



INSECURITY AND DEMOCRACY

Keys to Promoting Effective and Democratic Security Policies

Introduction

In Latin America and the Caribbean, widespread popular discontent stems from chronic problems that impact the daily lives of the population, who expect urgent solutions that democratically elected leaders consistently fail to deliver. This persistent failure of democracies to address issues ranging from corruption to inequality and insecurity has created a fertile environment for populist and authoritarian leaders to justify public policies that violate human rights and undermine the fundamental principles of the rule of law.

Few issues highlight this as clearly as the problem of insecurity, which is a central concern for all governments in Latin America and the Caribbean today. In a region embroiled in constant electoral cycles, leaders—both during campaigns and in office—tend to rely on attractive, simple, and vote-winning responses.

Faced with legitimate demands for urgent and effective solutions, *mano dura* approaches have often prevailed. In its most crude form, there is the case of El Salvador,

where the government has gained immense popularity after effectively reducing homicide and extortion rates, despite the high cost to democracy of the measures adopted. However, despite evidence of the excesses committed during implementation, no other widely recognized model has shown comparable effectiveness. When in fear, citizens are often willing to sacrifice guarantees.

To counter the prevailing narrative in the region that suggests that improving security necessarily comes at the cost of individual rights and democracy, it is essential to work on a democratic security agenda. The deterioration of the region's democracies calls for more democracy, not less.

Any security policy grounded in the rule of law and moving in this direction must take the following four key points into consideration.

1. Measures that combine an effective criminal enforcement policy with the due process of law, to investigate and prosecute those who commit crimes, alongside a social prevention policy aimed at controlling the conditions that drive many people, especially the youth, into delinquency.
2. This combined approach must transcend the traditional ideology-based polarization of public policies in Latin America by articulating punitive policies—typically promoted by center-right or right-wing governments—and social policies—usually proposed by left-wing or center-left governments.
3. Given the complexity of addressing the structural causes of crime, it is necessary to craft long-lasting security policies, which essentially requires some level of consensus among various political players, regardless of who is (or will be) in power and who is (or will be) in opposition.
4. Due to the transnational reach of organized crime, regional coordination and cooperation are also essential to address these problems.

That said, a public policy that includes all the aforementioned elements is of little use if it cannot be effectively communicated to the population. Without this, there can be no citizen buy-in or interest in the issue, nor will there be incentives for politicians, who seek votes to gain and maintain power, to appropriate this agenda as their own—and then implement it. A strategic communication policy is paramount for the success of any security policy and to begin changing the prevailing narrative across the region.

This paper explores potential guidelines for an alternative public policy that addresses insecurity both democratically and effectively. It does not seek to settle the debate, but rather to contribute to an urgently needed discussion to further develop guidelines to strengthen democracy in the region. The conclusions are based on our research and a series of closed workshops conducted by the Peter D. Bell Rule of Law Program of the Inter-American Dialogue in the region, in collaboration with local counterparts. These workshops bring together diverse stakeholders who offer different and complementary perspectives.

In the workshops, participants analyze the problem of insecurity in each country, review the lessons learned from security policies implemented to date, examine the criteria for a security policy grounded in the rule of law, and develop recommendations for its strategic communication to decision-makers and the general public.

Insecurity and Democracy in Latin America

Despite the absence of significant war threats, Latin America and the Caribbean is still the world's most violent region. According to 2021 statistics from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), 34% of the world's homicide victims in 2021 were from the Americas—where the rates in the United States and Canada are very low—and 8 of the 10 countries with the highest homicide rates are in Latin America and the Caribbean. Central America, in particular, has the highest and most volatile homicide rate (UNODC, 2023). According to UNODC (2023) data, around half of the murders in Latin America were caused by score-settling and conflicts between criminal groups. Additionally, according to the 2023 Latinobarómetro, over 30% of Latin Americans were victims of crime over the past twelve months (Latinobarómetro, 2023).

