

# *El Salvador authorizes lethal force against gang members as prisons go on lockdown*

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San Salvador, April 28 (RHC)-- In El Salvador, President Nayib Bukele has authorized police and military to use lethal force against alleged gang members, following a spate of homicides in recent days linked to gang activity.

Authorities say more than 50 people were murdered over the weekend, after imprisoned suspected gang members allegedly ordered the killings from behind bars. Shocking images, many of which were shared on Bukele's own Twitter account, show prisoners crammed together, with only some wearing face masks, as prisons enforce a round-the-clock lockdown on suspected gang members, which includes putting metal sheets over prison bars and housing inmates from rival gangs in the same overcrowded cells.

Coronavirus cases have been mounting across prisons in Latin America as human rights advocates and public health experts call on authorities to release nonviolent prisoners.

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