

Escalation of Hybrid War Against El Salvador: US Senator Compares President Nayib Bukele to Hitler, Covert Support of Terrorist Gangs

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The Hybrid War waged by the US on multiple fronts against El Salvador had escalated by November 2018 as punishment for [establishing relations with China](#), accepting that Taiwan is only a province. Now, within the context of the New Cold War, the Northamerican empire is redoubling efforts to limit the growing sovereignty that El Salvador and its democratically elected government have shown in recent years. In August 2018 the country severed diplomatic relations with Taiwan to establish them with China, and in 2022 followed a [principled neutrality](#) regarding the Russian [Special Military Operation](#) in Ukraine that began in February.

Since then the US has expanded its New Cold War defense mechanism against this Central American country, seeking to limit and obstruct the government of Nayib Bukele through [NGOs](#) and Salvadoran government officials. The pressure exerted on the country by the US Hybrid War continues through threats, [ultimatums](#) and sanctions, despite the fact that “[Chinese-Salvadoran cooperation poses no threat to US interests](#)” as Andrew Korybko pointed out in an article in 2021.



A bitcoin ATM in El Zonte. (By [Karlalhdz](#), licensed under [CC BY-SA 4.0](#))

The Bukele government in 2021 made [Bitcoin](#) legal tender along with the dollar. Soon after that the International Monetary Fund and the [rating agencies](#) — the West’s usual economic warfare institutions — expressed concern about the currency move. Months later, in February 2022, U.S. Senators Bob Menéndez and Jim Risch called for an [investigation](#) into El Salvador’s adoption of Bitcoin. Global South countries becoming sovereign is something that terrifies the US, they prefer that their Centralamerican vassals know their place and their limits so their behavior does not divert from those ends enshrined by their government and their oligarchies. Central America’s role under US rule is to be a servant state, whose purpose is to satisfy the economic and political needs of foreign states and not its own national needs, exemplifying the most basic definition of neocolonialism just as it occurs in other countries of the region.

On July 28, 2022, Democratic Senator Bob Menéndez in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee while [interviewing](#) the candidate for U.S. ambassador to El Salvador made a series of comments that demonstrate the seriousness of the Hybrid War against El Salvador. As if that weren’t enough, Menéndez also compared President Nayid Bukele to Hitler, and accused him of making pacts with organized crime. Here are the most significant excerpts from the recordings of the interview:

Senator Bob Menéndez: In Nicaragua Daniel Ortega has become what he once fought to overthrow a ruthless dictator his disdain for democracy and decency are attest to the international community as we confront the rising global tide of authoritarianism. In El Salvador President Bukele is wielding populism and new digital tools to perpetuate a cult of personality even as he undermines El Salvador’s democratic institutions at an alarming rate. [...] Our [Renacer Act](#) lays out congressional guidance on suspending Nicaragua from the CAFTA (Central America Free Trade Agreement) trade agreement and I know it’s a powerful tool, the same thing with El Salvador. [...] Mr Duncan I was a little surprised at your response to Senator Rubio about president Bukele’s popularity, Hitler was popular, Putin is popular in Russia, it doesn’t mean that because a person is popular in their country that in fact we don’t press extremely hard on violations of human rights and democracy [...] So we have an increasingly challenging situation in El Salvador, one that threatens both the future democracy and the country in bilateral relations with the United States. Over the last two years president Bukele has presided

over a number of alarming setbacks for democratic governments, undermining judicial independence intimidating opposition lawmakers by using security forces to occupy the legislature negotiating political pacts with gangs regularly attacking journalists and media outlets and in addition to these actions Bukele has also repeatedly used his network of Twitter trolls to attract and to attack and threaten not only government critics within El Salvador but also United States officials including my colleague in the house of representatives congresswoman Norma Torres. It's amazing what he is doing directing against a member of the United States congress and former ambassador Gene Manz [...] What other steps do you believe the United States needs to take to prevent further democratic backsliding in El Salvador?

Nominee Duncan: Senator [...] I agree with you there have been a number of developments in El Salvador over the last two years that are concerning. When it comes to the strength and the health of El Salvador's democracy I think we have made judicious use of the various sanctions tools that congress has given us to highlight some of those problems whether it's the removal of the supreme court magistrates in the constitutional chamber, the gang truce that you referred to or other acts of either corruption or acts that tend to undermine democracy and I think we need to continue using those tools appropriately judiciously but we need to keep using them to send the message that El Salvador's best future lies on the path of democracy.

Indeed, there are several elements to unpack from what was said in the committee proceedings, I would like to draw attention to how these US elected officials — as well as their NGO complex — use the words corruption and democracy as a shield and as code to disguise what they are really interested in, which is to neutralize the growing sovereignty of countries in the Global South like El Salvador whose government is increasingly sovereign in seeking to progress in order to strengthen their interests. Senator Menéndez openly threatens both Nicaragua and El Salvador with punishment if they continue their sovereign behavior, insisting that he wants to exclude them from [DR-CAFTA](#). This treaty between the United States and Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua regulates numerous trade issues, and controlled by the U.S. simplifies the [neocolonial administration](#) of the economies of several countries at the same time. This in turn serves the commercial interests of the United States which controls the awarding of contracts from afar. This makes the Central American countries that signed the treaty vulnerable, since it profoundly overexposes their economies to manipulation by US corporate power as their inclusion or exclusion from the treaty is [conditioned](#).

