

# The need for international solidarity: the case of Latin American democracies

## A necessidade de solidariedade internacional: o caso das democracias latino-americanas

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### 1 INTRODUCTION

If, on one hand, there is interference by countries over others, exasperating autocratic national governments, giving rise to international crises, political conflicts, and wars; on the other, it is known that international relations can aid democratic processes, especially in those Latin America “fragile democracies,” as continue to be observed nowadays. In these scenarios, acts of international solidarity have the power to promote human rights, social justice, and, thus, the dignity of citizens. Therefore, this problem calls for an efficient international community to boost relations between States through international organizations to promote peace and avoid conflicts. The Organization of American States (OAS) is one of these organizations focused on strengthening these democracies that increasingly tend to deteriorate, inciting violence among their populations and disrespecting human dignity. This article aims, therefore, to reflect on concepts intrinsic to democracy such as human rights, citizenship, dignity, and governance, among others, while, at the same time, presenting empirical cases of countries with great

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social turmoil in these times of violated human rights, which are seen on international media news and socialized with the entire globalized society in this digital era.

With that, this article projects the possibility of new governance that is capable of treating societies with great inequalities in the global public space. Such inequalities lead to a lack of control of all kinds, particularly in the so-called 'global south', which is characterized by being dominated by a greater power, namely the "global north." This new governance is a possible utopia, as Enrique Dussel points out: the utopia of a fairer society where people are treated with dignity. In the appendices, we attempt to provide a brief analysis of current events occurring in Venezuela, El Salvador, and Ecuador. Since these issues are continually happening, the analyses have been based on reviews of newspaper articles, as scholarly research on the most recent events has not yet been completed.

## 2 A DISCUSSION ON DEMOCRACY

To better understand the concept of democracy and its multiple meanings hereby utilized, the following authors were selected. Starting with the philosopher Enrique Dussel, proposed the construction of a new type of national State considering "[...] a participatory democracy under the control of the people over the exercise of delegated power [...] so that the citizen's demands are satisfied." (CASELAS, 2009, p. 79).

Innerarity (2020), in turn, emphasizes that:

Democracy has lived most of its past glories; now it must survive, reformulating its function in the current world and the future [...] What has been broken today is the trust that governments want or can face the risks of existence in an effective and egalitarian manner [...]. What most weakens our democratic institutions is their mutilation, or reductionism, their simplification. (INNERARITY, 2020, p. 413)

Innerarity's approach leads us to think about the concept of a complex democracy, which is understood as a process capable of serving an equally complex society based on increasingly expansive globalization and knowledge.

The articulation of greater complexity can and must be compatible with the need to make decision modes intelligible so that respect for the complexity of the world should not mean renouncing the pretensions of political

configuration [...] therefore, it is necessary to think about the forms of government in the era of networks and organized complexity; the more rustic forms of government that were appropriate for relatively simple societies must be more sophisticated and complex for the 21st-century society. (ibidem, 2020, p. 727)

This idea of democracy is combined with government practices that are not open to the perspective of complexity. Edgar Morin has been one of the pioneers in researching the issue of complexity, which he called the *Epistemology of Complex Thought and Complexity Sciences*. It turns out that, while science has changed a good portion of its paradigms, the central concepts of political theory have not carried out the corresponding transformation and the use of the same means that served delimited spaces and slow times. When spaces are deterritorialized and instantaneity is present in the communication of social subjects, that is, old instruments versus new realities, which constitutes a conceptual and practical gap simultaneously. Hence, there is the question: Can democracy survive the complexity of climate change, artificial intelligence, algorithms, and financial products, or do we have to conclude that this complexity is a threat to democracy? The answer is complex, and a few points to consider include: a) our idea of democracy and our government practices are not open to the perspective of complexity; b) the need for greater participation in a more direct deliberative democracy; c) we need to think about a more complete and complex concept of democracy, which takes into account globalization within societies, with its multiple categories, from physical, knowledge, wisdom, and collective intelligence societies.

