

Poli-416:
**REVOLUTION
& POLITICAL
VIOLENCE**



TODAY'S AGENDA

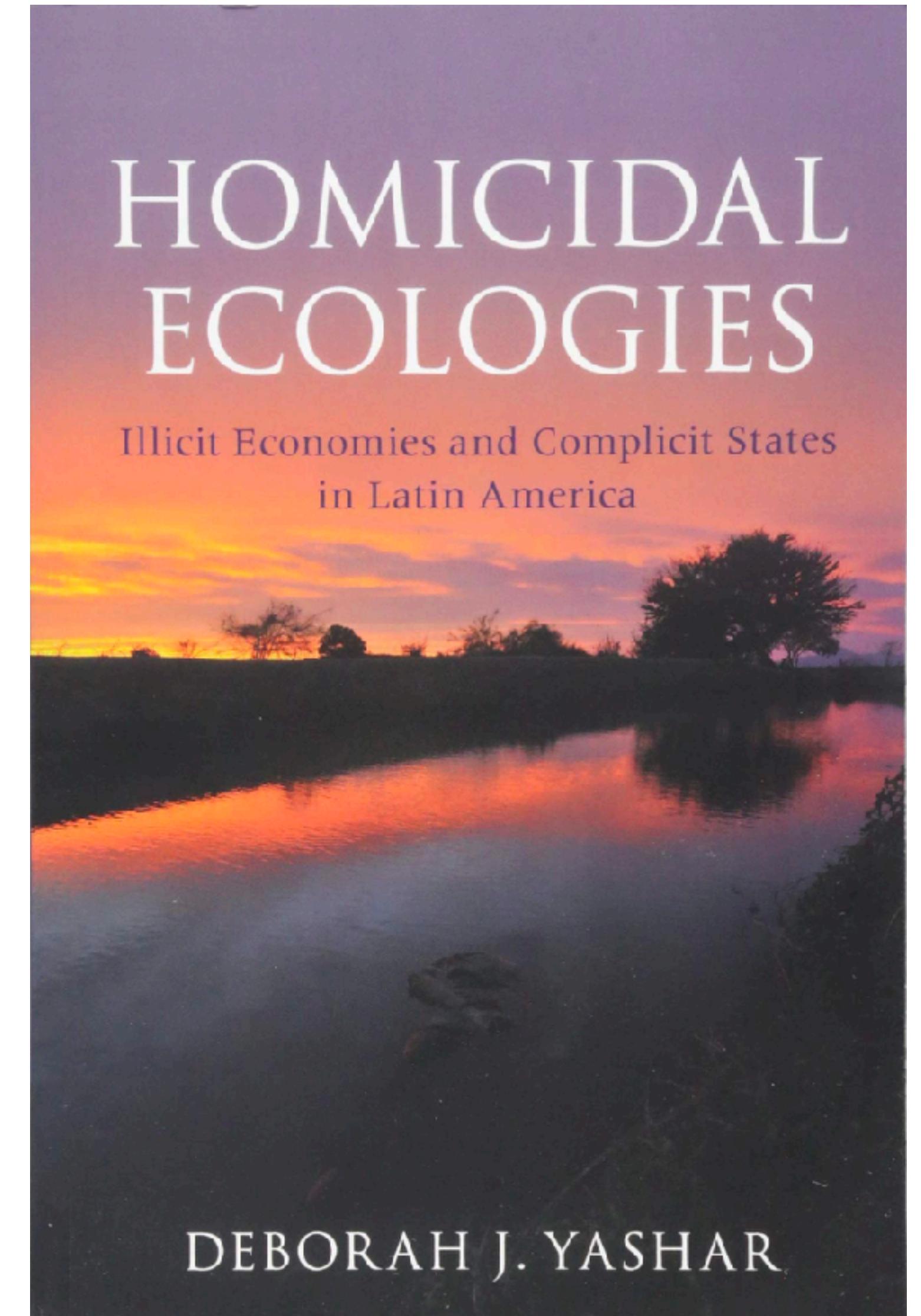
- 1 Short video on contemporary gangs in CA
- 2 Violence and the drug trade in LA
- 3 Guatemala: high crime
- 4 Nicaragua: low crime

The book

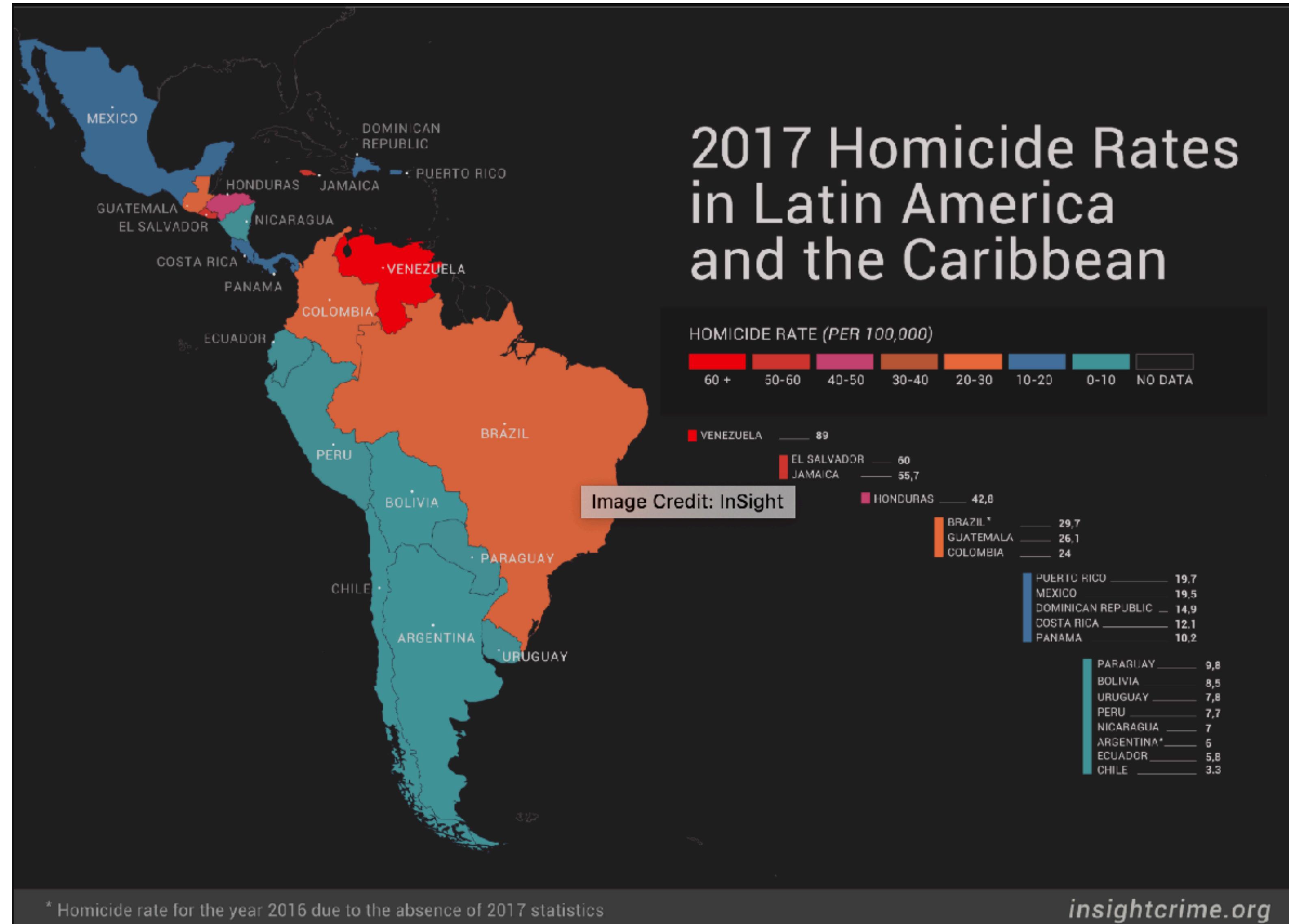
Central America plagued by violence

Puzzle: what is the **source** of violence in the region today? And why does it **vary** subnationally?

Guatemala (high violence) vs.
Nicaragua (low violence)



The northern triangle



Why is CA so violent?

Three factors:

