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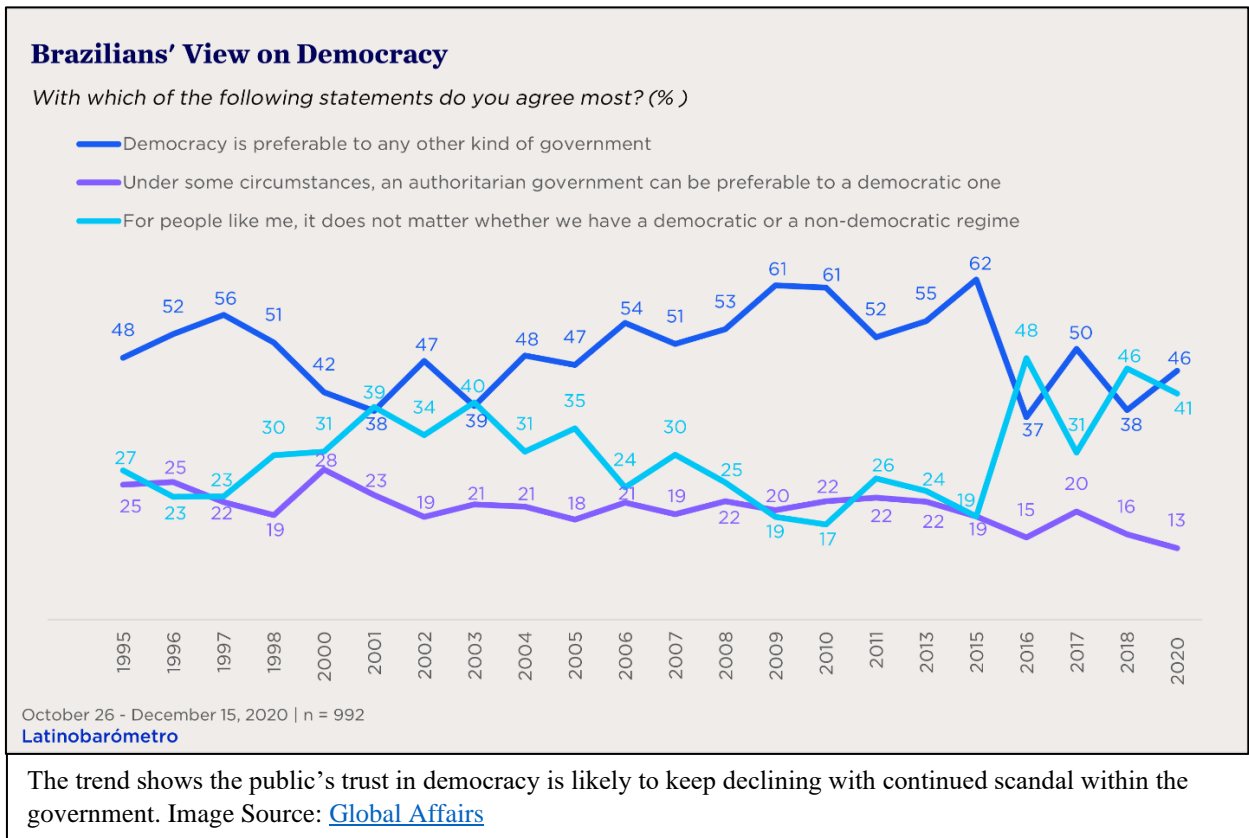
BRAZIL: Political Corruption Highly Likely to Damage Public's View of Government

Summary: The continuous political corruption within the Brazilian government, exemplified by ongoing charges against former President Jair Bolsonaro, will likely damage the public's confidence in the government. Given the Supreme Court's recent ruling, the courts will likely convict Bolsonaro of an attempted coup. This corruption within the uppermost part of government will almost certainly lead the people of Brazil to lose the remaining trust they have, especially if this trend continues. Due to this lack of trust, the Brazilian public will likely to large-scale protests across the country.

Background: On 26 March, Brasilia's Supreme Court ruled that Bolsonaro will stand trial for an attempted coup, according to *Americas Quarterly*. This is the most recent event of many that highlight corruption within Brasilia's government, part of a larger pattern of corruption, with five of the eight presidents who took office after the last military dictatorship ended in 1985 becoming involved in corruption scandals. In March 2014, Operacao Lava Gato (Operation Car Wash), a scheme that involved a state-owned oil company (Petrobras) and many high-level politicians, was launched. Investigations showed that influential politicians and Brazilian corporations were kicking back millions of dollars to secure contracts with Petrobras, according to the Council on Foreign Relations.

