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Order or chaos? The fight against transnational organized crime in El Salvador in 2019-2025

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This article aims at exploring the methods used by the Republic of El Salvador to suppress transnational organized crime at the present stage. To achieve that, the author has scrutinized Nayib Bukele's anti-criminal policy, which fundamentally altered the state's socio-political climate in an unprecedented way. Focusing on the debate around balancing national security and human rights, the author examines why Salvadorian citizens express trust in their leader despite endorsing restrictions on democratic freedoms. The research conducts a comparative analysis with the ongoing migration crisis at the US-Mexican border. Central to this comparison is the stance of Nayib Bukele, who expressed readiness to receive persons with criminal records deported from the United States. This development carries the potential for serious consequences for the international criminal justice system. In conclusion, the author addresses the study's central question: can the negative effects of the president's 'punitive populism', a model that achieved societal order while exacerbating legal chaos, be effectively mitigated?