Changing drug routes

Weak/complicit states

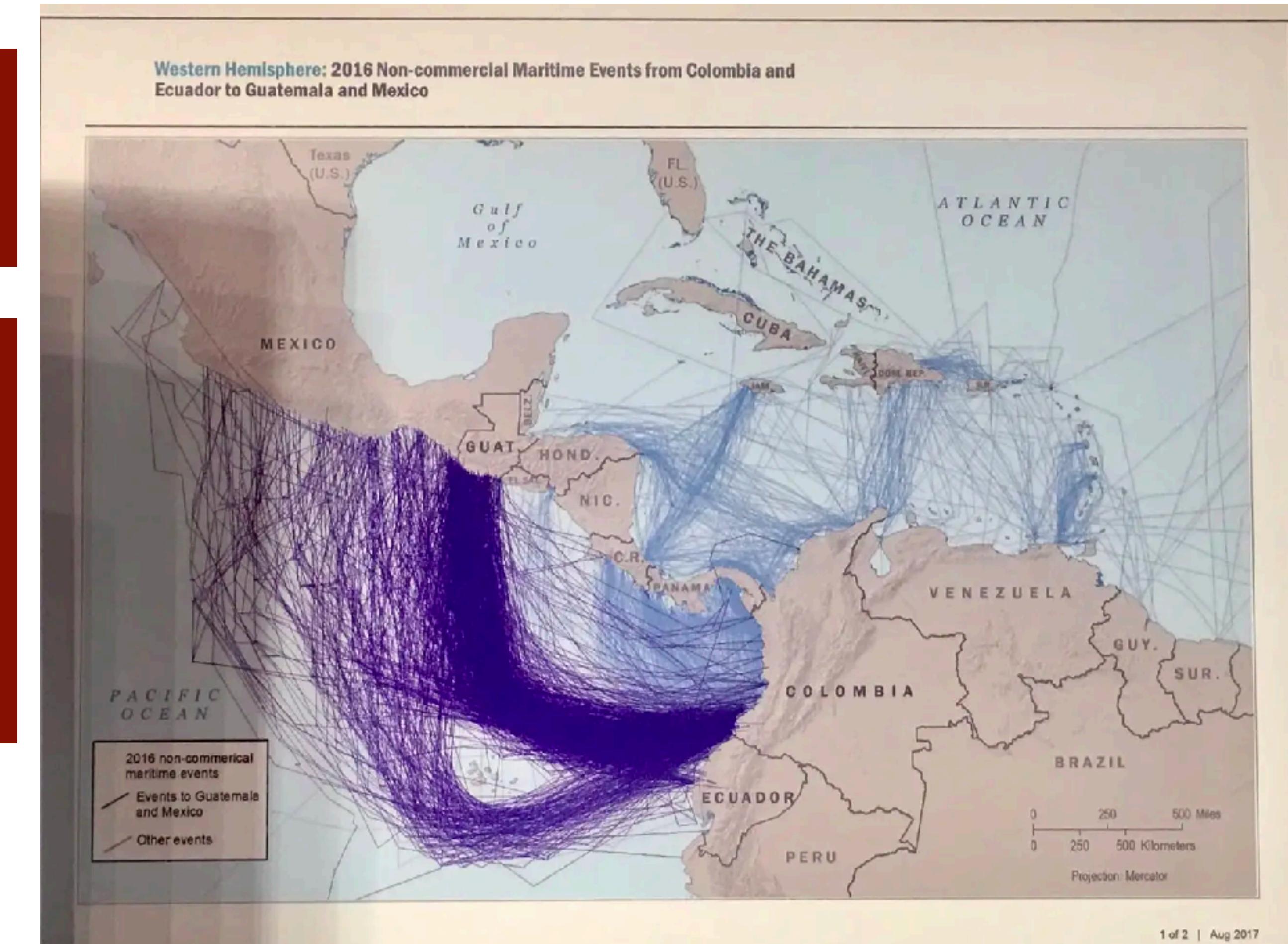
Competition

The coca trade

Producers:
Colombia, Bolivia, Peru

Bulk of cocaine goes:
Colombia/Ecuador →
Guatemala/Mexico →
US border

Mostly boats, some air

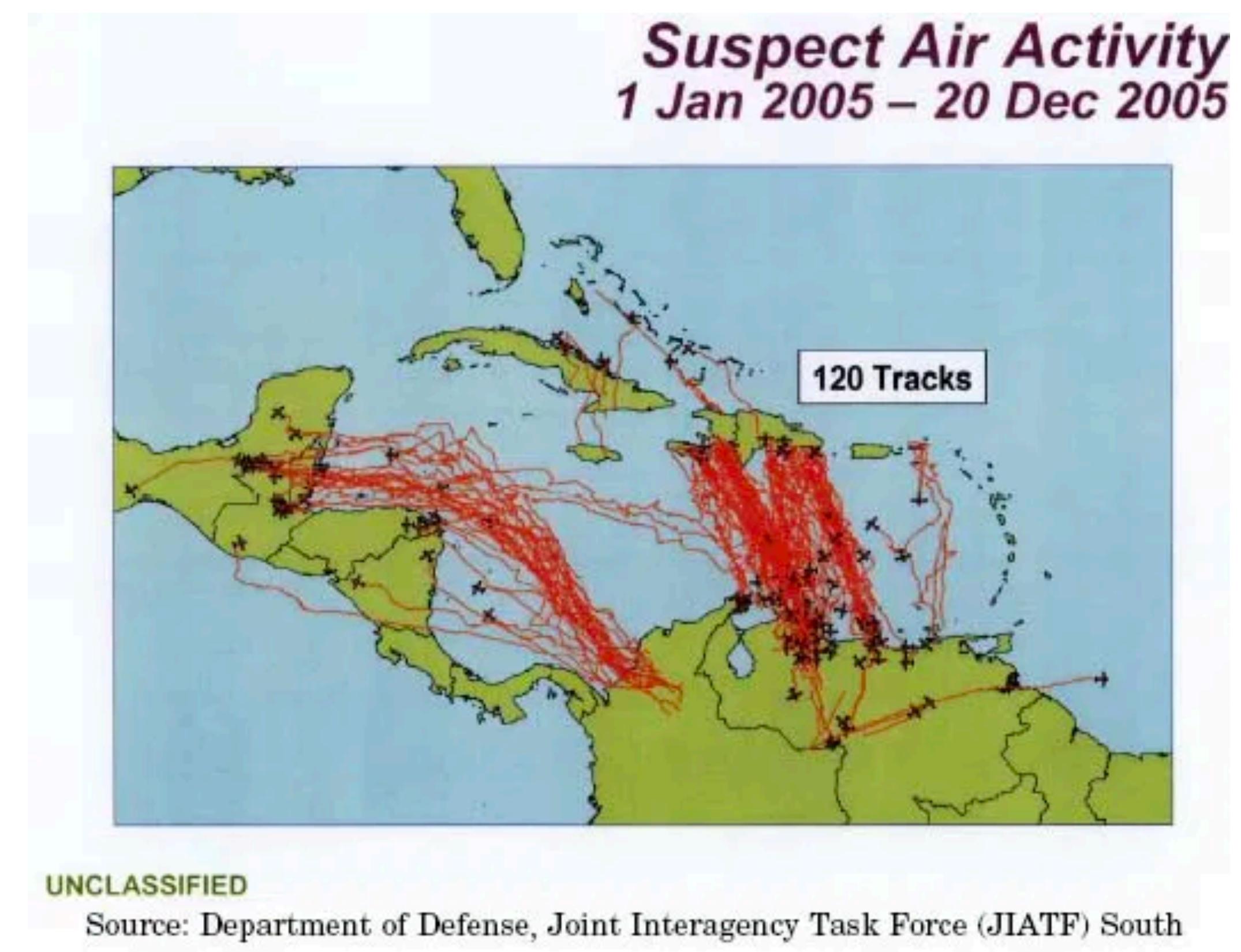
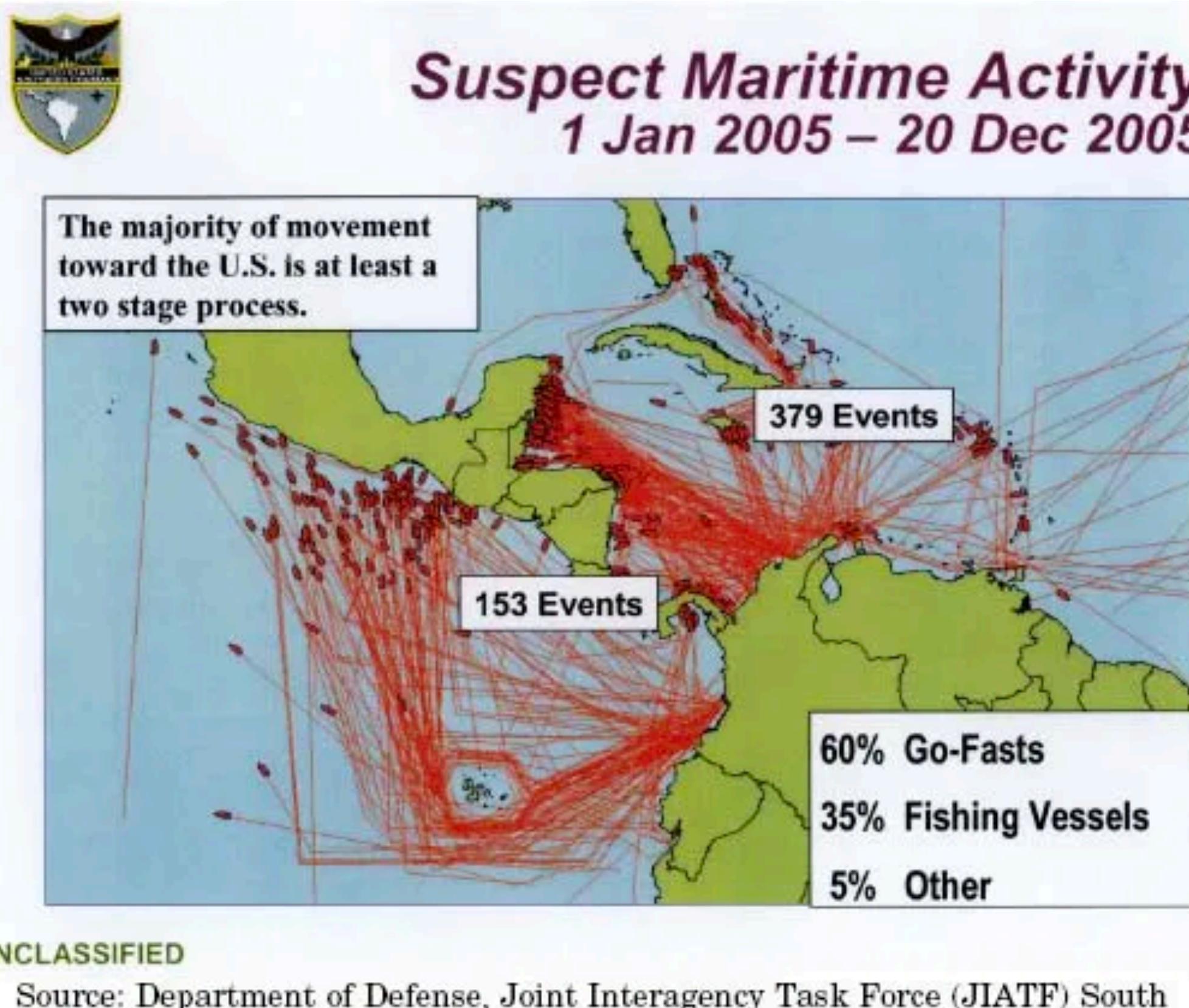


Coca labs

Coca typically grown processed and packaged in Colombia



US Southern Command



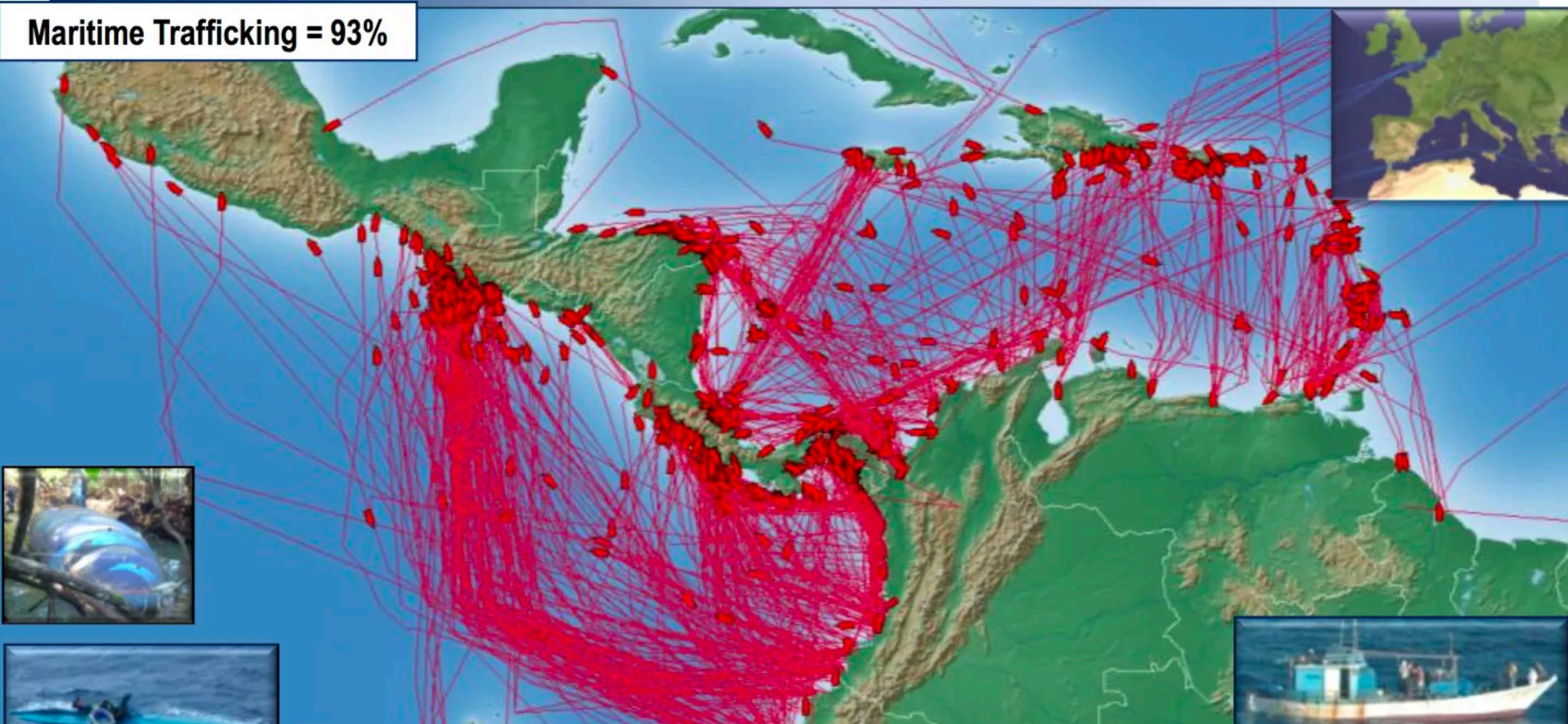


Suspect Maritime Activity

2014



Maritime Trafficking = 93%



“Eastern Pacific flow currently accounts for more than 68% of documented cocaine movement,”

Changing drug routes

In the mid-1980s, over 75% of US cocaine moved through Caribbean

US/international efforts in Caribbean moved drug routes west

Snorkel Pablo Escobar's Sunken Drug Plane In The Bahamas

Just off Norman's Cay lies a corroding reminder of paradise's brief but sinister past.