Public is Almost Certain to Lose Trust in the Government: The public will almost certainly lose its trust in the government due to continued political corruption. After Operation Car Wash became public knowledge, the Brazilian public grew polarized, according to the Kellogg Institute for International Studies. As the public began scrutinizing Lula, Bolsonaro gained a massive following. While both politicians have avid supporters, the scandal hastened the division. According to BBC, another scandal broke out amid the Operation Car Wash allegations. Brasilia alleged Lula and other members of the Worker's Party took portions of the funds from Operation Car Wash to buy votes and fund their campaigns. Lula was found guilty and sentenced on three of the five charges against him, although the court annulled his convictions in 2021, according to Reuters. Lula ran for office and was elected president again in 2022. However, even before the

election, Bolsonaro was sowing doubt about the integrity of elections in Brazil during his campaign, according to CNN World.



Lack of Trust will Likely Lead to Protests: The lack of trust in government actions will likely lead to public protests. In the past, Brazil's population has protested the abuse of democracy and corruption within its government. In response to perceived unfairness in the 2022 elections, Bolsonaro supporters protested outside the Brazilian Congress building. Bolsonaro supporters later stormed the building, even though the event started out peacefully, according to CNN World. During Operation Car Wash, people protested to hold political figures accountable for taking bribes and money laundering. Lula's supporters protested to denounce the court's ruling, despite his alleged connection to Operation Car Wash, according to AP News. AP News interviewed some of the supporters at the gathering, many of which believed that the conviction was a ploy to prevent Lula from running for the upcoming election in 2017.

The people of Brazil have historically proven that they will make their voices heard on issues that they care about, according to BBC. In 2004, landless campaigners staged a series of protests

and land invasions to reform hunger and slavery. In 2005, protests about the corruption in the Worker's Party occurred as mentioned above. In 2013, a wave of public demonstrations to protest poor public services and rising expenses occurred, according to BBC.



Public displays such as the one shown above are likely to increase if political polarization and lack of trust in the Brazilian government continues. Image Source: [Reuters](#)

Outlook and Implications: The Brazilian public's view of their government is highly likely to keep deteriorating if political corruption continues. The Supreme Court will likely convict Bolsonaro of the alleged coup attempt, given the history of corruption of Brazilian presidents. Bolsonaro supporters will likely react with protests and demonstrations, much like Lula supporters did after his conviction. Political polarization will likely accelerate after these protests. It is highly likely that both sides believe that the government is against them and working for the adversary. When Lula's conviction was reversed, Bolsonaro supporters likely believed the government was wrongfully allowing a criminal to run for president. If Bolsonaro is not convicted, Lula's supporters will likely think the same. Whether Bolsonaro is convicted or not, it is almost certain that the trust in the government from both Lula and Bolsonaro supporters will decrease. The blatant corruption within the government, along with political figures sowing doubt about the government, is likely responsible for the decrease of trust in the integrity of democracy in Brazil. It is likely that this damage will increase the chances of revolting against

the government. The Brazilian public has shown us that it is probable they will have a reaction, either peaceful or violent, about corruption in politics. The Brazilian public is highly unlikely to let political corruption continue without consequence. The continuation of corruption will likely warrant large-scale protests. It is unlikely that Brasilia will change the way it handles insider corruption. Given the history of Brazilian social movements, has shown that the protests will likely start peacefully but will quickly turn violent once a large number of people have gathered.

[Madison Turner]

HAITI: Gang Violence Likely to Continue After More Police Officer Deaths

Summary: Pictures of a dead Kenyan police officer in Haiti, who was fighting gang violence in Port-au-Prince, recently surfaced. Gang members also shared videos of U.S.-funded military trucks set on fire in a ditch, a trap set up by a local gang to ambush the police via WhatsApp. This police officer's death marks the second Kenyan casualty in this conflict, Kenyan soldiers likely face increasing difficulties, as gangs will likely continue expanding their control over Haitian cities.