The high levels of violence are primarily attributed to organized crime and drug-trafficking, which are not new problems but are evolving challenges linked to illegal markets, structural issues such as a weak rule of law, inequality, and unemployment. Factors like record levels of drug and firearms production have contributed to about half of the homicides in the region (UNODC, 2023). Countries such as Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Jamaica, and Uruguay, in particular, show an exponential increase in violence closely linked to the rise in organized crime and drug-trafficking (InSight Crime, 2024). Even in Uruguay, a country with stronger democratic institutions, the homicide rate reached 11.2 per 100,000 inhabitants, up from 7.6 per 100,000 in 2013, reflecting an approximate 47% increase (Inter-American Dialogue & Ágora, 2024).

Despite persistently high levels of violence and the worrying rise in organized crime and drug trafficking, overall violence in the region has decreased over the past decade (UNODC, 2023). However, the perception of insecurity has grown in the same period. According to Latinobarómetro (2023), citizen insecurity is the third most concerning issue for Latin Americans (13.2%), following unemployment (13.4%) and the economy (15.2%). The sense of insecurity among Latin Americans is directly correlated with their lack of trust in police forces, the judicial system, public institutions, and the political system. In 2018, 44% of Latin Americans believed the police were involved in criminal activity (Muggah & Aguirre Tobón, 2018), and in 2023, 60.4% and 44.6% reported having little or no trust in the police and armed forces, respectively.

Furthermore, 68.7% also have little or no confidence in the judicial institutions (Latinobarómetro, 2023), and those who feel unsafe trust political institutions 3% less than those who perceive less crime (Muggah & Aguirre Tobón, 2018), with 70.2% of citizens in the region having little or no trust in their governments (Latinobarómetro, 2023). Additionally, criminal violence has an economic cost, with the estimated total financial burden ranging between \$114.5 billion and \$170.4 billion per year, or \$300 per capita (Muggah & Aguirre Tobón, 2018). The increase in the perception of insecurity may also be due to the rise in violent crimes—where the proliferation of firearms and drug-trafficking have escalated armed violence (Solmirano, 2023; Sanjurjo, 2020)—and their public visibility, partly through the widespread dissemination of images and information by mass media, including social media.

The trend towards “mano dura” policies has increased support for non-democratic governments that promise to solve security problems.

The tendency to address this problem through *mano dura* policies has directly impacted democracy in the region. Not only do governments resort to *mano dura* policies when they cannot show short- or medium-term results to the security problem through mechanisms within the realm of the rule of law, but Latin Americans are also willing to support them as long as they restore public order. The percentage of people willing to accept a non-democratic government if it resolves their problems has increased from 46.5% in 2016 to 51% in 2023 (Latinobarómetro, 2023).

According to the latest report from The Economist (2024), Latin America and the Caribbean experienced their eighth consecutive decline in democratic standards in 2023, with the regional average dropping to 5.68, down from 5.79 in 2022. Only just over 1% of the region's population lives in a full democracy.

This trend of increasing democratic disaffection and emerging authoritarian tendencies is having harmful effects on human rights and civil liberties, prompting statements from organizations such as the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR) and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) (2023). In a joint statement, they emphasized that repressive solutions that undermine human rights in favor of security are unsustainable in the long term, as they lead to the weakening of institutions, checks and balances, judicial independence, and democracy. The Inter-American Court of Human Rights (IACtHR) has stated that the use of armed forces to combat citizen insecurity should be limited, since “they are trained to fight against enemies and not to protect and control civilians,” (...) (2007); if they must engage in such tasks, it should be done exceptionally, subordinately, complementarily, and under strict regulation and supervision (IACHR, 2007; IACHR, 2023), ensuring their actions do not result in human rights violations.

Meanwhile, the United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres’ New Agenda for Peace suggests that overly securitized responses can be counterproductive, as they tend to reinforce the very dynamics they seek to eliminate. The long-term repercussions of these responses, such as human rights violations, increased gender inequalities, and the distortion of local economies, can become significant factors driving recruitment into terrorist or armed groups (UN, 2023). Furthermore, citizen security initiatives are rarely evaluated—only about 7% of documented ones are (Muggah & Aguirre Tobón, 2018)—limiting the evidence available to resolve security issues within the framework of the rule of law and democracy.

Punitive policies weaken democracy and human rights, and can perpetuate insecurity.

The Salvadoran Model

For decades, Salvadorans have suffered atrocious violence committed by gangs. Successive governments have been unable or unwilling to ensure citizens’ day-to-day security. Against this backdrop, the popularity of President

Nayib Bukele comes at no surprise, given the significant reduction in homicide and extortion rates obtained by his administration. However, neither Bukele nor his supporters, at home or abroad, are willing to seriously debate the cost of these policies, their long-term sustainability, or the consequences of dismantling democratic institutions in the country.