JOHN MCMAHON · UPDATED: JAN 24, 2019 · ORIGINAL: JAN 31, 2018



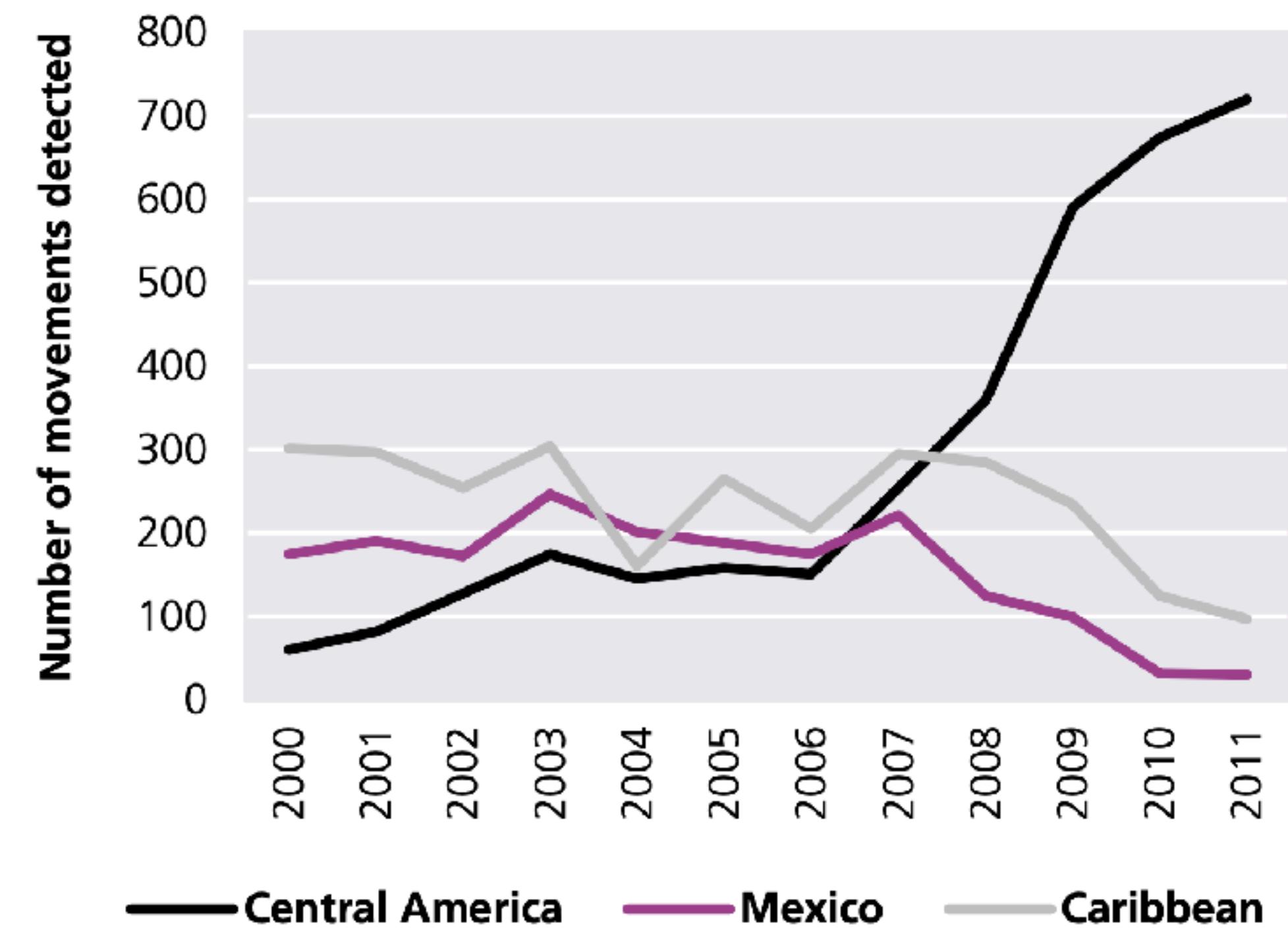
Changing drug routes

By 2010, over 80% was going through Central America

Boat to CA →
cross border into Mexico →
cross into US

Note: all our data is *seizures*;
might be lots we don't know!

Figure 22: Number of primary cocaine movements destined for, or interdicted in, Central America, the Caribbean, and Mexico, 2000-2011



The three factors in Guate



Guatemala and the drug trade

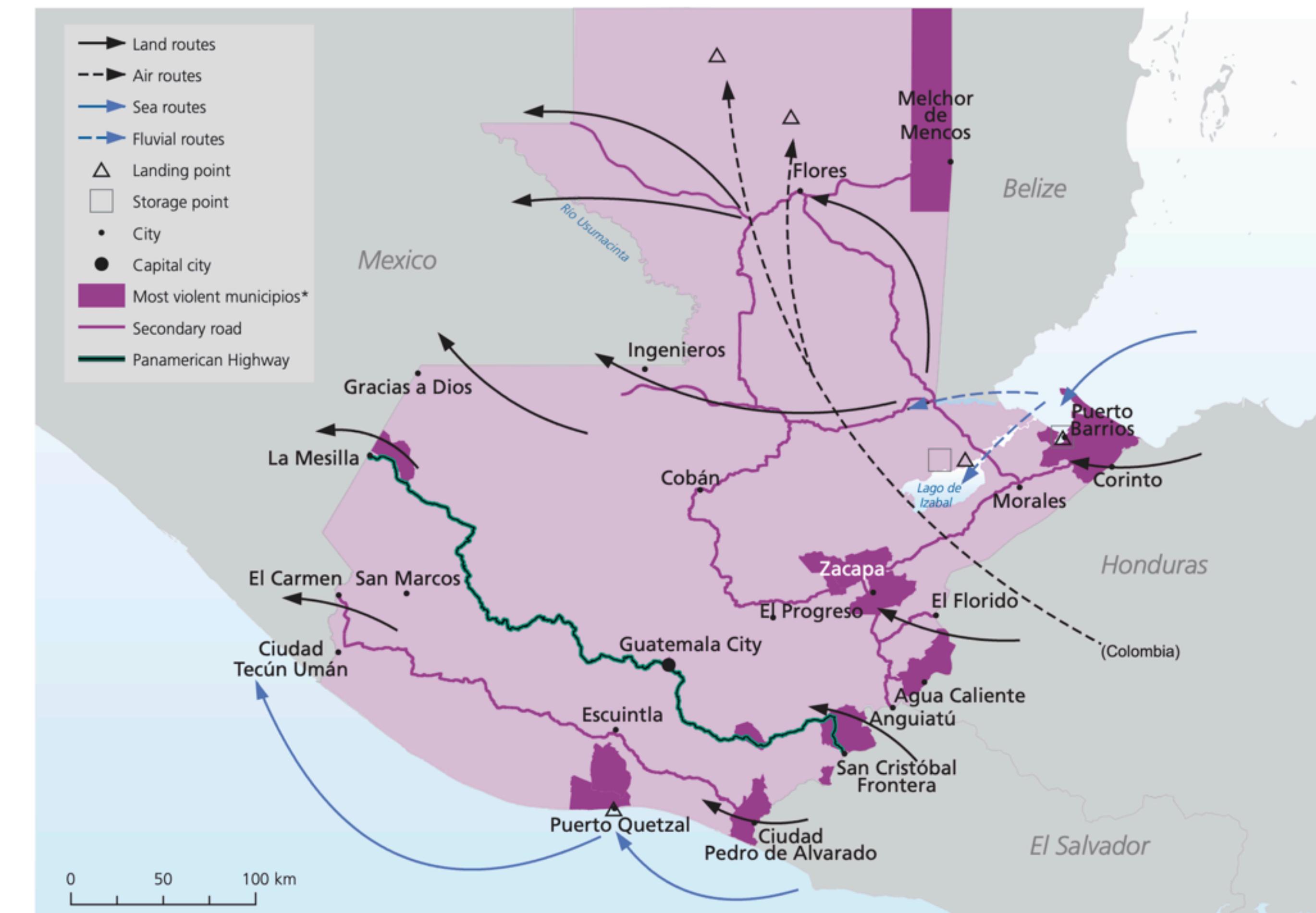
“When it comes to Central American trafficking, all roads lead to Guatemala”

Drug routes either up through the west or in **Peten** (looks like a hat)

What stands out about the dark purple areas?

Ports, capitals, borders

Map 8: Cocaine trafficking routes in Guatemala



Source: UNODC, elaborated from interviews in the region and national police data

*Selected among the municipalities with highest homicide rates (<100 homicides per 100,000 population)

Why not directly to Mexico?

Mexican government has cracked down on direct shipments to Mexico

Mexican state >> Guatemalan state

Traffickers constantly **adapt** to state efforts

Adaptation

In 2009 Honduras experienced a coup

Traffickers began diverting VZLA → DR flights to Honduras

Traffickers constantly adapting; state often just pushing crime around the corner

AN OLD-FASHIONED COUP

As elections loom, can a deposed leader return?



By William Finnegan November 22, 2009



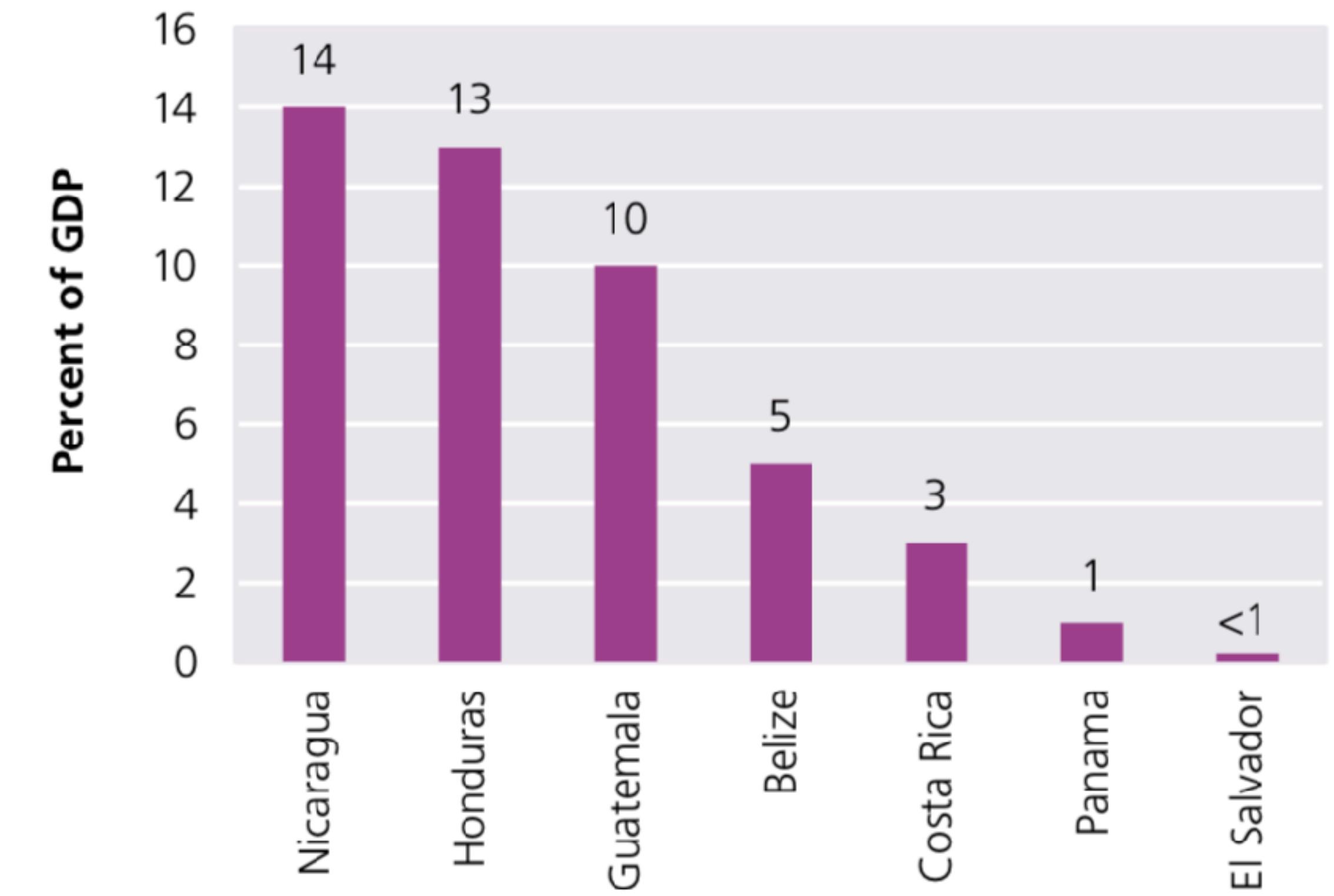
The scale of the problem

\$4 billion dollars in cocaine passes through Guatemala

Entire **region** spends \$3 billion on counternarcotics

Disproportionate economic power gives traffickers huge leverage

Figure 36: Share of GDP represented by value of cocaine transiting each country, 2010



The weak/complacent state in Guate

Three key actors

The police

The courts

The prisons

The police in Guate

How does Yashar describe Guate police?

All over LA, police weird mix of
ineffective and **predatory**

Low pay

“recycling”
problem officers

Extortion

No
professionalization

Cooperate with
drug traffickers

Lack of internal
accountability

Not just poor countries

Killing of Michael Brown by police sparks DOJ investigation into Ferguson PD

Ferguson's law enforcement practices are shaped by the City's focus on revenue rather than by public safety needs. This emphasis on revenue has compromised the institutional character of Ferguson's police department, contributing to a pattern of unconstitutional policing, and has also shaped its municipal court, leading to procedures that raise due process concerns and inflict unnecessary harm on members of the Ferguson community. Further, Ferguson's police and municipal court practices both reflect and exacerbate existing racial bias, including racial stereotypes. Ferguson's own data establish clear racial disparities that adversely impact African Americans. The evidence shows that discriminatory intent is part of the reason for these disparities. Over time, Ferguson's police and municipal court practices have sown deep mistrust between parts of the community and the police department, undermining law enforcement legitimacy among African Americans in particular.