Background: On 25 March, a Kenyan police officer deployed to Haiti as part of the Kenyan-led counter-gang efforts in the country died in an ambush. In a separate incident, a team of police set out on patrol in a smaller town, Savien, when their truck became stuck in a ditch. Gangs then ambushed the police and opened fire, the most recent example in the ongoing fight to restore peace to the country. This marks the second Kenyan fatality since the rollout of more than 800 police officers to Haiti, which has made little progress in combating the gangs. Haiti's Presidential Transitional Council (CPT) stated that its authorities will continue to "restore stability and build a Haiti where security and justice prevail," according to BBC. The police force faces funding and troop shortages. A Haitian National Police (PNH) Spokesperson said "With the MSS mission underfunded, outgunned, and short-staffed, Haiti's security forces remain at a breaking point—while gangs grow bolder by the day," according to *Haitian Times*.

Humanitarian Situation Likely to Continue Deteriorating: With too little funding and ineffective combat methods, gang violence will likely kill more people. Reports have stated that 80% of Port-Au-Prince fell under full gang control. Gang-related violence killed more than 5,500 people in Haiti in 2024, and more than a million people have fled their homes, according to the Voice of Nigeria. Haitians also suffer a strong food insecurity and emergency hunger levels. "Nearly 6,000 people are living in famine-like conditions, while 500,000 children are displaced - a quarter suffering stunted growth due to malnutrition. Only half of health facilities in the capital are fully operational, and 31 per cent have shut down due to insecurity," according to the United Nations. The humanitarian situation in the city will likely continue to worsen without effective intervention against the gangs. Gangs could exploit this to expand their recruitment efforts.

Gang Territorial Control: After the gang's high success of taking over the capital, they will likely put more effort into expanding farther out to take control over more of the country. Gangs have started to implement their own rules across their controlled parts of the country, according to sources within the United Nations. This allows gangs to take over smaller towns and villages, which will improve their ability to coordinate attacks against the PNH. Gangs in the area will probably use this advantage to expand their territorial control, slowly taking the country town by town. Increased gang control of smaller areas within Haiti will almost certainly make domestic trade and transportation much more complicated and dangerous. The United Nations communicated this concern, saying "The Viv Ansanm gang coalition and others have launched coordinated attacks, often outnumbering police, and have destroyed or taken over schools, orphanages, courts, media outlets and hospitals," according to News UN.

Haiti Calls for Help: Haiti will likely continue calling on nearby countries for assistance in the form of equipment, troops, or money after losing ground against gangs. Port-Au-Prince voiced its crucial need for heavier equipment to create order, saying "The mission also faces a severe equipment shortage, despite pledges of support from international allies," according to Haitian Times. A source on the ground told reporters that they do not have enough space for more troops



Armored car stuck in a ditch in Haiti. Image Source: Stock Image

because of the lack of Forward Operating Bases (FOB). While international partners land more troops on the ground, these efforts will likely not succeed without more FOBs. A PNH spokesperson also stated that other forms of support, especially combat helicopters and maritime security equipment, could help police more effectively fight the gangs. With combat helicopters, the PNH would likely take back much of the land they lost to gangs.

Outlook and Implications: The lack of funding from allied countries, improving tactics, and increased resources from gangs in Port-Au-Prince will almost certainly make the country's efforts to restore order much more difficult. Gangs will likely see this opportunity and use it to further tighten their grasp on the capital and its people. It is nearly certainty that people, including Kenyan police officers, will continue to die because of the violence inherent to gang takeovers. Gangs will likely have the ability to create stronger tactics because of the increased land they control, along with the increase of smuggled arms entering the country. Gangs will likely take over port towns, which gives them control of shipping to and from Haiti, adding another degree of difficulty to the fight. Unless the forces in Haiti get many more troops and support from allied countries, the PNH will probably not have ample power to fight the ever-strengthening gangs in Haiti.

[Davis Cameron Parker]

MEXICO: Operation Northern Border Likely Viable Action Against Drug Trafficking

Summary: Since its launch on 4 February, President Claudia Sheinbaum's Operation Northern Border (ONB) has completely rebranded Mexico's approach to combatting drug trafficking. The operation's key goals include curbing narcotic trafficking and bolstering border security. As the operation progresses, Operation Northern Border's military-heavy approach at the border, combined with efforts to disrupt drug transportation by sea, may ultimately transform the fight against organized crime and smuggling, bringing about meaningful change for the country and its people.

Background: Sheinbaum launched Operation Northern Border in response to rising drug trafficking and organized crime, particularly in Mexico's border states. For many previous presidencies, drug trafficking had remained a central concern, but this ever-evolving system continued to thrive despite Mexico City's efforts to contain it. This operation, debuted in early February, aimed to finally rein in trafficking and heighten security through increased military deployment designed to dismantle criminal networks. Early reports show that the operation proved effective in its core focus on curbing trafficking, seizing nearly 53,000 pounds of drugs



Image displays cartel smuggling routes in Mexico. Image Source: [Research Gate](#)

and arresting 1,809 people by 25 March, according to Herald USA. The same report shows that criminal organizations alone have incurred an estimated \$7.3 million in financial losses.