On March 27, 2022, the Salvadoran government adopted a state of emergency, initially for 30 days, to address a surge in gang violence. The state of emergency has been extended several times and remains in effect. Under this emergency regime, 79,211 people had been detained as of April 2024, according to official figures (Cristosal, 2024).

The measures adopted by the government have successfully reduced extortion and homicide rates, directly impacting the quality of life for citizens, who can now move more freely in parks, beaches, and run businesses without fear of extortion by criminal gangs. Homicides, which had been progressively decreasing since 2015, have further declined, reaching a rate of 2.4 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants in 2023, according to official figures (El Salvador National Civil Police, 2024). While changes in the methods of recording homicides hinder an exact determination of the true extent of the decline, there is little doubt that the homicide rate in El Salvador—formerly among the highest globally—has significantly decreased.

However, the security policies adopted by Bukele’s government have resulted in widespread human rights violations. Many Salvadorans with no gang ties have been arbitrarily detained, especially in low-income communities. According to human rights organizations, some detainees have been tortured, at least 265 have died in custody under circumstances that were not properly investigated, and thousands have been subjected to abusive criminal proceedings without due process and have remained incommunicado (Cristosal, 2024). Authorities have inflicted immense suffering by refusing to provide information about the detainees’ whereabouts to their families, in what amount to enforced disappearances under international law (Cristosal & Human Rights Watch, 2022).

Bukele has advanced this agenda due to two central factors. First, he swiftly dismantled democratic institutions upon taking office in 2019, including the co-opting of the Supreme Court and the replacement of the Attorney General with an ally. This concentration of power has allowed him to commit all sorts of abuses without any internal checks. In fact, at the 2023 UN General Assembly, Bukele claimed that he could not have implemented these

security policies with the previous court and attorney general (CNN en Español, 2023).

The second factor has been his immense popularity. According to a 2024 AS/COA report, Bukele is the most popular president in Latin America, with an 88% approval rating (Harrison & Vilcarino, 2024).

Data from the AmericasBarometer indicates that satisfaction with democracy in El Salvador has increased under Bukele's administration, rising from 58.6% in 2018/19 (Zechmeister & Lupu, 2019) to 67% in 2023 (Lupu et al., 2023). His popularity is due to both the security results and the massive investment in strategic communication that has allowed him to sell a model highlighting achievements and obscuring the adverse impacts these measures have had on human rights, the rule of law, and democracy in the country

With this popularity and control over the judiciary, Bukele was able to run for reelection, despite several constitutional clauses prohibiting it. There were serious questions about measures taken before the elections that facilitated the incumbent party's legislative victory in 2024, as well as criticisms of how the results were announced. Nevertheless, Bukele was reelected by a wide margin. He won 84.6% of the vote, with a difference of more than 78 points over the other candidates, and his party, Nuevas Ideas, secured 54 of the 60 available seats in the Legislative Assembly.

El Salvador's model has reduced violence but at a high cost to the rule of law and democracy.

A PUBLIC SECURITY POLICY WITH A DUAL APPROACH

In all the workshops conducted by the Inter-American Dialogue to date, and in interviews with subject matter experts, there has been a consensus on the need for a **dual approach to public security combining effective investigation and criminal punishment measures, ensuring due process, with social policies aimed at preventing crime and promoting social inclusion.** These latter measures include crime prevention programs, access to education, job opportunities, and community development, with a focus on vulnerable areas and populations, to address the structural causes of crime. Such policies require effective coordination among various public offices, which should be prioritized by the government, and benefit from the support of the citizenry and key sectors of society, such as the business community.