In the current circumstances of social complexity, it is necessary to think about forms of government in the era of networks and organized complexity. It is essential to know how to transform information into knowledge, manage ignorance, anticipate risks, especially those arising from artificial intelligence (AI), consider the need for environmental sustainability, and plan the future of societies so that the current circumstances of social complexity can be met. In this sense, the fundamental teaching of complex and non-linear thinking for politics is that not every action follows a safe and predictable result in societies. According to Rothstein and Innerarity (2020), “any intervention project in these same societies will have to learn to develop more reflective and subtle strategies, managing the growing uncertainty regarding the effectiveness of their interventions” (p. 1000). This uncertainty is also part of the new steps of science, as its purpose is to understand new realities, which in turn are societies of increasing uncertainty, since the era of certainties is behind us, both in science and in society.

In this sense and per Sassen (2010), current societies have little centrality due to the formation of networks that multiply interdependent relationships between all citizens, both from a social and spatial point of view, which projects a new geography: that of centrality and marginality. In turn, Saramago (2013), in the chapter entitled “Truth and Democratic Illusion,” also contributes to the notion of democracy in this article. In his words, Saramago argues that

Any elementary manual on Political Law would inform us that democracy is an internal organization of the State in which the origin and exercise of political power are up to the people, an organization in which the governed govern through their representatives; thus, being assured, I would add the said manual, intercommunication and symbiosis between rulers and ruled, within the framework of a rule of law (p. 60).

He continues arguing that:

The fact that democracy can be defined according to the formulas mentioned above, or others equally equivalent in precision and rigor, does not mean that as a real and effective democracy, we have to characterize it in all cases and circumstances just because it is still possible, when applicable, to rediscover and identify, in all of its institutional bodies and structures, some or all of the traits that are made explicit or implicit in the aforementioned definitions (ibidem p. 61).

It involves reflecting on the various definitions of democracy and its concreteness, that is, democratic action itself. In this sense, the author asks:

To what extent can they give us guarantees of a truly democratic action [...] when taking advantage of the institutional legitimacy that came from the popular election, they try to divert our attention [...] from the fact that in the very same process of voting already were present, and in conflict, on the one hand, the expression of a political option represented materially by the vote and, on the other hand, the involuntary demonstration of a civic abdication in most cases without awareness of itself? (SARAMAGO, 2013, p. 62).

With this, we intend to show that, coinciding with Saramago's literary expression but lacking his verve, the vote, an essential condition of democracy, does not represent in itself the system that calls itself democratic since politicians have increasingly used the hope of deluded voters turning into, as the author states, reductive democracies, that is "a particular authoritarian body under general democratic guises." In other words, in reality, we have no shortage of examples of autocracy in the time/space in which we are situated. In the era of what Santos (2000) called "perverse globalization," the

Competitiveness, suggested by production and consumption, is the source of a new totalitarianism, more easily accepted thanks to the confusion of spirits that is taking place. The production, at the very basis of social life, of structural violence, easily visible in the ways of acting of the State, companies, and individuals, has the same origins. [...] There is a real setback regarding the notion of public good and solidarity, which is emblematic of the shrinking of the social and political functions of the State with the expansion of poverty and the growing harm to sovereignty, while the political role is expanding of companies in regulating social life. (ibidem, p. 37–38).

### 3 DIGNITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Habermas (2012), in a chapter dedicated to Human Dignity, "The Concept of Human Dignity and the Realistic Utopia of Human Rights", refers to Article 1. of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the United Nations on December 10, 1948, which contains the premise that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights, from which he deconstructed it through the various observations he makes about its real relevance. In his reflections on the links between the concepts of human dignity and human rights, he states that the invocation of human rights is generated by the indignation of those offended by the violation of their human dignity, thus suggesting that "human dignity" is not a posteriori classifier expression but rather the moral "source" from which the contents of all fundamental rights are fed. Habermas (2012) emphasizes that:

The experience of disrespect for human dignity has a revealing function – for example, in the face of unbearable social living conditions and the marginalization of impoverished social classes; given the

unequal treatment of women and men in the workplace; discrimination against foreigners, cultural, linguistic, and racial minorities [...]; or in the face of the brutal deportation of illegal immigrants and asylum seekers. (HABERMAS, 2012, p.33–34)

After 200 years of democracy in modern constitutional history, it is possible to assume, according to Habermas, that human dignity constitutes the “portal” through which the egalitarian and universalist content of morality is imported into law. Following his reflections, he uses Kant’s ideas to address the issue of morality and encourages us to think about how his influence can be seen today, 300 years after his birth. In this sense and considering the scenario of the recent crisis of democracy in the world and Latin America in particular, Pascoal (2024) has stated the following on Kant’s thought:

Kant – a beam of light in dark times: Despite the time that separates the era in which he lived from the current one, the vitality of his thought and the perception of how much his ideas can inspire the search for ways out of the crisis that has become the present world are quite dark. The current world is going through a phase of dangerous turbulence: the growth of authoritarianism, worship of populist leaders of various shades, attachment to prejudices that time should have buried, erosion of the international order based on respect for the autonomy of States, growing belligerence between States, ‘witch hunts’ and intolerance on a cultural level that are incompatible with the level of civilization achieved by humanity”, which is what seems to be possible to glimpse in these times, in these countries of our region and not only in them. (PASCOAL, 2024, 4, p.A6)

With this argument, already emphasized by Habermas (2012), we move on to the issue of the public sphere, a concept so well defined by him, to analyze what is happening today in the so-called “knowledge societies,” where technologies are capable of obstructing the tenuous line that separates the public from the private and makes all citizens open and exposed to society in general, with serious risks to the privacy necessary for citizens, as well as its consequences for societies. Many of these consequences can also lead to social chaos due to the lack of truth, which is a disruptive factor in today’s societies.

Professor Virgílio Almeida, coordinator of the Oscar Sala Chair<sup>1</sup> at the Institute of Advanced Studies at the University of São Paulo - Brazil (IEA/USP) highlights the ethical and social risks linked to the veracity of information and the need for the public sphere to know how to deal with the transmission of information to citizens when it comes to interaction between humans and algorithms. That is, to address its influence in democratic theories and political sciences on the ability to listen to the citizens of contemporary societies.

Upon listing possible impacts and challenges of technologies and their long-term consequences on public institutions and observing the possibility of hardening private sources of information, rarely subjected to political questioning, Almeida, Mendonça, Filgueiras (2023) state:

We are interested, however, in drawing attention to the fact that many of them are crossed by the same macro-process of transformation of what social scientists call the public sphere [...] The public sphere is essential to democracy and is anchored in communication ecosystems that are historically transformed, but that depends on our ability to produce meaning collectively, and that refers to a common political ground. Generative Artificial Intelligence technologies affect the communication ecosystem, promoting restructuring that fuels challenges posed to democracies. One of these important challenges has to do with the ability of citizens to be heard by the political community (ALMEIDA, MENDONÇA, FILGUEIRAS, 2023, s/p.).

## 4 GLOBALIZATION AND LATIN AMERICA

Santos (2000), when reflecting about the globalization process, pointed out that it can be perceived as perverse when it creates and perpetuates inequalities between nations. The new “mass” technological frontier with the emergence of artificial intelligence (AI) as one of the main drivers of this phase of the globalized economy represents a new front in the battle against inequality because it still represents what we here denominate of technological coloniality, a risk already pointed out by Santos in the early 2000s. Caution is necessary, as, instead of being an equalizer, AI can serve as yet another mechanism of domination, exacerbating existing disparities from both economic and political points.

Another likely risk is that Latin America’s historic economic challenges may deepen further in light of AI. The possibility of massive automation of industrial processes and the integration of AI in various spheres of society

can potentially eliminate low-skilled jobs, increase unemployment, and further accentuate internal and global social inequality. On the political side, Shoshana Zuboff (2021), Professor Emeritus at Harvard, warns that AI can also be used as a tool of social and political control. Authoritarian or authoritarian-friendly governments can employ AI to monitor citizens, suppress dissent, and manipulate information, thereby undermining civil and political rights. Lack of adequate regulation and accountability mechanisms may allow misuse of IA to restrict freedom of expression and political participation, significantly compromising the implementation of democracy. Hence, a new approach that guarantees citizens' participation and political representation is essential to mitigate the effects of digital inequality and the unregulated advance of AI. This involves creating public policies that promote equal access and participation in technology and digital education and regulations to protect individual and collective rights in the digital environment.

Thus, in the context of what can be called the "crisis of democracy" in Latin America and the world, we highlight the following points:

1. Democracy must be understood as a process.
2. Globalization and complex societies are the references for contemporary democracies.
3. The interactions and the configuration of these interactions in the political and election systems of the countries are of utmost importance.
4. It is necessary to make government decision-making intelligible so that citizens can exercise surveillance and control functions that affect them
5. Democratic representation presupposes citizenship capable of understanding, judging, and controlling the political system.
6. The weakening of democratic institutions is linked to their manipulation, or reductionism, to their simplification, which is incompatible with today's complex societies.
7. Only a complex democracy can be considered a complete democracy
8. The analysis of complexity is interested in knowing how change propagates through interconnected behaviors, which occurs in modern communication networks, where all participants are potentially united with each other, and this changes the way democracy needs to be understood.