Even relatively routine misconduct by Ferguson police officers can have significant consequences for the people whose rights are violated. For example, in the summer of 2012, a 32-year-old African-American man sat in his car cooling off after playing basketball in a Ferguson public park. An officer pulled up behind the man's car, blocking him in, and demanded the man's Social Security number and identification. Without any cause, the officer accused the man of being a pedophile, referring to the presence of children in the park, and ordered the man out of his car for a pat-down, although the officer had no reason to believe the man was armed. The officer also asked to search the man's car. The man objected, citing his constitutional rights. In response, the officer arrested the man, reportedly at gunpoint, charging him with eight violations of Ferguson's municipal code. One charge, Making a False Declaration, was for initially providing the short form of his first name (e.g., "Mike" instead of "Michael"), and an address which, although legitimate, was different from the one on his driver's license. Another charge was for not wearing a seat belt, even though he was seated in a parked car. The officer also charged the man both with having an expired operator's license, and with having no operator's license in his possession. The man told us that, because of these charges, he lost his job as a contractor with the federal government that he had held for years.



Right in our backyard

Questionable
legality of civil
asset forfeiture in
the US



Emma Andersson, Senior Staff Attorney, Criminal Law Reform Project
& Susan Dunn, Legal Director, ACLU of South Carolina

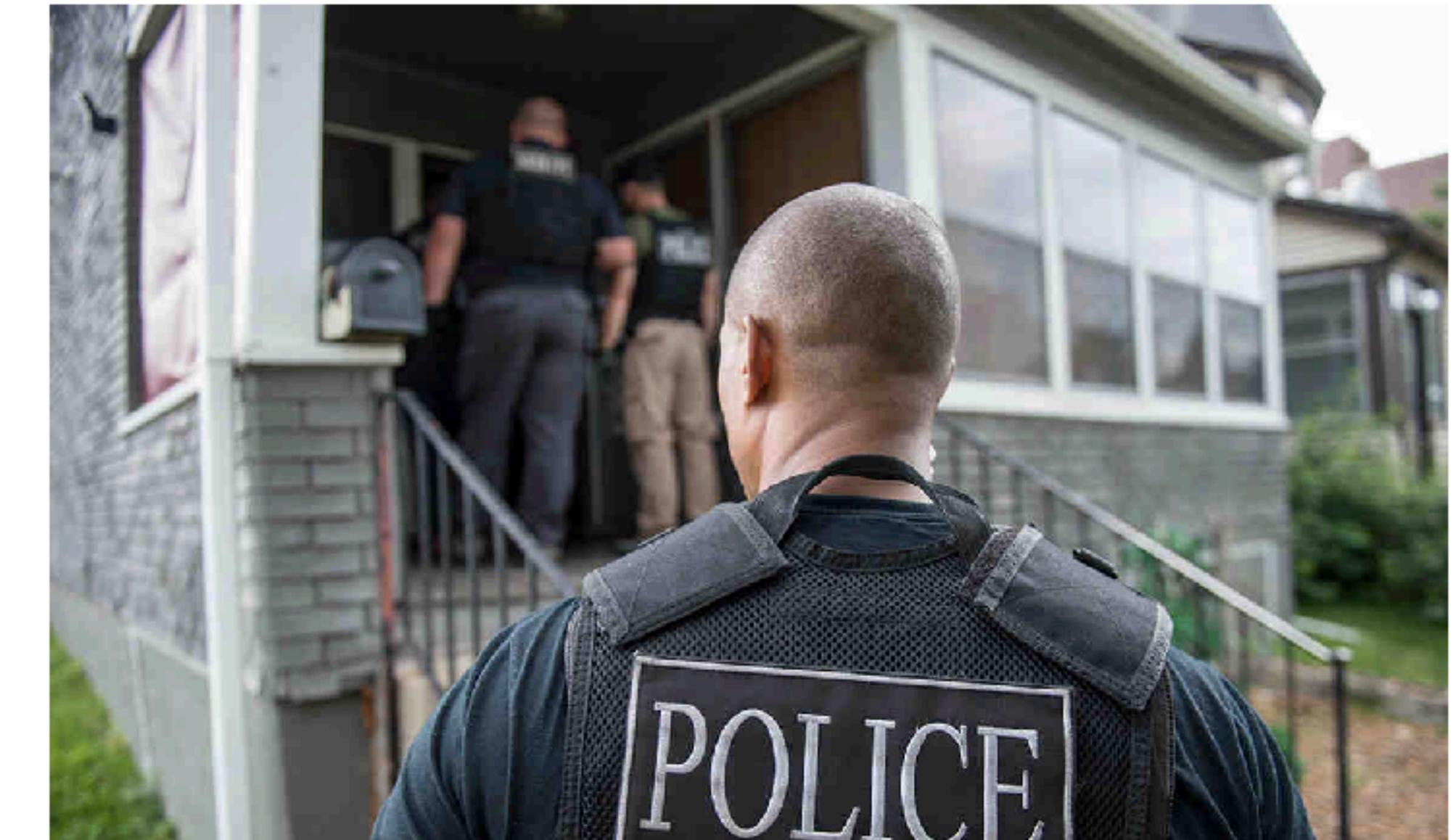
FEBRUARY 12, 2019 | 3:45 PM

TAGS: [Asset Forfeiture Abuse](#), [Reforming Police Practices](#), [Criminal Law Reform](#)



In Conway, South Carolina, a 72-year-old widow hides inside, her curtains drawn, fearing that local law enforcement will attempt to take away her home for a third time. Ella Bromell has never been convicted of a crime. So how has her house been at risk of seizure for over a decade?

The answer is simple, but the process is obscure, discriminatory, and all-too commonplace: civil asset forfeiture.



Police vs. military

In many developing countries,
states turning to military or
militarizing police forces

What would you imagine is the
trade-off here?

Higher capacity, more force,
but **human rights violations**
abound



How do citizens navigate this?

Someone steals your car but police are ineffective, corrupt, or both; what do you do?

Community justice in Guate



Trafficking and violence

Yashar notes that homicide rate
is low in Western Highlands

Surprising given that's where civil
war hit hardest

Violence here most famously
extra-judicial killings

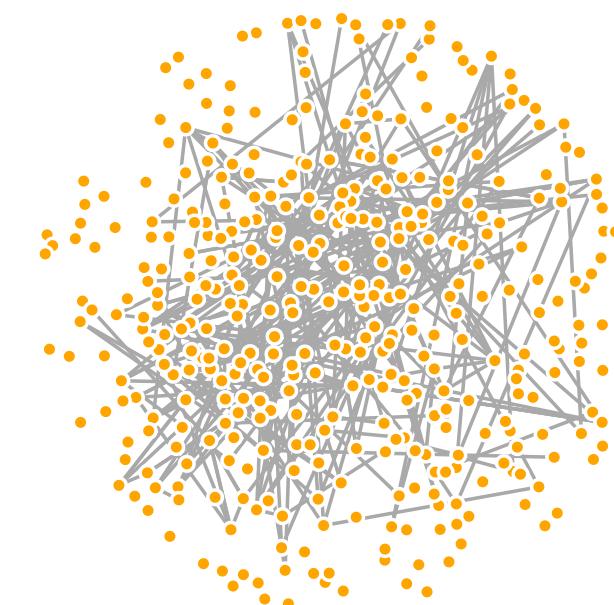
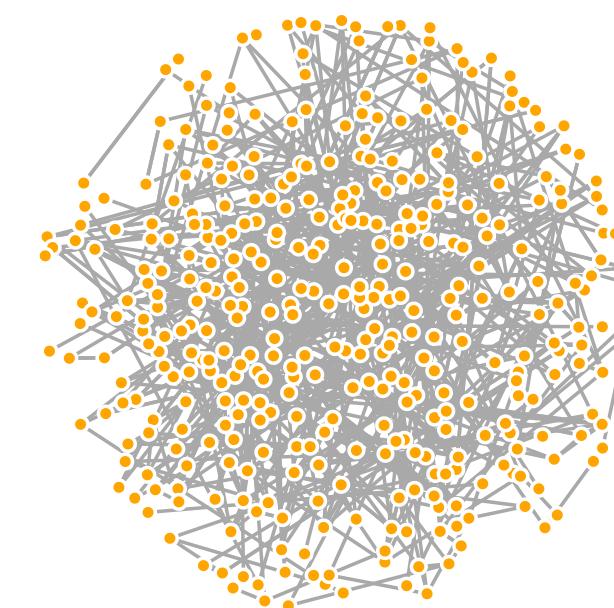
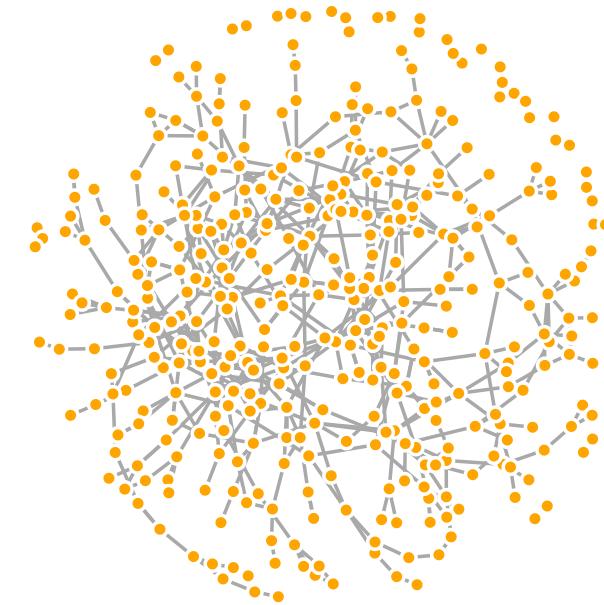
These are also places where **self-defense groups**
formed!