Smuggling Disruptions at the Border: The significant increase in military presence at the northern border likely indicates Mexico City's confidence in the potential of its security forces. Early reports on 10 February, just six days after ONB first launched, noted that former diplomats and analysts expressed doubts regarding the operation's ability to effectively resist the flow of migrants and drugs, according to *The Mazatlán Weekly*. However, by 21 February, Mexico City's border patrol reported 622 arrests and seized of nearly half a ton of cocaine and 10 tons of meth, according to WOLA. This swift shift from initial skepticism of any success to notable results within just 11 days suggests that Sheinbaum's immediate and forceful approach to drug trafficking likely proved itself. Along the nearly 50 border crossings into the US, Sheinbaum deployed about 2,600 troops in Chihuahua alone to intercept smuggling. By 7 February, forces had already made nearly 20 arrests, seized firearms and vehicles, and significant quantities of narcotics, according to *El Paso Times*. Early and continued success at border ports supports the idea that Operation Northern Border may prove itself a cornerstone initiative in Sheinbaum's security strategy.

Core Ship Operation Seizures: Drug seizures on boats likely show Mexico City's commitment to halting drug trafficking at its core. On 29 March, a 1.8-ton cocaine seizure on a boat intercepted just off the coast of Acapulco, Guerrero, marked a significant achievement for Mexico City, according to *El País*. This added itself to a total of nearly 30 tons of cocaine seized since Sheinbaum took office. These seizures also disrupted criminal groups involved in fuel smuggling, which contributes about \$49 million daily in illicit sales, according to *El País*. Beyond just drugs and fuel, these operations disrupted part of the logistical infrastructure that the cartels and similar organizations depend on for their shipments, weakening their influence. Sheinbaum will likely capitalize on these successes and continue to build momentum, strengthening Mexico City's strategies to target the foundations of these organizations.

Outlook and Implications: Mexico City's Operation Northern Border may prove itself as a viable, long-term solution to drug trafficking. With early success in disrupting criminal networks, intercepting drug shipments, and dismantling smuggling foundations, this operation may become a key pillar of Mexico's anti-drug strategy. The sustained focus on weakening cartels by targeting both high-level players and essential supplies for their operations suggests that Sheinbaum's approach shows reactivity but also proactivity, which may help address the

root causes of these criminal networks. As the operation evolves, it may foster stronger collaboration between Mexico City and other governments to tackle organized crime more effectively. Over time, ONB may even lead to the creation of sophisticated anti-trafficking networks capable of preventing drug shipments from reaching their destination. This may also encourage broader reforms within Mexico's law enforcement, improving public trust and operational efficiency. For Operation Northern Border to truly succeed in the long term, it would likely need to adapt in real time to combat the cartels' ability to evolve their strategies. If Sheinbaum can maintain momentum and continue targeting the core of these criminal organizations, Operation Northern Border may evolve into a crucial part of a sustainable solution to drug trafficking for Mexico.

[Morgan Evenson]