9. The network architecture facilitates unlimited connectivity and extension, favoring terminations in front of the center.
10. The potential for innovation provided by the internet makes it impossible to control or limit these connections and their collaborative nature, and this, therefore, expands public space.
11. It is necessary to design government institutions for this era of social/virtual networks; and,
12. Highlight that effective governance in the 21st century requires organized collaboration and that institutional intelligence today means the ability to generate collective intelligence, which is a genuinely public task.
13. The Internet has favored a rapprochement between peers, the formation of watertight behaviors, including sectarian ones, and uniform opinion spaces, which make up the classic information monopolies.
14. Disintermediation produces an information overload, as the available data increases, but is not compensated with a corresponding capacity to understand them and transform them into knowledge, which puts democracy at risk, or the so-called “crisis of democracy,” which in the case of Latin America can be mentioned in some of the countries with very threatened democracies, such as Ecuador, El Salvador and Venezuela, which recently went through presidential elections and are going through absolutely serious situations about the security of their citizens, presented below.

## 5 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Starting from the examples of the countries mentioned above, we will weave the considerations that we believe are capable of relating the ideas presented in the text to show that human dignity, human rights, and self-declared democracies themselves, in reality, do not correspond to the facts that can be seen in the sample selected to compose this work, as well as evoke the need for international bodies representing the mission of contributing to peace in the world, in the political/diplomatic context, to be supportive of citizens and exercise their role effectively so that these democracies established there, in the context of Latin America, do not succumb, as appears to be happening.

## **APPENDIX A. Latin American contemporary democracies analysis**

The appendices that follow attempt to provide a brief analysis of current events occurring in Ecuador, El Salvador, and Venezuela. Since these issues are continually changing, the analyses have been based on reviews of newspaper articles, as scholarly research on the most recent events has not yet been completed.

### **APPENDIX A.1. Ecuador**

In a referendum held by President Daniel Noboa, on April 21, 2024, Ecuadorians went to the polls to demonstrate in a popular consultation on 11 issues related to the security area, the economy, commercial issues, employment contracts, and the possible extradition of Ecuadorians, an important point for the issue of organized crime.

The country, which recorded around 8,000 violent deaths in 2023, with a homicide rate of 44.5 per 100,000 inhabitants – the highest in Latin America, is suffering a serious public security crisis as well as a major energy crisis, with energy rationing of up to 5 hours a day and suspension of working hours on April 18th and 19th. According to statements by President Noboa, at the time, Ecuadorians demanded urgent reforms to guarantee security, a process that: “can only continue and be maintained if we give the police and armed forces the clear and firm support that we are proposing in popular consultation.”.

Ecuadorians needed to answer whether or not they agreed with the increase in penalties in cases of terrorism, organized crime, contract killings, trafficking in human beings, or arms trafficking, among others, such as extraditing some of their compatriots for crimes defined in the Ecuadorian legislation. To do this, the country would have to reform its entire Organic Penal Code, which for Jorge Nuñez – co-director of the Ecuador Prison Observatory and assistant professor at the University of Amsterdam – is a mistaken measure: “We know that increasing sentences does not necessarily solve or reduce the crime” (PAÚL, 2024)

**Image 01:** The popular consultation seeks to allow the military to support the police without the need to declare states of exception.



Source: Getty Images

The result of the referendum was the approval of nine of the eleven questions asked by Daniel Noboa's government, which managed to approve the extradition of the country's citizens and the adoption of harsher penalties against organized crime. The 'Yes' received 60% to 73% of the valid votes. The 'No' prevailed on questions about the reestablishment of working hours (69%) and the recognition of international arbitration for the resolution of commercial disputes (65%), according to the director of the National Electoral Council (CNE) – Diana Atamaint. Regarding permission for additional support from the Armed Forces to the police in combating organized crime, 'Yes' = 73%; Allow extradition – 65%, among other specific results. ( [CartaCapital.com.br](https://www.cartacapital.com.br) –AFP – 22/04/2024).

