

WATCH: El Salvador President Addresses Soldiers Battling Gang Violence, Has An Ominous Word For America

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Video of [Salvadoran](#) President Nayib Bukele addressing soldiers tasked with battling rampant gang activity went viral on social media as the small Latin American nation seeks to control violent [crime](#).

El Salvador saw a 56.8% decrease in the murder rate last year as the nation's government launched an operation against gangs such as MS-13, which is especially infamous for its brutal killings of women and children. Salvadoran authorities arrested some 64,000 suspected gang members in less than one year.

Bukele previously shared a [video](#) on social media showing 2,000 gang members with shaved heads and no clothes except for identical white shorts being packed into buses by heavily armed prison guards and transported to a newly constructed supermax prison. Bukele, who assumed office in 2019, shared more footage from a [speech](#) he delivered to units of Salvadoran soldiers dressed in battle gear and positioned in a large field. He emphasized the government's role in protecting the innocent.

 pic.twitter.com/Th2Zz8FbpQ

— Nayib Bukele (@nayibbukele) [February 28, 2023](#)

“For eight months, we have been fighting this war against the gangs. And thank God, we are winning. This is a very surprising victory that is nearly within our grasp. Let it be clear that the glory is for God,” Bukele said. “We humans are lucky to be instruments of God, all of us, to bring peace, liberty, and happiness to the Salvadoran people.”

Bukele commended the young soldiers for embracing the virtues that have historically built prosperous nations. “Peace is built with hard work, with sweat, with effort, and with the bravery that you and your brothers in the police have,” he continued. “It is worth risking your life for that purpose that is more important than yourself alone. Values such as bravery, such as courage, such as strength, discipline, patriotism, honor, loyalty, and love for your fellow man.”

The official appeared to contrast the rise of El Salvador amid the crackdown on criminality with the decline of the United States, where major cities are increasingly [characterized](#) by violence. Video of organized smash-and-grab [robberies](#), as well as brazen [murders](#) and attacks on unsuspecting American urbanites, frequently circulate on social media. The international attention toward El

Salvador indeed comes as a [report](#) from the Marshall Project showed that authorities in the United States solved less than 50% of homicides in 2020, the latest metric in a long decline since the 70% of homicides that were solved in the 1980s.

“These are the fundamental values for human society, but these values are increasingly scarce in the world. If you watch the international news, you will see how the most important values for human beings, such as honor, loyalty, bravery, courage, and love for your fellow man, are precisely the values that we are losing with each passing day,” Bukele said. “And that is why you can see how societies that seemed to have won, now are degrading, as they are losing the values that made them great. These values were probably not strong in this land, and were strong in other lands. And that is why those lands grew and became great. But they are losing those values now.”

Though the popularity enjoyed by the Bukele administration has reportedly [remained](#) consistently high, critics have said that his government maintains authoritarian tendencies.

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