Current research in India

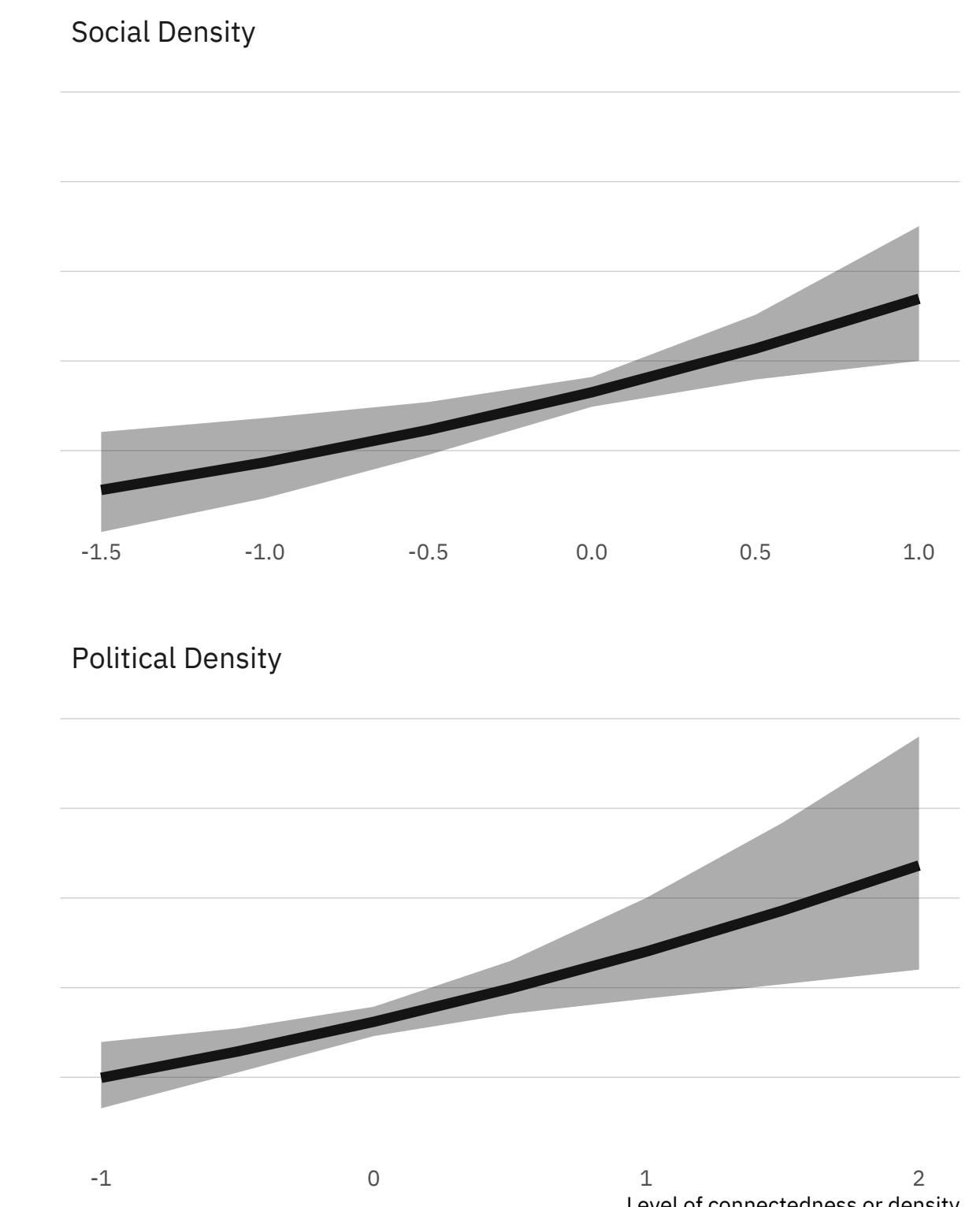
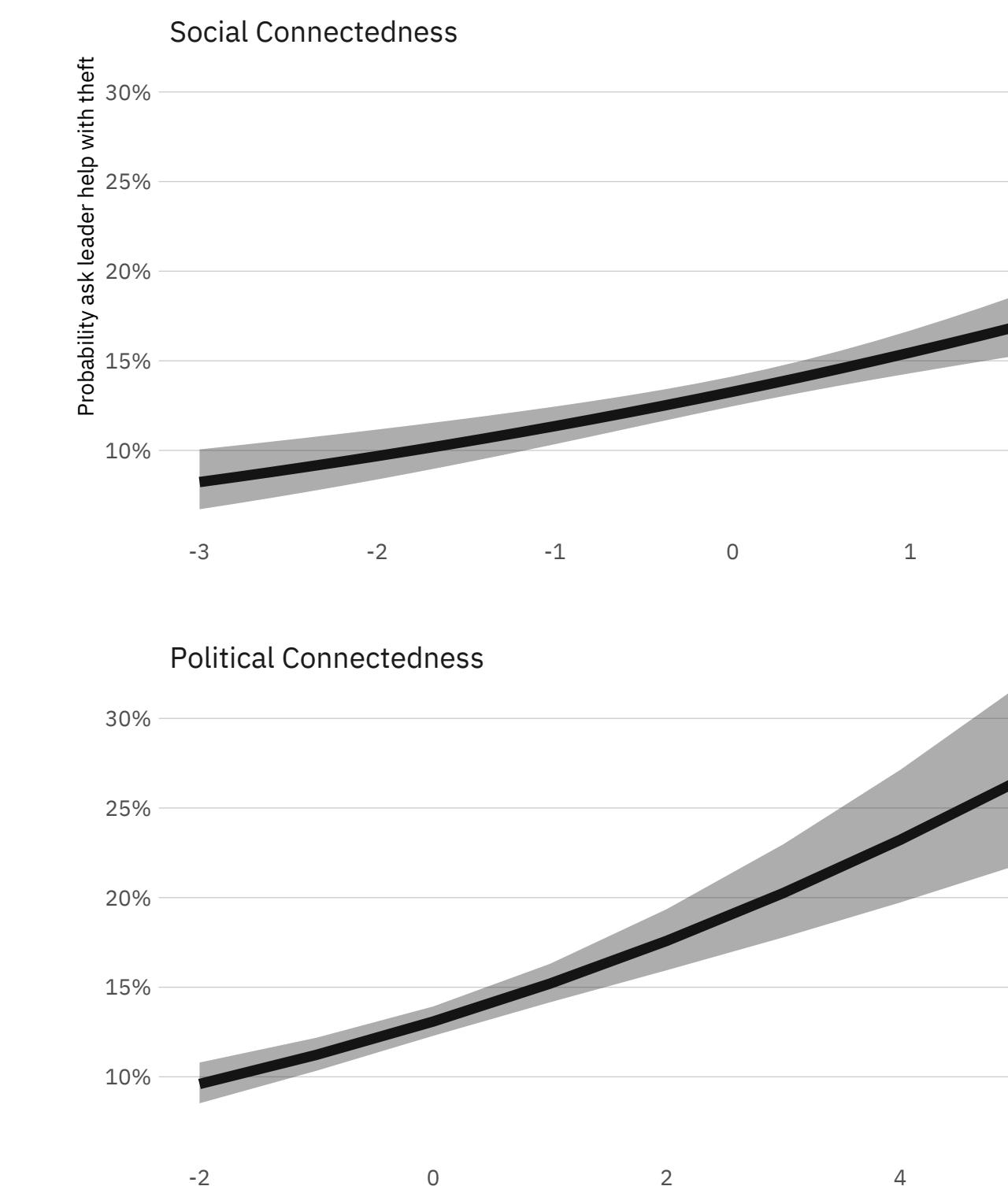
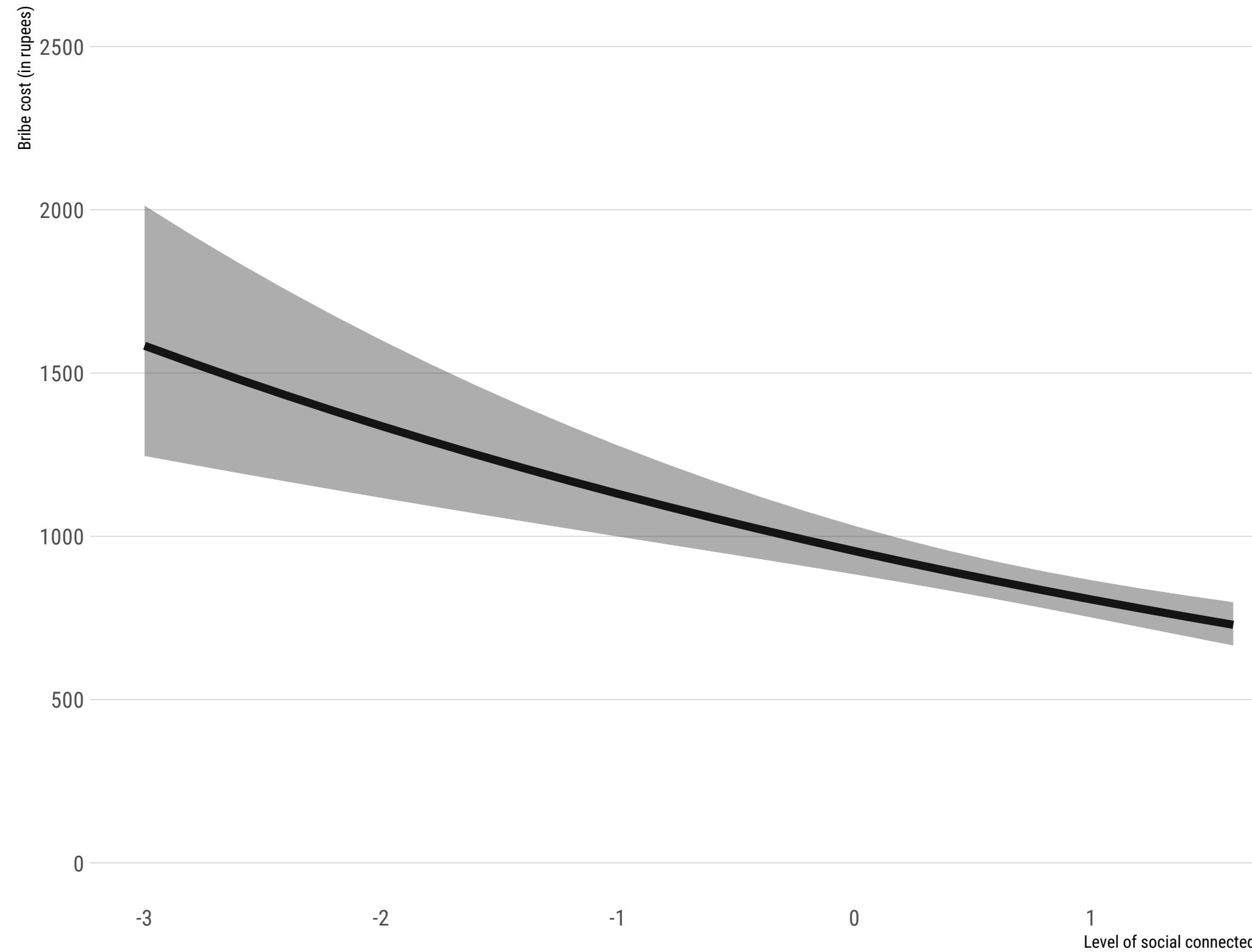
We mapped people's social networks across 170 slums in Bangalore, Patna, Jaipur (India)

Who they talk to regularly, who they spend time with, who they might ask for a small favor



Current research in India

More well connected people, and better connected slums:



Pay less in bribes, more likely to get special favors

How?

How are these communities with better networks able to get better police services?

Leverage size and ability to coordinate to **exchange votes** for **better service (clientelism)**

Very important in slums where citizens have few legal rights!



The courts

What problems plague Guate's courts?

Weak response/
conviction rates

Low capacity/few
judges

Low tech

Low training

High corruption

Security issues

Prisons

How does Yashar describe Guate's prisons?

Overcrowded

Inmates can still dictate
crime outside of prison

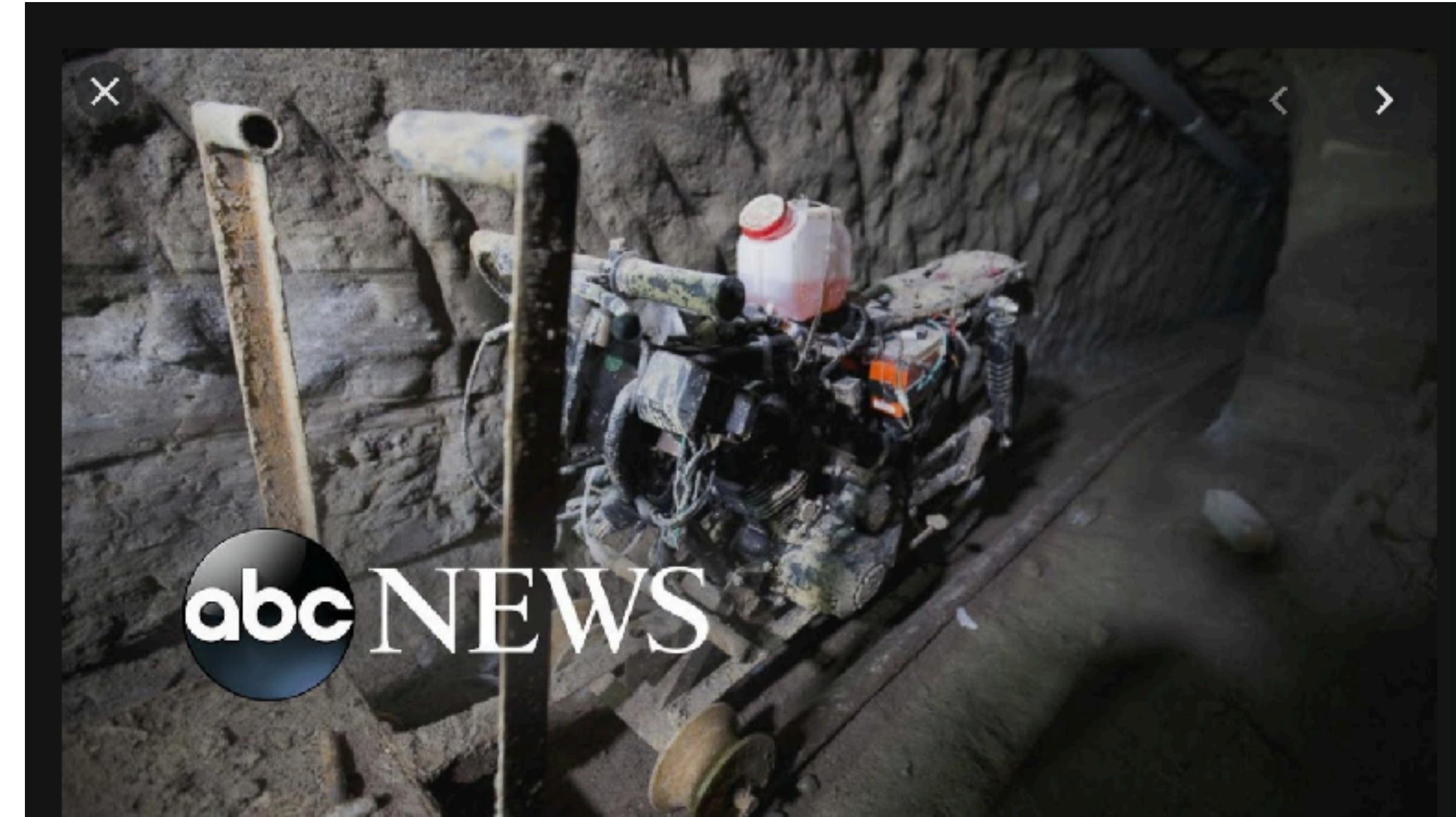
Complicity of guards

La Catedral: Inside The Luxurious Prison Colombia Allowed Pablo Escobar To Make For Himself

By Gina Dimuro

Published January 7, 2019 | Updated August 30, 2019

The fortress was specially constructed on a foggy mountainside to keep Escobar's enemies out — and not the cocaine kingpin in.