The following analysis examines three examples where this combination of factors successfully reduced insecurity levels providing an overview of the policies implemented at the national level in Guatemala, and the subnational levels in São Paulo and Bogotá.* **While no model is flawless or applicable across the board, these examples illustrate that enhancing security conditions does not require the sacrifice of democratic guarantees, and present measures that potentially be explored for other jurisdictions.**

GUATEMALA

Guatemala was once considered among the region's most violent countries due to high homicide rates in the late 1990s and early 2000s, though its violence levels have been relatively lower than those of El Salvador and Honduras. Guatemala hit its highest homicide rates in the early 2010s, but since then, there has been a progressive reduction in lethal violence. In 2022 and 2023, homicide rates hit historic lows of 17.30 and 16.70 per 100,000 inhabitants, respectively. The AmericasBarometer survey also showed a slight reduction in the perception of insecurity in 2023, with 41.3% of people feeling "somewhat unsafe" or "very unsafe," compared to 44% in 2021 (Lupu et al., 2023).

While there were improvements in reducing lethal violence, issues such as violence against women, disappearances, extortion, drug-trafficking in border areas and regions with weak state presence, and organized crime remain. There is a general consensus on the key factors driving the reduction in homicide rates:

- ▶ **Institutional Strengthening:** Increased training, equipment, and use of technology in judicial and law-enforcement institutions.

* The Guatemala section is based on work conducted by the Inter-American Dialogue and Cristosal, with conclusions presented in a publication by both organizations, cited in the bibliography. Sources for the São Paulo and Bogotá cases are listed in the bibliography section at the end of this document.

- ▶ **Strategic Criminal Prosecution (2009-2018):** The traditional case-by-case approach was replaced with **investigations targeting criminal phenomena and structures**. This was complemented by the transfer of some capabilities from the International Commission against Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG) to the Public Prosecutor's Office and the strengthening of criminal investigation police.
- ▶ **Social Policy Initiatives:** Programs like "Open Schools" had a positive and lasting impact.

On issues such as homicides, both the Public Prosecutor's Office and the National Civil Police of Guatemala have maintained strategic investigation practices, remaining largely unaffected by the country's political divide, despite the weakening of capacities in other areas, such as the dismantling of the Special Prosecutor's Office against Impunity (FECI) and the persecution of justice operators who investigated sensitive crimes, many of whom have now been criminally prosecuted or forced into exile. While technical cooperation has supported the investigations, it is crucial to further develop and transfer capabilities to national authorities through international cooperation and technical assistance frameworks. Additionally, it is worth looking into the feasibility of applying this approach to the investigation of other violent crimes affecting Guatemalan society.

The following section describes the impacts of reforms and social programs:

- ▶ **The National Commission for Police Reform** (2009-2011) and the improvements in **police personnel training, increased budget**, and the **purging of "social cleansing" squads** were fundamental in restoring trust and improving the performance of the National Civil Police.
- ▶ Another good practice consisted in the **implementation of an organized leadership structure** such as the one envisioned by the Charter Law of the National Security System, under the orbit of the Ministry of the Interior and with civil society participation. This structure has enabled effective coordination among all law-enforcement institutions and improved their strategic analysis capabilities regarding the security context.
- ▶ **The "Open Schools" Program**, established during Álvaro Colom's administration (2008-2012), aimed to provide a safe and nurturing space for the overall development of children, youth, and adults from at-risk communities on weekends. It extended the use of school facilities for free extracurricular activities, such as arts, sports, and personal development, increasing student retention in the educational system. This program was implemented in 220 schools and benefited approximately 100,000 people. It positively impacted the youth and communities, preventing the youth from being recruited into gangs and engaging into other illegal activities.

Among the challenges and limitations, it is important to note that Guatemala has repeatedly implemented **states of emergency** since the Peace Accords of 1996, partly to address security conditions. Unlike strategic criminal prosecution, the police reforms or the "Open Schools" program, these measures only had a **short-term effect on crime** and resulted in consequences such as **abuses of power and human rights violations** (Inter-American Dialogue & Cristosal, 2024).

SÃO PAULO

The case of São Paulo showcases a remarkable reduction in homicide rates since the early 2000s. After reaching a peak of 52.2 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants in 2000, the rate dropped to 6.1 in 2018. This decrease has been sustained over time. According to the Brazilian Public Security Forum (2024), between 2022 and 2023, both the number of victims and the number of criminal acts resulting in homicide in São Paulo decreased by 10.4%. Most public policy changes to improve security and reduce homicides were introduced during Covas' administration (1995-2001). However, they were further strengthened by Alckmin's government (2001-2005), another member of the Brazilian Social Democracy Party, like Covas.