**Image 02:** Ecuador is experiencing a serious public security crisis. In the photo, prisoners in custody in a prison in the province of Cotopaxi



**Source:** Getty Images

On October 15, 2023, voters returned to the polls to choose, in a second round, the country's new president, whose dispute is between Luiza González and Daniel Noboa. This dispute was marked by the murder of candidate Fernando Villavicencio on August 9, during the electoral campaign. (CNN - REUTERS – 12/10/2023).

**Image 03:** Military personnel accompany the coffin of Fernando Villavicencio, killed after a political rally in Ecuador



**Source:** Photo: Henry Romero/Reuters

#### Images 04: President Daniel Noboa visits the prison



Source: Santiago Arcos /Reuters

Daniel Noboa, a 35-year-old millionaire, is elected president of Ecuador, with 52% of the votes in an election marked by historic violence, which had international repercussions. (G1 – Mundo, 10/15/2023).

“Violence does not relent, and Ecuador renews a state of emergency.” (G1 – Mundo, 10/15/2023). - Thus, seven months after being elected, President Noboa declared a new state of emergency in 7 of the country’s 24 provinces. According to the measure announced by the government, the constitutional guarantees of Ecuadorians were suspended for 60 days, as well as the right to the inviolability of home and correspondence.

In January, the escape of a criminal leader from a prison provoked a violent attack by drug trafficking groups that led to prison riots, attacks on the press, car bomb explosions, temporary detention of prison officers and police officers, and around 20 deaths [...] According to Noboa, Wednesday’s decree is part of a ‘second stage of the war’ against drugs and organized crime. Ecuador, located between Colombia and Peru – the world’s largest cocaine producers -, years ago went from being an island of peace to becoming a strategic point and the target of a violent dispute between groups of drug traffickers. (ESTADÃO, 2024, s/p.).

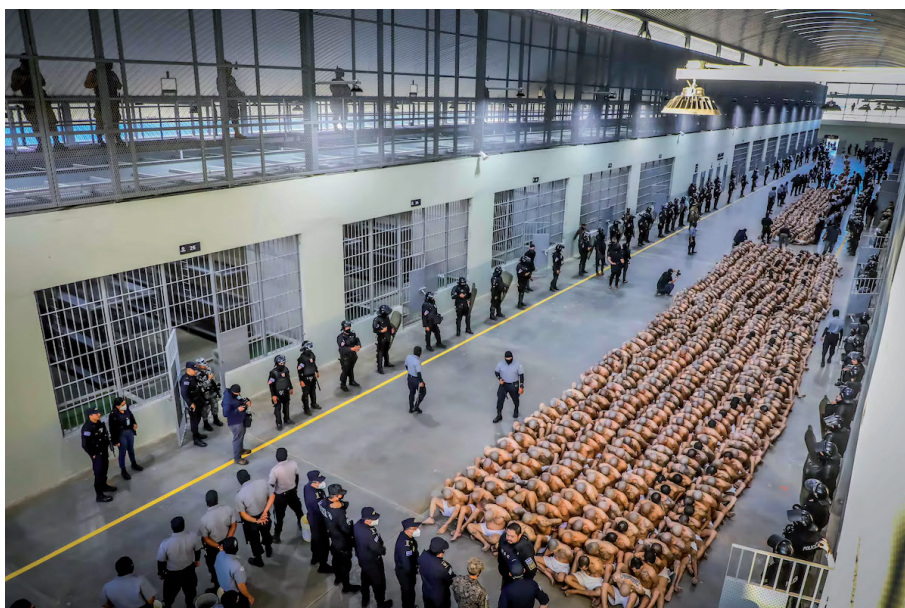
## APPENDIX A.2. El Salvador

On February 4, 2024, Nayib Bukele was re-elected in El Salvador with more than 85% of the valid votes, amid controversies due to the concentration of powers in the Executive. Focusing on security, Bukele ran a campaign based on the success of his security strategy. According to the Magazine *Look*, in a publication dated February 5, 2024, the country's crime rate fell from 107 homicides for every 100 thousand people, in 2015, to 2.3 homicides for every 100 thousand people, in 2023, but at a high cost. It is estimated that more than 75 thousand Salvadorans were arrested without charges, more than 1% of their entire population—without court orders, lack of legal processes, abuses, and precarious conditions in prison.

