services AG.



Anthony Maingot

Professor emeritus of sociology at Florida International University in Miami, former director of Yale University's Antilles Research Program and teacher at the University of the West Indies, Trinidad.



Carole Nakhle

Internationally recognized energy economist and the Founder & CEO of the multi-award-winning Crystal Energy, renowned for its independent expertise in global energy markets, policy and geopolitics.



John Polga-Hecimovich

Lecturer and researcher with a focus on governance, democratic institutions and stability in Latin America. He is an associate professor of Political Science at the U.S. Naval Academy and an associate researcher at FLACSO-Ecuador.



Ana Rosa Quintana-Lovett

Latin America expert and senior advisor at the U.S. State Department, former senior director of policy for the Vandenberg Coalition and staff director for Western Hemisphere at the Foreign Affairs Committee at the U.S. House of Representatives where she was a principal advisor on Latin America and the Caribbean.



Dr. Joseph Tulchin

The late Dr. Joseph S. Tulchin was a professor of history, with expertise in U.S. foreign policy, inter-American relations, contemporary Latin America, strategic planning and social science research methodology. Dr. Tulchin was a Senior Scholar of the Woodrow Wilson International Centre for Scholars. America.

Layout and graphics by Michał Rogalski

Illustrations of experts by Andreas Leitner

Introduction

For decades, Central American and Caribbean countries have been plagued by democratic backsliding, corruption, gang activity, drug trafficking and violence. These problems grow out of structural obstacles as well as poor public policy, a tolerance for corruption and a lack of political commitment to practical solutions for institutional capacity-building. Seeking economic opportunities and an escape from oppressive conditions, significant numbers of Central Americans continue to emigrate.

U.S. intervention to prevent the spread of socialist dictatorship in the region has a long history (see the cases of Guatemala 1954, Grenada 1983 and Panama in 1989). Nonetheless, President Donald Trump’s ouster of Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro in January 2026 marks a substantial escalation. The incident will have significant consequences for security, trade, energy, diplomacy and cooperation in Central America and the Caribbean.





Geopolitical
Intelligence
Services

visit our website

www.gisreportsonline.com