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8-27-2024

### Power and Policies: Criminal governance at the Colombia-Venezuela border (1999-2024)

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#### Recommended Citation

Sanguino-Cuellar, Kenny, "Power and Policies: Criminal governance at the Colombia-Venezuela border (1999-2024)" (2024). *International Programs*. 280.

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## at the Colombia-Venezuela border (1999-2024)

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### Abstract

This research studies the violence and tensions on the Colombian-Venezuelan border since 1999, focusing on the interactions between the civilian population, state authorities, and organized criminal groups.

### Framework

1. Feldmann & Mantilla (2021); Feldmann & Luna (2022) and Mantilla (2024) provide a key framework for understanding the influence and control of criminal groups, their operations, and tactics in conflict regions.
2. Arias (2018) offers valuable insights on security policies and state responses to challenges imposed by criminal organizations on the Colombian-Venezuelan border.
3. Andreas (2022) and Idler (2019) help to understand the symbolic value of the border amidst governmental tensions and the role of non-state actors in filling the governance vacuum and affecting state decisions.

### Objectives

1. Analyze the violence and tensions occurred at the Colombian-Venezuelan border since 1999.
2. Identify the relationships between the civilian population, state authorities, and organized criminal groups at this border.
3. Explore how variations in the power of armed groups influence the security policies implemented since 2015.

### Method

1. The literature review provides a theoretical framework for understanding criminal governance and border security.
2. The qualitative data from interviews and focus groups with civilians, authorities, and organized crime members provide in-depth insights.
3. The quantitative data from various reports and datasets are statistically analyzed to identify patterns and relationships

### Early findings

1. Tensions between the states of Colombia and Venezuela have been permanent in the period under study, but their most critical years were 2008, 2015 and 2019.
2. The interaction between the civilian population, public institutions and criminal groups at the Colombia-Venezuela border fits into what García-Pinzón & Mantilla (2021) have called criminal governance.
3. Security policies between 2018 and 2023 have generated what Mantilla (2024) has called the paradox of border control, that is, the strengthening of criminal groups that were intended to be weakened.

### References and CV