The Salvadoran prison is the largest in the Americas. Currently, the Latin American country has around 65 thousand inmates and lives in a state of exception, according to the newspaper – (ESTADÃO, 2023, s/p.).

The country's new prison, called the Confinement Center for Terrorism, was inaugurated at the beginning of February and has 10 pavilions and cells that can hold up to 100 prisoners, with a total capacity to hold 40,000 inmates, making it the largest prison of the Americas.

**Image 05:** First prisoners taken to the mega-prison located in Tecoluca, 74 kilometers from San Salvador



Source: Salvadoran Presidency / AFP

**Image 06:** A prison for 40 thousand people was inaugurated in the presence of President Nayib Bukele.



**Source:** Press Secretary of the Salvadorean Presidency via *AFP*

The inauguration happened in 2023, a year before the election in which Bukele ran again, contrary to the Salvadoran Constitution, which prohibits direct re-election.

The numbers made the small Central American nation of 6.5 million inhabitants reach, in March last year, the top of the *ranking* of countries with the highest incarceration rate in the world. The data comes from World Prison Brief, an organization based at Birkbeck University, in London.

In March 2022, the country's president, Nayib Bukele, managed to get Congress to approve a state of exception in the country. In this way, some constitutional rights were suspended — the police began to make arrests without warrants, and the government began to be able to access people's communications without authorization from the Court. After that, the number of prisoners exploded: more than 62 thousand people were arrested, most of them suspected of belonging to gangs.

**Image 07:** New prison complex in El Salvador



**Source:** Press Secretary of the Salvadorean Presidency via *AFP*

Several human rights bodies, in addition to residents, however, denounce the arrest of innocent people and suspected mistreatment in penitentiary centers. On Friday the 27th, *Human Rights Watch* stated that a database obtained by the NGO supports the existence of severe overcrowding in prisons, mass violations of due process, and detentions of teenagers. According to the organization, the data comes from the Ministry of Public Security and lists people processed under the state of exception. Human Rights Watch also states that, at the end of August, 1,082 minors were arrested, 918 males and 164 females – including 21 teenagers aged 12 and 13. The database counts at least 32 people who died in state custody (*ESTADÃO*, 2024).

On May 20, 2024, on p. C6, *o ESTADÃO* published an article by *The Economist* entitled “(IN) Public Security – Gang Violence – AL needs to see crime in a new way – Mano dura policies please crowds but create problems.”.

It is possible to highlight the following:

Bukele’s *mano dura* has worked – for now – because El Salvador’s gangs were ‘poor and predatory,’ says Christopher Blattman of the University of Chicago. Salvadoran criminal groups relied heavily on extortion,

controlling neighborhoods establishing checkpoints, and charging tolls from anyone who wanted to pass. [...] The extortion business model meant that gangs had to operate openly in the most densely populated urban areas to maximize profits, so it was easy to siege them. Tattoos with gang symbols also helped identify criminals.” [...] Tired of violence, Salvadorans welcomed the repression of crime. [...] Politicians have visited El Salvador to arrest ‘the Bukeke model’. The repression of crime in Ecuador smacks of this too, **despite Daniel Noboa being more democratic. (authors’ emphasis)** (ESTADÃO, 2024, p. C6)

Under the title: “In El Salvador, the population feels safe from gangs, but fears the State”, journalist Luiz Henrique Gomes, wrote:

Controversial policies of popular President Nayib Bukele have dismantled group control but left families fearing arbitrary arrests. Updated data shows that 1.85% of the country’s population, 6.3% million inhabitants, is incarcerated, under President Nayib Bukeke’s exceptional regime. Thousands of people are imprisoned, but not the main leaders of Mara Salvatrucha and Barrio 18 (dominant and rival groups). The government claims that there are no longer “pandilleros” (groups of criminals that formed in the country in the 1990s based on extortion and control of territories) on the streets, but the exception regime is renewed every 30 days. In turn, the economy of the country, which is one of the poorest in Latin America, favors violence, as political scientist Robert Muggah said: There is a very strong relationship with economic inequality,” as we know very well. In Muggah’s analysis, without resolving structural problems, the policy of militarization and mass incarceration will hardly be sufficient to maintain the country’s security. This calls into question Bukele’s successes in the future (ESTADÃO, 2024, s/p.).