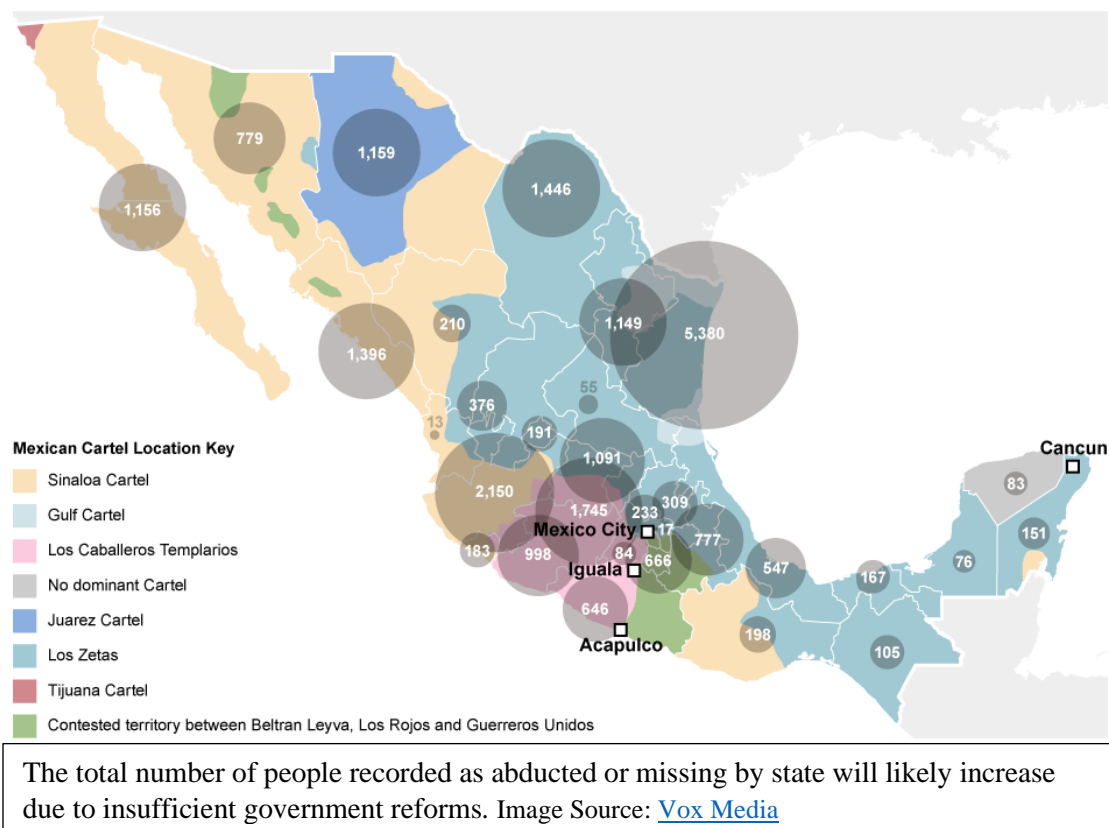
MEXICO: Discovery of Extermination Camp Almost Certainly Deepens Public Distrust

Summary: The discovery of a mass grave in Teuchitlán and local authorities' mishandling of the investigation highlight Mexico City's failure to address organized crime and human rights abuses. Despite repeated promises of reform, the slow and ineffective response, as well as potential corruption within law enforcement, led to widespread distrust among citizens. As cartel violence continues to escalate, many citizens question Mexico City's ability to protect them and deliver justice, and the cycle of violence will likely persist.

Background: For the past six years, disappearances have plagued Mexico, and the discovery of a mass burial site on Izaguirre Ranch in Teuchitlán may offer the answers families and officials seek. A group of civilian organizations dedicated to searching for missing persons, known as "seekers," reported the discovery of the "ranch of horror," where they found burnt human remains, bullet casings, over 200 pairs of shoes, and other personal items. Officials believe that the ranch belonged to Mexico's Jalisco Cartel and served as a training camp where the cartel held forced recruits. Officials cannot determine how many people have died, and they have not identified any of the remains. Since 2006, over 116,000 people have disappeared in Mexico, and for the past six years, a person has gone missing every hour, according to Anadolu Agency. Previously, Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum pledged to strengthen laws around missing people, but this discovery has cast a shadow on that.

Distrust of Government Reforms Likely Leads to Discouraged Citizens: The discovery of the extermination camp likely undermines Sheinbaum's message about addressing the mass disappearances in Mexico. Mexican citizens will likely not trust Sheinbaum's claims due to the severity of the extermination camp. The attention surrounding Teuchitlan puts increasing pressure on Sheinbaum, who took office last October with the aim of distinguishing herself from her mentor, former President Andre Manuel Lopez Obrador, whom citizens criticized for not doing enough to address the ongoing disappearances, according to Reuters. Tensions have escalated as more families arrive at the site, demanding answers. They wait to enter the gates, hoping to identify their missing loved ones among their belongings and finally achieve closure, according to Reuters. Protestors have also gathered across Mexico as a call to Mexico City, demanding justice. Aurora Corona, a woman whose son vanished over a year ago, stated that she

hoped the discovery would put pressure on authorities to do more to find the hundreds of thousands of people registered as missing in Mexico and “hopefully they’ll pay attention to us now they see the horrors of the country we live in,” according to CBS. Sheinbaum has promised to stand by the victims and their families and deliver justice. Her proposed reforms aim to create a universal system for recording personal and biometric data and accelerate the search process to ensure an immediate response to a missing person, according to Anadolu Agency. Although she has attempted to make addressing disappearances a focal point of her presidential term, the exposure of the “ranch of horror” likely discourages citizens from believing the reforms work.



