

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

September 23, 2020

His Excellency Nayib Armando Bukele Ortez  
President of the Republic of El Salvador

Dear Mr. President:

For many years the United States and El Salvador have had a relationship of mutual respect and cooperation. Over two million Salvadoran-Americans live and work in the United States contributing to our economy and to our culture. Through our nation's Congress, our citizens have made major investments in El Salvador's government institutions, security, and economy. Additionally, we appreciate your government's recognition of interim President Juan Guaido in Venezuela. The relationship our two countries share is important to us, and our hope is that it can continue to grow and flourish.

We are writing today to respectfully express our concerns regarding recent developments in El Salvador which have been documented by various news organizations. Specifically, we are troubled by what appears to be a slow but sure departure from the rule of law and norms of democracy that our hemisphere has fought so hard to preserve. Some of these concerns are also shared by high-ranking officials within the United States' Millennium Challenge Corporation who have specifically referenced your government's use of troops to intimidate its Federal congress and efforts to undermine judicial decrees which called out potentially unconstitutional extensions of power during the pandemic. We also understand that the Salvadoran government has arbitrarily targeted the subsidiary of an American company, raiding its facilities and disrupting its operations.

We are also troubled by reports that the government of El Salvador could be legitimizing MS-13, the largest and most dangerous gang in the United States, by engaging in a risky negotiation process that could further empower this criminal organization. MS-13, as you well know, is designated a domestic terrorist organization by your own government and is actively involved in drug trafficking and underaged human trafficking and has terrorized American communities with brutal and violent crimes.

The United States, through its participation in the Organization of American States and by way of its own foreign policy, has long promoted strong democratic institutions, adherence to the rule of law, and respect for human rights across the Americas. We strongly believe that these important values advance the security and prosperity of all peoples in our hemisphere, including the people of El Salvador. As members of Congress, we are pleased to fund the departments and programs that work daily to promote these values.

Our commitment to freedom and democratic institutions in the Americas is unwavering, which is why we strongly oppose the dictatorships that currently rule Cuba, Nicaragua, and Venezuela. For decades El Salvador has been a member of the community of free and democratic nations in our hemisphere. It is our sincere hope that this important tradition will continue for the benefit of Americans, Salvadorans, and the citizens of our neighbor nations in the region.

Sincerely,



DAVID P. JOYCE  
Member of Congress



MARIO DIAZ-BALART  
Member of Congress



RODNEY DAVIS  
Member of Congress



BRIAN FITZPATRICK  
Member of Congress



ALEX X. MOONEY  
Member of Congress



FRANCIS ROONEY  
Member of Congress