**Image 08:** The El Salvador presidency published the following image in 2020 showing prisoners in rows



**Source:** Reproduction/Twitter/El Salvador Presidency

### APPENDIX A.3. Venezuela

With 51.2% of the votes, Maduro wins elections and consolidates the strength of Chavismo in Venezuela. The President of Venezuela will have another mandate to reunify the base, expand social programs, and lift US sanctions. - Lorenzo Santiago - Brazil De Fato.

The president of Venezuela, Nicolás Maduro, was re-elected this Sunday (28). The Chavista who represents the United Socialist Party of Venezuela (PSUV) received 51.20% of the votes against 44.2% for former ambassador Edmundo González Urrutia with 80% of the votes counted. (SANTIAGO, 2024, s/p.).

**Image 09:** Nicolás Maduro has been in charge of Venezuela since 2013



Source: Internet/Reproduction

**Image 10:** The Supreme Court of Venezuela declares Nicolás Maduro winner of the elections after an audit of the electoral records.



Source: Leonardo Fernandez Vilorio / Reuters

Today, the Venezuelan Court of Justice validates Maduro’s re-election and calls for an investigation into ‘false minutes’ published by the opposition. Court of Justice stated that it also found the attack *hacker* against the elections and asked for the publication of the results, according to SANTIAGO (2024).

About a month has passed since the election results were announced, confirming Maduro as the winner, and during that time, there have been both internal and external protests around the legitimacy of the vote. After opposition leader Maria Corina Machado and her replacement, Corina Yoris had their candidacies rejected, the opposition, led by former diplomat Edmundo González, internally rejected the president’s victory and looked for a way to have the results reexamined. Based on the online count of 83% of the minutes, González’s lead over Maduro was approximately 37 points, with the certainty that he won the most votes based on the available data.

In this process, people were detained in violent demonstrations, more than 24 were killed, and politicians remained in hiding for fear of the arrest that threatened them. Without presenting the minutes of the results, demanded by everyone, Maduro proclaimed: “I can say before the people of Venezuela and the world – I am Nicolás Maduro Moros, the re-elected president of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. And I will defend our democracy” (KURMANAEV, 2024).

**Image 11:** Fire during protests after Nicolás Maduro was declared winner of election in Venezuela



Source: CNN in España

Leaders and nations from all around the world have been protesting Maduro’s election and calling for the results. Latin American leaders from Mexico, Brazil, and Colombia have been working together to mediate, through diplomatic channels, Maduro’s government position and the opposition’s demands.

“Brazil demands voting minutes, but ignores signs of fraud by Maduro.” (ESTADÃO, 2024, p. A12).

“In Chile, President Gabriel Boric declares that he does not consider that there is democracy in Caracas.” (ESTADÃO, 2024, p. A11).

In turn, “The US has already recognized that the opponent, Edmundo González Urrutia won the presidential election. The American government was followed by several countries in the region, including Argentina, Peru, Ecuador and Panama.” O ESTADÃO, 2024, p. A 20. In Europe:

The EU does not recognize Maduro’s victory and ‘requests independent verification’ [...]. ‘in the absence of supporting evidence, the results published on August 2 by the National Electoral Council – **CNE** - cannot be recognized’, the EU Council said in a statement, calling

for an independent verification of the votes” [ ...]. The manifestation of **UE** It comes amid growing international concern about the increase in the number of prisons in Venezuela following the elections. Maduro announced at a rally last week that the government had arrested 2,000 opponents and warned that more would be detained. (ESTADÃO, 2024, p. A11).

International organizations such as

The **Carter Center** – the most important organization authorized to monitor the election in Venezuela, declared yesterday that the process cannot be considered democratic. Founded by the former president of **USA** Jimmy Carter, the center pointed out ‘serious violations’ in the supposed victory of dictator Nicolás Maduro [...] **OAS** met yesterday on an emergency basis to discuss the crisis in Venezuela, but there was no majority to approve a resolution calling for transparency in the investigation. There were 11 votes in favor of the text, but 18 were needed. Brazil abstained”. (ESTADÃO, 2024, p. A12).