Go Inside Mexican Drug Lord "El Chapo" Prison Escape Tunnel | Good Morning America | ABC News



Prisons as sources of crime/radicalization



Sayyid Qutb
(1906 - 1966),
Egyptian author and
theorist

As Egypt's Jails Fill, Growing Fears Of A Rise In Radicalization

August 24, 2016 · 5:02 AM ET

Heard on [Morning Edition](#)



The formula

Violence = drug trade + weak states +
competition

Competition in Guate

Who are the actors competing over the drug trade?

Cartels (mexican)

Gangs (*maras*)

Cartels

Does presence of cartel alone produce violence?

Broad swathes of land in the southwest of the country (where the *Cartel del Pacífico* and their allies, the Chamaleas, operate) and in the interior provinces of Alta and Baja Verapaz (area of influence of the Zetas) have very little violence. The most troubled areas in Guatemala appear to be along the borders with Honduras and El Salvador, areas that could be contested by *Cartel del Pacífico* ally *Los Mendozas* and *Zetas* ally *Los Lorenzanas*. (UNODC 2012: 66–67)

Need **competition**; under one-sided control **relatively peaceful**

Peten

Three factors converge in
Peten

Incredible given mostly a
national forest, low population
density

Border to Mexico and Belize

Few police, very corrupt,
weak state



Gangs

MS-13

vs.

Calle-18

Drug dealing

Extortion

Mostly urban
areas, **the capital**

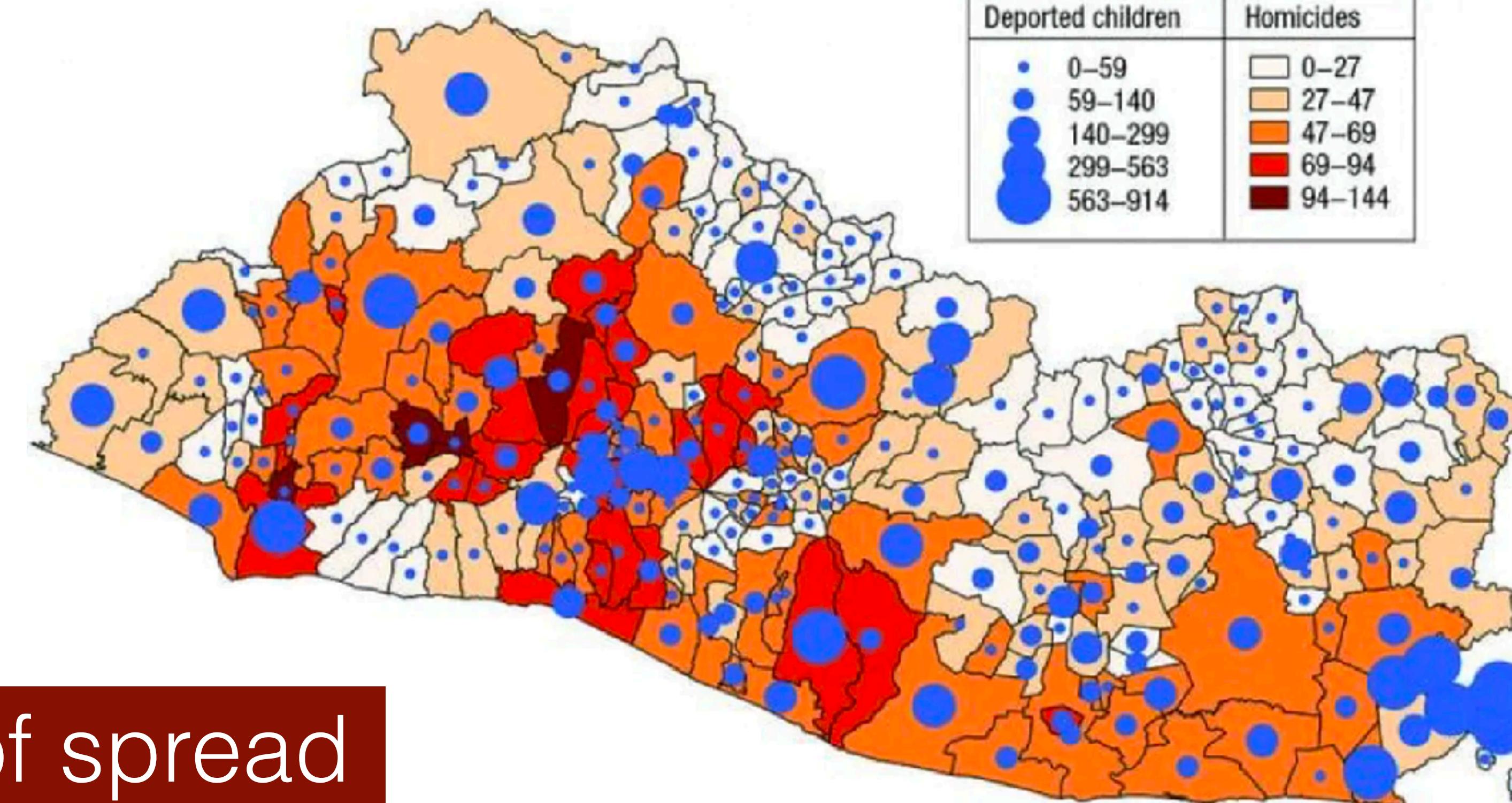
Migration and gangs

MS-13 forms in...

Los Angeles

Salvadorian self-protection from other gangs

Deportations from US part of spread to CA, especially El Salvador



Extortion on bus lines

Huge number of
Guatemalans depend on
buses to get from outskirts/
shanty-towns to city center

Gangs frequently rob/“tax”
these lines

Gang control

But sometimes
communities
prefer gang
involvement

Gang presence,
on its own,
!= violence

“El Gallito” is located in zone 3 in Guatemala [City]. It is known that Kevin is the chief captain [capo mayor]. In each building one finds flags – spies – with radio communication and binoculars so as to control entrance and departure into the zone. Everyone is heavily armed with automatic long-range weapons. The only ones who leave alive are the buyers. Delinquency has become so prevalent that the Police cannot enter. There are people in the streets who are supposedly selling hotdogs, but they are spies and inform the “capo” about who is entering and leaving. They make 100 quetzales a turn (a turno), apart from their “line” of pure cocaine for consumption. Most striking is the recognition that people in Guatemala know that “El Gallito” is an impenetrable zone. Those who enter this place perhaps don’t know or aren’t afraid of death, according to a nearby neighbor. Firefighters have a free pass to come and take those who have been injured or to put out fires, as do funeral homes to take out the dead. Vehicles who enter the zone must do so with their windows down and must identify themselves.¹¹⁰

Gang competition

Gangs compete over
extortion rackets

Gangs also compete over
control of **prisons**

Assailant tosses grenade into Guatemalan bus, killing 2, wounding 15

NEWS Jul 12, 2010 Guelph Mercury



GUATEMALA CITY - Two people are dead and 15 wounded after an unidentified assailant tossed a grenade into a bus in Guatemala's capital.

The killings come amid a series of attacks against buses, which are frequent targets of extortion by gangs in Central America.

Police spokesman Donald Gonzalez says the bus was attacked at a parking lot along its route.

He said Monday that one possible motive under investigation is intimidation by gang members who extort bus drivers with threats of violence.

Prison Riot In Northern Brazil Leaves At Least 57 Inmates Dead

July 30, 2019 · 3:33 AM ET

SCOTT NEUMAN



A police officer patrols the surroundings of the Altamira Regional Recovery Centre after at least 52 inmates were killed in a prison riot, in the Brazilian northern city of Altamira, Pará state, on Monday.

Bruno Santos/AFP/Getty Images

At least 57 prisoners were killed by fellow inmates during a prison riot in northern Brazil in what authorities have described as a "targeted act" by gang members directed at a rival group.

Homicidal ecologies in Guatemala

Drug flows: border with
Mexico, ports, cities

Weak/complicit state: police/
state weak, compromised

Competition: movement of
Mexican cartels south, gang
battle over extortion rackets

Guatemalan presidential candidate arrested in Miami in drug-trafficking plot

Sofia Menchu

3 MIN READ



GUATEMALA CITY (Reuters) - A Guatemalan presidential candidate was arrested in Miami on Wednesday and charged with an elaborate plot to use drug cartel money to win the election and assassinate rivals, according to U.S. officials, two months before voters head to the polls.

Mario Estrada, candidate of the center-right National Change Union, who is polling far behind other rivals, is accused along with another man, Juan Pablo Gonzalez, of seeking between \$10 and \$12 million from Mexico's powerful Sinaloa Cartel to fund his campaign and transport cocaine into the United States.

"Estrada and Gonzalez conspired to solicit Sinaloa Cartel money to finance a corrupt scheme to elect Estrada president of Guatemala," Geoffrey Berman, U.S. attorney for the Southern District of New York, said in a statement.

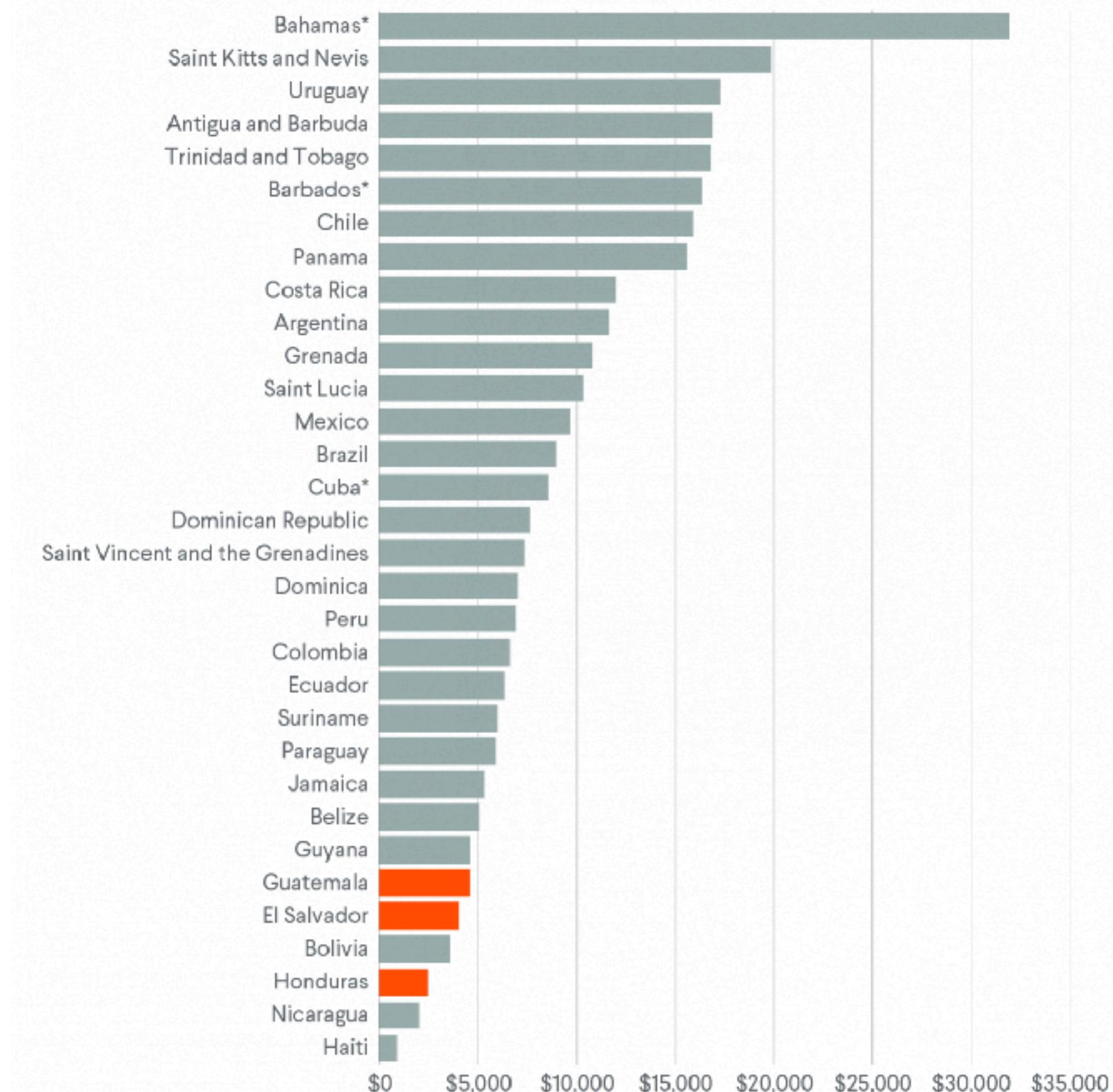


Nicaragua's different



Scraping By in the Northern Triangle

Gross domestic product per capita, 2018



*2017 data

Source: World Bank.