There is a general consensus on the key factors that have contributed to the reduction in homicide rates:

- ▶ The essential role of the **Homicide and Individual Protection Department (DHPP)**: This department is part of the civil police and is responsible for investigating homicides where the perpetrator is unknown. In 2001, a plan was introduced to investigate homicides that included significant investment in promoting and facilitating the identification and incarceration of repeat offenders. As a result, the number of incarcerated murderers increased by 700%, and case resolution rates reached 65% in 2005, while the unit responsible for mass murders and multiple homicides achieved a 95% resolution rate in 2003.
- ▶ **Investments in Information Systems**: These systems were implemented to georeference and track the incidence of crimes and homicides in different areas of the State. This has enabled a more efficient allocation of resources and personnel, sending more officers to high-crime areas and identifying targeted responses to specific crimes in each location.

In turn, **social and community programs**, still in effect today, were implemented to help vulnerable youth stay away from crime:

- ▶ **"Young Apprentice" Program**: Launched in 2000, this program provides theoretical training for adolescents aged 14 to 17 from vulnerable backgrounds to prepare them for entry into the labor market. Subsequently, they are assigned a paid job where they can apply the knowledge acquired during the first stage of the program.
- ▶ **"Young Worker"/"Young Citizen" Program**: For those over 17 years old, this program provides scholarships and guidance for entering the labor market.
- ▶ **Community policing model**: Introduced in 1997, this model sought not only to improve police services to reduce crime but also to transform the police into an organization dedicated to protecting citizens' rights and dignity. Based on the experience of countries like the United States, Canada, England, and Japan's KOBAN program, officers were tasked with partnering with community groups and non-governmental organizations to diagnose and address security-related problems. The model was based on the book *Community Policing: How to Get Started* by Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux, which was translated in Rio de Janeiro by the State's military police.

Finally, between 1999 and 2004, several measures were adopted to confiscate a large number of firearms, which marked a milestone in São Paulo's history, coinciding with the initial drop in homicide rates. Approximately 67% of homicides in São Paulo were committed with firearms. Several hurdles and laws were established to restrict civilians' access to firearms, and voluntary weapon surrender programs were organized for their destruction. These regulations included:

- ▶ **Law 9.437 (1997)** by which illegal possession of firearms was classified as a crime, previously considered a minor offense, making it harder to obtain firearms.
- ▶ **The Disarmament Statute (2003)**, by which illegal firearm possession became a non-bailable crime.

Simultaneously, efforts were made to increase the efficiency of the military police in locating illegal firearms among residents of high-violence neighborhoods, increasing the risk of imprisonment for carrying firearms on the streets. As a result, young people from the outskirts were discouraged from doing so.

Several of these measures continue to be applied due to their positive results, although their continuity is in doubt with the recent change in state government. The recent increase in deaths committed by the military police and internal conflicts within the First Command of the Capital (PCC), an organized crime group, could lead to a significant increase in violence, requiring effective measures to address this new scenario.

BOGOTÁ

Bogotá's approach to combating homicides has gained recognition both nationally and internationally for having reduced its homicide rate by 65%. The United Nations, for example, has promoted Bogota's model to neighboring countries and those in Central America. The successes of these security reforms have not been short-lived: in 2022, the city achieved its lowest homicide rate since 1984. However, in 2023, these numbers increased by 5.3% compared to 2022, reaching 13.4 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants.

The significant drop in homicides in Bogotá can be attributed to policies and programs focused on civic culture, the recovery of degraded areas and public spaces, and the institutionalization of security management.

This section evaluates the period from 1995 to 2003, during which the model known as the "**Mockus and Peñalosa**" model (named after the former mayors) was introduced.

- ▶ **Focus on civic culture:** Disarmament and alcohol consumption awareness programs were introduced, as in São Paulo, since most murders were committed with firearms and in contexts where one of the parties was under the influence.
- ▶ **Continuity and strengthening:** Despite their affiliation to different political parties, Enrique Peñalosa continued and strengthened the public policies implemented by Mockus.

Key measures implemented include, among others:

▶ **Firearm control:**

- Prohibition of carrying firearms in public spaces on weekends.
- Restriction on retail alcohol sales in public establishments.
- Campaigns in universities and high schools on the importance of self-moderation.