Inadequate Government Response Almost Certainly Undermines Reforms: The inability of Mexico City to effectively combat organized crime and human rights abuses will likely lead to rising levels of cartel activity and violence, creating a sense of helplessness among citizens. The numerous allegations of misconduct by state officials suggest their likely involvement in corruption and almost certainly deepens citizens’ doubts about the ability of Mexico City to bring justice to the victims. The Federal Attorney General’s Office took over the Teuchitlán case

due to the “many problems” in the investigation conducted by the Jalisco Attorney General’s Office, according to *Mexico News Daily*. This shift in authority underscores the lack of accountability within local agencies to properly carry out investigations. It also suggests the potential influence of corruption within local governments, as cartels have historically bribed officials. Authorities arrested two municipal police officers, “allegedly” related to the case, which will almost certainly undermine citizens’ trust in their local police forces. Mexico’s Attorney General, Alejandro Gertz, criticized the Jalisco state authorities for their negligence in handling the investigation at Izaguirre Ranch. According to Gertz, they failed to test human remains, properly identify clothing and shoes found on-site, register evidence or fingerprints, process the vehicles located at the ranch, and neglected to alert federal authorities, despite standard procedure requiring them to do so, according to *Mexico News Daily*. State authorities had supposedly secured the ranch six months before activists discovered it. This systematic failure in law enforcement likely undermines any of Mexico City’s promises or proposed reforms.

Outlook and Implications: The discovery of the extermination camp likely undermines Sheinbaum’s pledges to strengthen laws regarding missing persons. Citizens across Mexico likely grow frustrated by years of waiting with little to no reforms. Despite Sheinbaum’s focus on disappearances, the severity and scale of the extermination camp and the lingering mistrust in Mexico City’s ability to resolve the crisis, will almost certainly lead many to question the effectiveness of her proposed reforms. As violence and disappearances persist, Mexico City’s empty promises of justice and reform likely fuel citizens’ feelings of abandonment and disillusionment. Many citizens likely believe that those in power either contribute to the violence or lack the ability to stop it, breeding skepticism about Mexico City’s willingness to address the root causes of the violence. Without significant reforms to tackle corruption and inefficiencies in local law enforcement, the cycle of cartel violence and impunity will likely continue. The mishandling of evidence in the Teuchitlán case illustrates Mexico City’s failure to prevent such atrocities, suggesting that similar incidents will likely persist without reform. This inability to implement necessary changes to law enforcement despite repeated promises almost certainly shows the reforms as either insufficient or deliberately undermined by corruption, eroding public faith in Mexico City’s ability to enact change. As pressure mounts, Sheinbaum’s administration will likely attempt to reassure the public that they do everything possible to bring justice to the

victims of Izaguirre Ranch. However, the longer it takes for citizens to witness visible reforms, the more their trust in Mexico City's ability to protect them from cartel violence will likely erode. This growing frustration could leave Mexico's political establishment at a critical crossroads. Not only will they likely have to address the possible corruption, but they must restore the public trust essential for long-term stability and peace.

[Tessa Updegraff]

About GSIS

Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University's (ERAU) Bachelor of Science in Global Security & Intelligence Studies (GSIS) degree program at our Prescott Campus blends both academic and professional studies to equip students with the knowledge and skills necessary to become future leaders in intelligence, security, and law enforcement. The program provides students with a sound foundation in the liberal arts, including international relations, foreign languages and cultures, international law, foreign policy, political and military history, and other essential topics.

About EE

Eagle Eye Intelligence (EE) is an intelligence and research organization led by the students of the GSIS program at ERAU in Prescott, Arizona.

Dr. Philip E. Jones founded EE and Embry-Riddle's GSIS program in 2002, following a career with the Central Intelligence Agency and consulting work in international development and global security. Currently, Professor Dale R. Avery, a former career intelligence analyst, serves as EE's faculty advisor.

EE strives to provide actionable intelligence and analysis to its customers during the academic year. We are driven by a number of goals – continuous development, nonpartisanship, interdisciplinary studies, global awareness, and professionalism.

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Lauren Estrada, a Senior in the GSIS program, currently serves as EE's Editor in Chief. For questions or comments, contact the team at editorsee@gmail.com or Professor Avery at 928.777.4708. If you use material from this publication, you should attribute: Eagle Eye Intelligence Edition 472, a publication created by students at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in Prescott, Arizona.



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