Regarding the loss of patience of several human rights organizations, Andrés Oppenheimer, from the ‘Miami Herald’ and presenter of the ‘Oppenheimer Presents’ Program on **CNN** in Spanish, states: “Mature and the delay and The Hague Court” (ESTADÃO, 2024, p. A13):

There is a critical factor that stands out for its absence, in the pressures of **USA** and Latin America for the Venezuelan dictator, Nicolás Maduro, to allow a transition to democracy: for the International Criminal Court to issue an arrest warrant against him. Several human rights organizations are losing patience and asking whether the **TPI** is protecting Maduro [...] Se Khan (prosecutor of the **TPI**) issues a warrant in the coming days, the court order will become a formidable tool for pressuring the dictator to accept a negotiated transition, perhaps in return in some form. If it persists, however, Khan’s inaction will constitute a scandalous omission.

What we intended to weave, in these considerations presented above, was yet another outline of what is possible to glimpse in the “democracies” of Latin America, based on the sample selected based on the criteria of

holding the recent presidential elections, on October 15, 2023; February 4, 2024 and July 28, 2024, respectively, in Ecuador, El Salvador and Venezuela, which exposes what can be considered the tip of the *iceberg* of the social situation in which the citizens of these lands, called Latin America, whose term was “invented in Paris in 1836, when the Frenchman Michel Chevallier in his book *Letters about North America*, used for the first time the expression ‘Amérique Latine’ to differentiate countries to the south of USA of the United States themselves”, according to Palacios (2024: p. 441).

Finally, it remains for us to share some questions inserted in this context of concern and doubts that societies, in general, are going through, which can be called a “civilization crisis.”.

1. How can we think about the necessary human dignity, increasingly threatened by the successive failures of our faltering democracies?
2. How to validate a voting system determined by digital networks with information that is not always true, when quantification is not combined with reflection?
3. How can we think about political/governmental representation, which is not visible in the actions of those who received these votes?

Thus, if in the new “digital republic”, characterized by networks, algorithms, robotization, and Artificial Intelligence (IA), we have technological solutions to political problems, and, if in elections, the number of votes given to candidates requires reflection, mathematics is not enough to arrive at democracy and its future, which can be destructive or strengthening.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> The chair develops research topics related to responsible artificial intelligence.

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## ABSTRACT

Territorial growth makes all nations, regions, and blocks of countries interdependent, which also causes problems and challenges beyond their borders. In the context of weak Latin American democracies, this article aims to answer the following question: How can international civic solidarity strengthen and guarantee rights for citizens in the region? From an international relations perspective, this research seeks to demonstrate specific needs for international solidarity in Latin America, mainly for countries that recently had presidential elections, such as Ecuador, El Salvador, and Venezuela, which have specific needs for the protection of human rights and of the dignity of their citizens, aiming for a more democratic and participatory Latin American society. Using an interdisciplinary theoretical approach, this study starts with a comparative analysis of regional concepts and experiences along with quantitative and qualitative data on democracy in the region, the violation of these democratic rights, and the lack of attention to human dignity. Thus, it seeks to contribute theoretical-empirical evidence for the interrelation between international civic solidarity and overcoming the democratic deficit through political/diplomatic actions beyond the National States, which ultimately should translate into efforts to promote human rights and social justice.

**Keywords:** Democracy; Latin America; International solidarity; Public security; El Salvador

## RESUMO

O crescimento territorial torna todas as nações, regiões e blocos de países interdependentes, o que também causa problemas e desafios além de suas fronteiras. No contexto das frágeis democracias latino-americanas, este artigo busca responder à seguinte questão: Como a solidariedade cívica internacional pode fortalecer e garantir direitos aos cidadãos da região? Sob a perspectiva das relações internacionais, esta pesquisa procura demonstrar necessidades específicas de solidariedade internacional na América Latina, principalmente em países que recentemente realizaram eleições presidenciais, como Equador, El Salvador e Venezuela, que possuem demandas específicas quanto à proteção dos direitos humanos e da dignidade de seus cidadãos, visando a uma sociedade latino-americana mais participativa e democrática. Utilizando uma abordagem teórica interdisciplinar, este estudo parte de uma análise comparativa de conceitos e experiências regionais, juntamente com dados quantitativos e qualitativos sobre a democracia na região, a violação desses direitos democráticos e a falta de atenção à dignidade humana. Assim, busca contribuir com evidências teórico-empíricas para a interrelação entre solidariedade cívica internacional e a superação do déficit democrático por meio de ações políticas/diplomáticas além dos Estados Nacionais, que, em última instância, devem se traduzir em esforços para a promoção dos direitos humanos e da justiça social.

**Palavras-chave:** Democracia; América Latina; Solidariedade internacional; Segurança pública; El Salvador