▶ **Recovery of degraded areas:**

- Broken windows theory: Based on the idea that spaces with visible signs of neglect or abandonment can incite criminal behavior, under the logic that “if a broken window is left unrepaired, all windows will soon be broken” (Eskibel, 2017).
- Projects to control public spaces in the city center and recover the Cartucho and San Victorino areas.

▶ **Social assistance for displaced populations and young people** with problematic drug use.

▶ **Creation of Permanent Justice Units**, which were temporary detention centers where offenders were held for 48 hours while officials initiated formal proceedings against them. These units effectively served as a deterrent by holding underage offenders, intoxicated individuals, and other offenders for 48 hours.

As to the institutional reforms, the Security Councils were consolidated, and police conduct was monitored and evaluated through the Unified Information System on Violence and Crime, inspired by the New York system. Significant resources were allocated to renew police transportation and communication equipment. During this period, the total number of people arrested for various crimes increased by 324%, from 14,473 in 1994 to 61,436 in 2002.

Strategic Communication

In a context of constant electoral cycles, the public debate often centers on results. The narrative of *mano dura* security policies has gained popular recognition, particularly due to the strategic communication investment by the Salvadoran government, which promotes its security model as effective and exportable. Although this may not be actually the case, it is hard to find a democratic security narrative as widely accepted by the public throughout the region.

In addition to being well-designed and implemented, any potential security policy needs to be underpinned by an effective communication strategy to influence public debate and build social awareness and support. Despite the existence of alternative models, particularly at the subnational level, a rhetoric persists that promotes harsher penalties or even drastic measures such as the death penalty. To prevent this narrative from prevailing and undermining confidence in effective and democratic security policies, governments committed to solving societal issues democratically should adopt measures such as:

- ▶ **Implementing a strategic communication policy:** With adequate funding, this policy should include monitoring and tracking of surveys, media, and social media to understand and provide a timely response to the population's main concerns. This includes not only monitoring the impact of campaigns already implemented but also diagnosing social concerns and perceptions in advance. In this regard, timely communication plays a key role in shifting public debate—alternatively, the narrative is shaped by whoever acts first (in this case, the *mano dura* approach).
- ▶ **Innovating in information dissemination:** Use new technologies and social media to spread information more widely and reach diverse audiences, especially

young people. This requires new formats, content, platforms, and language different from traditional ones, recognizing the potential of new platforms and the risks associated to the protection of other rights. Campaigns in this area should be bidirectional, involving citizens actively; in other words, the public should not merely receive information. This can be achieved through specific activities and messages appealing to emotions rather than the mere use of hard data.

- ▶ **Demonstrating the effectiveness of security policies:** The narrative should emphasize the effectiveness of security policies over rhetoric. Effective communication must go beyond selling promises or ideas about what a security policy under the rule of law might look like; it should showcase the results of specific policies. Highlighting evidence of successful, healthier, and more effective alternative models is essential, especially when aligned with societal priorities. For example, if there is widespread public support for an education-related policy, this can serve as an effective entry point to spotlight how such policies have positively impacted public security.
- ▶ **Narrating individual impact stories:** Presenting statistics alone is insufficient; it is crucial to share stories of individuals who have benefited from democratic alternatives that effectively combat insecurity.
- ▶ **Raising awareness about the harm caused by *mano dura* policies and corruption:** Increase awareness of the risks of abuse and lack of recourse within a corrupt system. This includes educating those who believe that *mano dura* policies benefit them, to foster active participation in preventing and reporting abuses and corruption. The message should convey that while supporting policies that seem beneficial when one is part of the majority enjoying security, such policies can be detrimental when one becomes part of the minority suffering abuses and lacking support.

Effectively communicating security policies is key for building public support and countering the *mano dura* narrative.

CONCLUSION

Adopting effective public security measures within the framework of the rule of law serves two fundamental purposes. First, it addresses a primary concern of the public: our right to security and the state's obligation to guarantee it. Second, operating within the rule of law strengthens democratic institutions—currently under threat—and helps counter the democratic decline in the region.

This underscores that effective public security models do not rely on *mano dura* or rights-violating policies. Rather, these models can inform the development of effective, democratic public security proposals, provided they are customized to address specific security challenges, adapted to local conditions, and supported by a robust strategic communication plan.

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