At a July 2022 press conference, Patrick Ventrell, who is the director of Central American Affairs for the US State Department, announced new sanctions against Nayib Bukele's government officials, which were accompanied by sanctions against Honduras and Nicaragua in an expansion of the [Engel List](#).

The [Enhanced US-Northern Triangle Engagement Act](#) was passed in 2020 to sanction actors involved in acts of corruption or attacks on democracy in the Central American region, but it is more than a [list](#), it is a nexus for the information they receive from their different proxy elements within El Salvador, meaning that the list contains their own networks of information and action, this without counting related NGOs that are part of this infrastructure of deception. [According to](#) Ventrell

"It is a very serious list and obviously the sanction of not being able to enter the United

States is something serious for many people, but as I mentioned we have other tools [...] We are always investigating and receiving information, these decisions are based on a lot of information that we obtained through our missions abroad and all the information that the US government has”.

The list facilitates the synchronization of the networks of pro-U.S. officials, lawyers and NGOs that are responsible for gathering it. Understand the Engel List as a [device](#) by which the US can regulate the severity and logistics of Hybrid War [economic sanctions](#). The government of El Salvador, while not a supporter of leftist revolutionary ideologies like Venezuela, Cuba or Nicaragua, is considered somewhat dangerous — though not to the degree of the others mentioned — because the Northamerican empire [fears](#) the economic, political and security [sovereignty](#) of countries in the Global South.

In [September](#) 2021 it included five El Salvadoran judges on its sanctions list for allegedly “undermining democracy”, however the real reason is that they interpreted the Salvadoran Constitution in such a way that President Bukele could run for presidential [reelection](#) after his current term ends in 2024 — a blatant foreign attempt to impact El Salvador’s internal presidential-related processes.

In December 2021, the U.S. [sanctioned](#) two El Salvador officials for alleged negotiations with Salvadoran gangs, for which they offer no tangible evidence in addition to unsubstantiated accusations by U.S. proxies inside the Central American nation. However, this accusation is somewhat ominous because Bukele’s government has done so much to neutralize gang members, pacify regions, and economically rehabilitate areas rescued from the terror of organized crime. Nevertheless, under Bukele’s leadership and his [Territorial Control Plan more than 40,000](#) elements of [organized crime](#) have been [arrested](#), freeing the population from captivity and dismantling the defacto system of drug trafficking and criminal protection money that was paid as a [form of taxation](#). Entire populations of citizens as well as immigrants lived under a second government of criminal overlords. President Bukele declared a state of exception strategically designed to strengthen Democratic Security, while Western media, NGOs and other [US proxies inside](#) and outside the Central American nation have been protecting the gang members from the Salvadoran state in a macabre synchronization of efforts.

The Hybrid War of Terror fueled by terrorist criminal gangs complements the economic Hybrid War of sanctions and [infowar](#) through pro-US NGO networks and US-dominated international [institutions](#) like the [UN](#) and the [OEA](#). The NGOs as well as the governments and the [press](#) of the ‘[Golden Billion](#)’ countries synchronize Hybrid Warfare tools that impact the flow of information and news by confusing the population about what is really going on. This sinister indirect support for criminal factions follows — albeit on a smaller scale — a modus operandi used by the media to cover the Syrian conflict since 2013 to protect terrorist forces ravaging the Arab country. When Russian and Syrian forces managed to push back the US and EU-backed mercenary forces, there was a media spectacle of those same powers humanizing the terrorists so that sanctions against the Assad government would be put in place. Likewise, when the government of El Salvador makes significant advances in Democratic Security, the ‘[Golden Billion](#)’ [press cries](#).

The Territorial Control Plan has been vital to winning the war against the gangs because since its launch it has achieved a sustained reduction in homicides, the state regained control of the prisons, as well as the training of thousands of new elements. Without this work in democratic security it would not have been possible for El Salvador to leave the list

of the most dangerous countries in the world, something it achieved in 2021, nor to have the personnel and equipment necessary to win the war against the gangs and maintain peace with the following phases, making security sustainable in the long term, preserving the peace and productivity lost for so many decades so it is very difficult for the Salvadoran people to deny all the good created with Bukele's Territorial Control Plan along with the neutralization of the gangs, it was achieved in three years what past governments of El Salvador did not achieve in three decades.

Fully realizing that the state of El Salvador is already besieged and infiltrated by various strata of Hybrid War agents and that there is no way to neutralize them by verbally insisting naively that El Salvador is pro-US or pro-capitalism — or that it is not Nicaragua. Since the [global transition to multipolarity](#) accelerated, the US is operating under its New Cold War, in which it divides the world into two camps. For the US-led West it is routine to call for the total surrender of sovereignty and independence to the nations of the region, as a sort of inter-american death cult. The state of El Salvador is already in the process of creating the basis for full Democratic Security in the territory by neutralizing organized criminal elements that were effectively operating as a mercenary army over the population. The Hybrid War will continue to intensify in the foreseeable future, as the sovereignty shown by the Central American country — although quite limited in comparison with sovereign countries of the Global South — clashes directly with the United States prerogatives, which has entered fully into the New Cold War as a defense mechanism against the [global systemic transition](#) to multipolarity.

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