Nicaragua's different

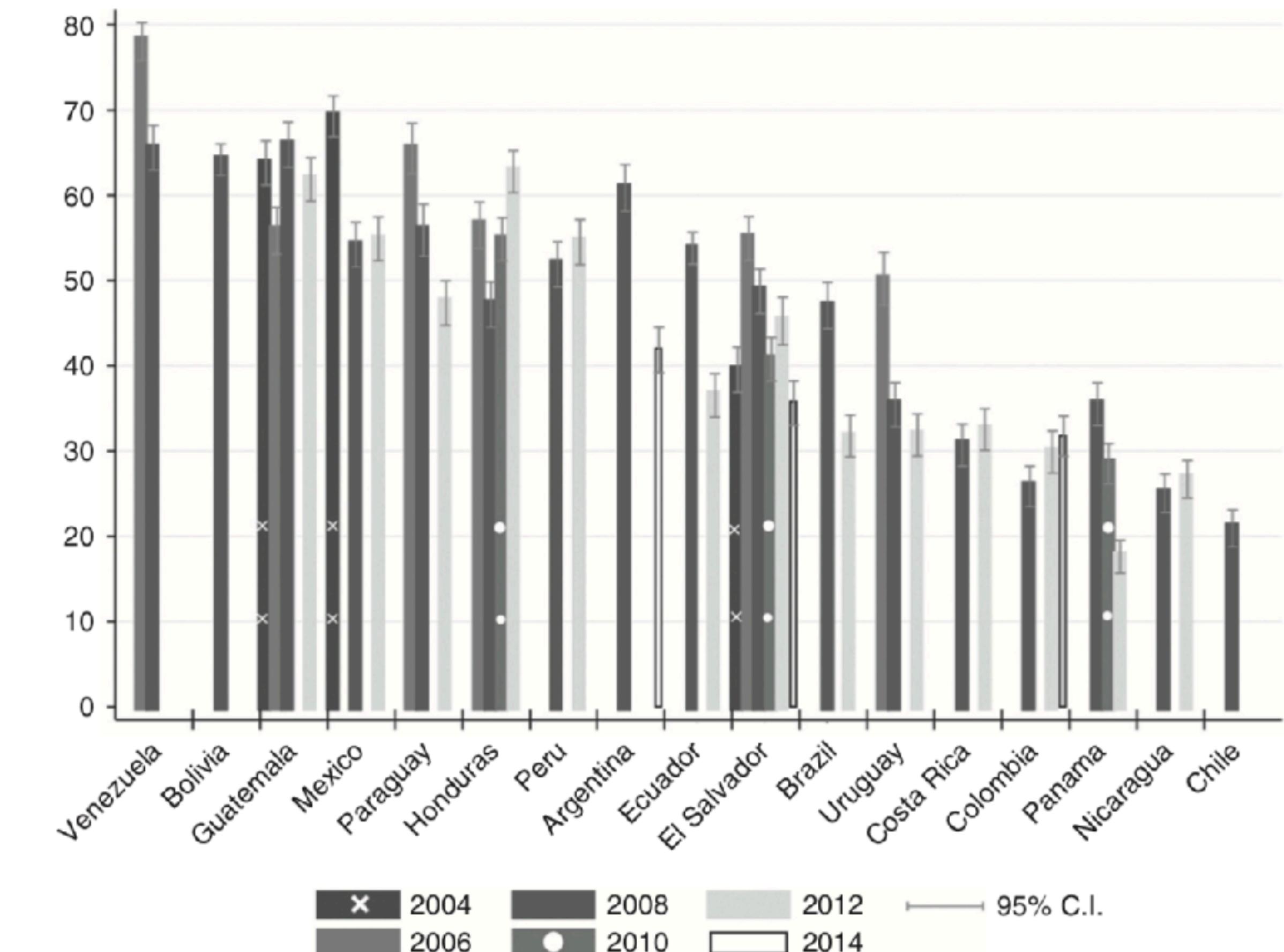
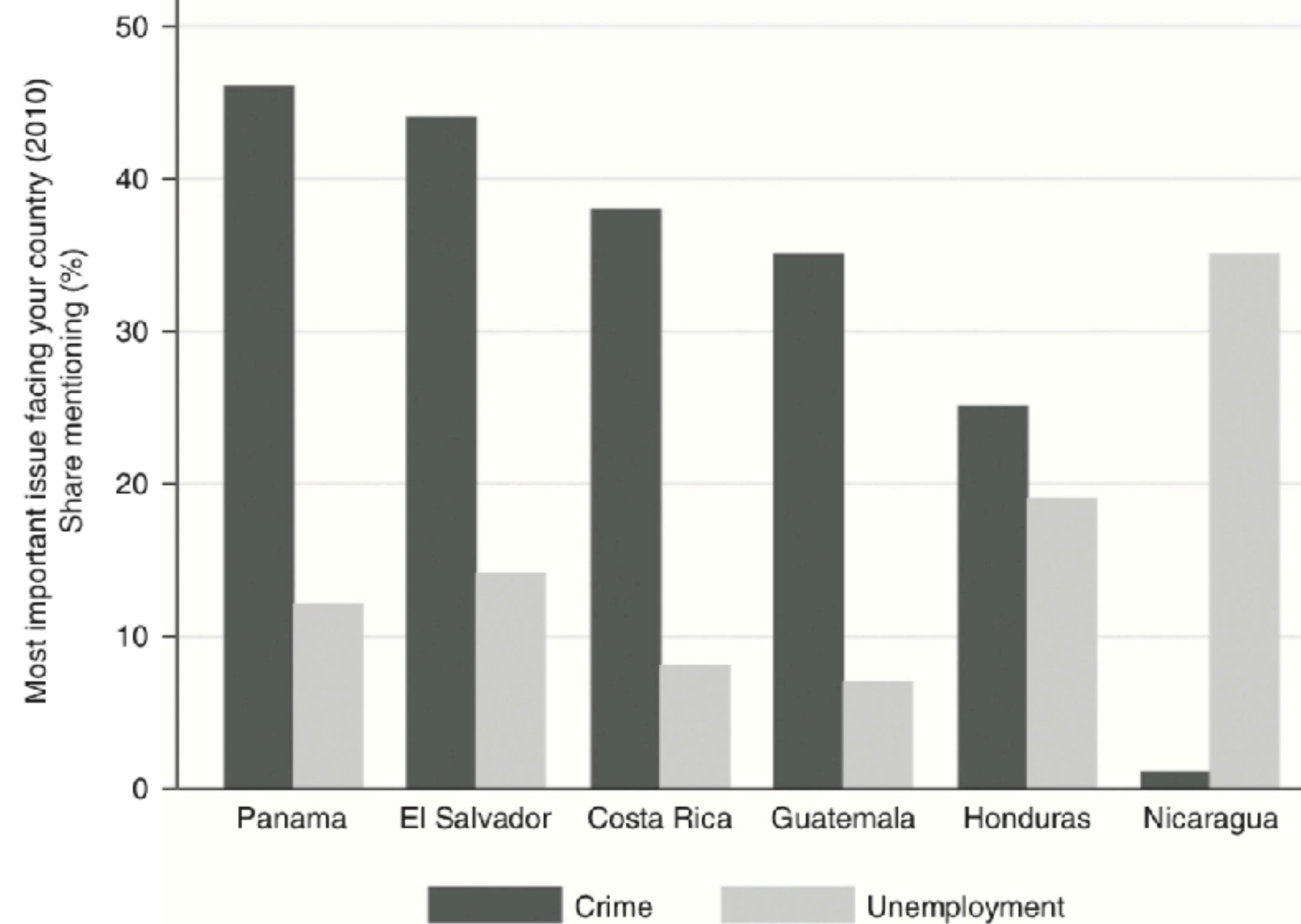


FIGURE 7.3 Belief in Latin America that police are involved in crime (2004–2014)
Source: LAPOP 2004–2012 Core Data. Specific country data for years 2010 and 2014.

The banana wars

1898 – 1934

Set of US interventions to protect
military/economic interests



The banana wars

Interventions:

Panama

Cuba: occupation after
independence

Dominican Republic:
1916 – 1924

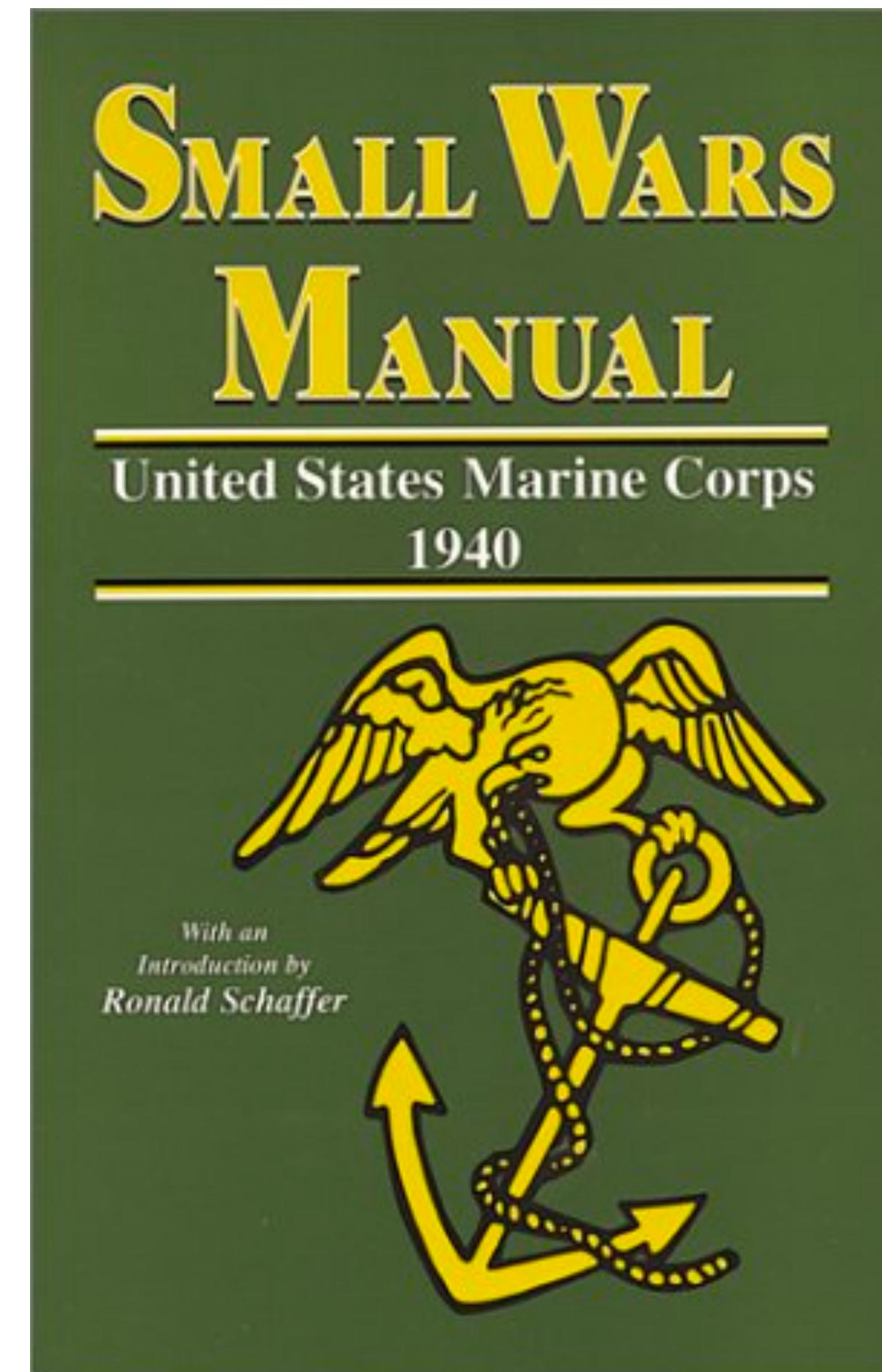
Haiti: 1915–1934

Mexico

Honduras:
like 8
invasions

Nicaragua:
1912 – 1933

The marines



The Nicaraguan revolution

US helps quash rebellion against
dictatorship

Somoza family put in charge, rule from
1937 — 1979

Sandinista National Liberation Front
defeats Somozas, takes power



“Tacho” Somoza,
Dictator of Nicaragua
1937—1979

“Sandinistas”



The contra war

Ex-Somoza supporters begin insurrection against Sandinista regime in 1980

Contra (“counter”) revolutionary war extremely bloody



Iran-contra affair

US support contras as part
of Cold War anti-
communism



Contra war ends in 1988
under leadership of Violeta
Chamorro



Contras reintegrated into
society

Sandinistas out of power

Sandinistas surprisingly lose elections in 1990 and peacefully turn over power

Military and police laws in 1990s to make security forces less “partisan”

Guatemala's civil war

1960 to 1996, 200k dead or missing

Nicaragua: rebels win quickly,
defend revolution

Guatemala: long insurgency
that ends in negotiated defeat

The “centaurized” Guatemalan state
doesn’t change much post war

Nicaragua able to loosen grip of military on state

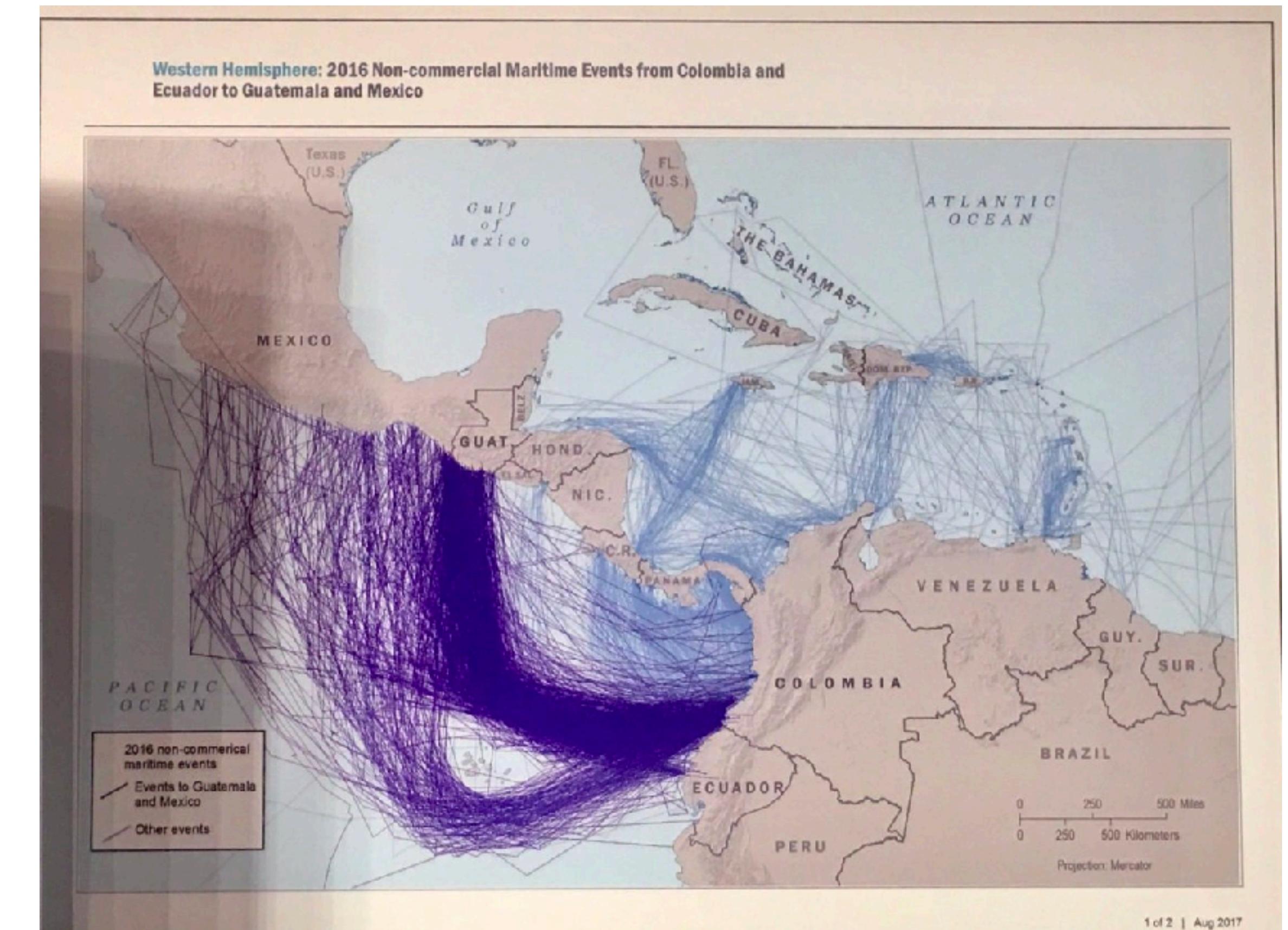


The three factors in Nicaragua

Violence = drug trade + weak states + competition

Nicaragua: blessed by geography

— Air --- Land - - Water



Nicaragua: competition

Areas with more competing cartels do have more violence, but nothing on the scale of Guate

“For the most part, gangs in Nicaragua are small youth gangs that are territorial in nature...involved in petty crime.”

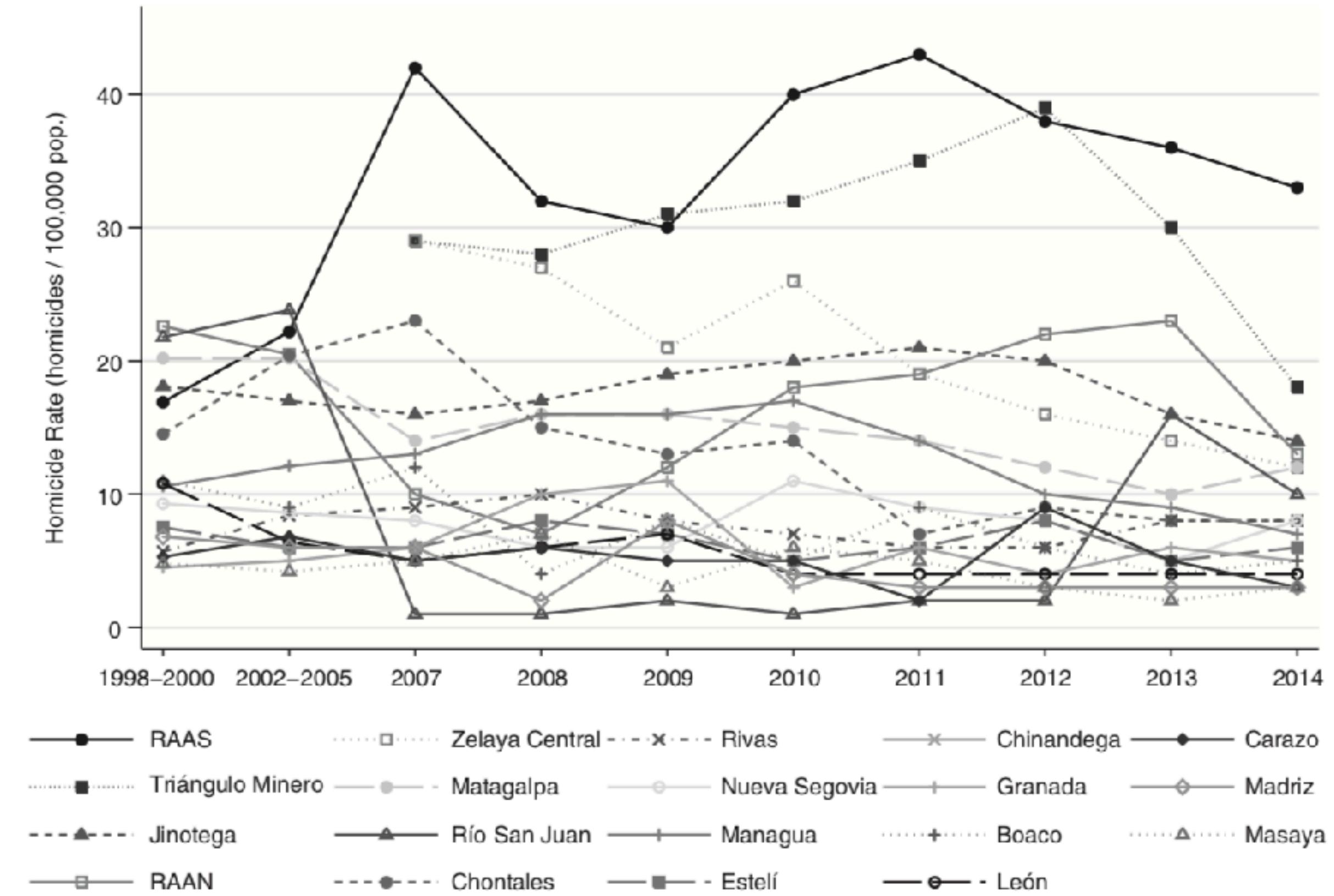


FIGURE 7.11 Homicide rates in Nicaraguan departments (1998–2014, rate per 100,000 population)

Nicaragua: the police

How does Yashar describe Nicaraguan police?

Widely trusted

High morale/loyalty

Professionalization

Community policing

High accountability

Separation of military
and police

Non-partisan

Loyalty in Nicaraguan police

Nicaraguan police seem more dedicated to social good; why?

Part of the story is the Revolution,
but that was a long time ago

How do these commitments persist over time? Or how do the police do to foster this?

Or maybe it's easier to be loyal when there's fewer cartels around

Community policing

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

SIGN IN

SUBSCR

WORLD

‘We Do All We Can So That People Don’t Kill Each Other’: The Experiment to Stop Latin America’s Carnage

Places in Ecuador and Colombia are exceptions to the region’s surge in homicides; turning gang members into garbage collectors, and firing hundreds of corrupt police officers



Community policing

The US Has Spent \$14B on Community Policing—What Have We Learned So Far?

Gauging whether a community policing program has been successful ultimately depends on how you define success.



A police officer speaks with kids in North Charleston, South Carolina. Photo by Ryan Johnson / Flickr.

Community policing

What does this look like in Nicaragua
(and in general)?

Cop as community problem-solver vs.
crime-punisher

Develop ties to community,
esp. gangs

presence/patrols

Active role in deterring crime (neighborhood watches, etc.)

Community decides how/what to police

Why the difference?

If Nicaragua's approach works, why
don't Northern Triangle countries
switch to this?

Part of the reasons are static:
geography of drug trade +
institutional “inertia”

But part of it is a choice about how to
deal with the drug trade

Letting the drugs flow

Some evidence Nicaragua has largely decided to allow drug trade to happen, “regulating” it

"People in the government know that the drugs are crossing there. But as long as they don't generate too much violence and too much conflict and disrupt the social order, they can just pass."



A mansion owned by Ted Hayman, one of the most notorious kingpins in Bluefields, Nicaragua. After his arrest last year, some people took to the streets to protest.

Letting the drugs flow

Involvement with **Drug** Traffickers and use of **Drug** Money for Campaign Finance

"We're the ones dealing with all of the dead people and all of the fighting, yet the consumers, the ones who provoke the phenomenon, are the ones who also decide who is doing a good job combating drugs," Suarez says. "That's why, some leaders have said, 'Let's legalize this and let the drugs flow north. Because if we don't, the *gringos* are going to keep swallowing drugs, while we kill each other.'"

verdicts.

31. (U) In one notorious case in 2005 widely reported in the media, Supreme Court magistrate Arguello coordinated a complicated scheme to make 609,000 dollars in **drug** money seized from two Colombians "disappear" from a Supreme Court account. There are credible reports that some of the money went to fund upcoming FSLN electoral campaigns, while the rest went to individual Sandinista judges, including Solis and Arguello.

But this could all go south

OPINION

Op-Ed: Nicaragua was one of Latin America's least violent countries. Now it's in a tailspin



Paramilitaries are seen on a truck at Monimbo neighborhood in Masaya, Nicaragua, on July 18. (Marvin Recinos / AFP/Getty Images)

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