



## *Pelo telefone*: Rumors, truths and myths in the ‘pacification’ of the favelas of Rio de Janeiro

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### Preface

The phenomenon of humanitarian engagement with situations of urban violence has attracted growing interest from academics, and practitioners in recent years.<sup>2</sup> Yet the subject remains shrouded with myths and misconceptions.<sup>3</sup> Much violence in the world today takes place outside formal conflict zones, in what are sometimes referred to as ‘fragile settings’. The purpose of the paper is to provide a detailed, factual assessment of one such operation, the so-called ‘pacification’ of the *favelas* of Rio de Janeiro, written from a humanitarian and human rights perspective.<sup>4</sup>

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3 For an overview discussion see Robert Muggah and Kevin Savage, ‘Urban Violence and Humanitarian Action: Engaging the Fragile City,’ *Journal of Humanitarian Assistance*, 2012; and Elena Lucchi, *Humanitarian interventions in situations of urban violence*, ALNAP Lessons Paper. London: ALNAP/ODI.

4 The term ‘pacification’ is widely used by both the Brazilian authorities and the Brazilian media. Its

*Rhetoric about a global 'war on terror', which was preceded by the so-called 'war on drugs', has been used by some to argue that international human rights law could be suspended, or displaced by the more permissive laws of armed conflict, which, by turning criminals into combatants, gives the security forces a license to kill.*

Since the terrorist attacks in the United States on 11<sup>th</sup> September 2001 and the subsequent US-led interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq, some have argued that fragile states represent a threat to international peace and security.<sup>5</sup> This has triggered a range of responses by both national governments and the UN Security Council, which are increasingly referred to under the common rubric of *stabilization*.<sup>6</sup> The UN missions to Haiti and the Democratic Republic of Congo both feature 'stabilization' as a central goal and there is a growing literature describing the inter-relationship between 'stabilization', counter-terrorism, counter-insurgency, peace-building, state-building, early recovery and development.<sup>7</sup>

In some cases these operations have been led by international armed forces, often mandated by the Security Council under its Chapter VII powers, while in others they have been carried out by national governments themselves. In both cases there has sometimes been doubt about the legal framework governing such operations, particularly where they have involved soldiers as well as the police. Rhetoric about a global 'war on terror', which was preceded by the so-called 'war on drugs', has been used by some to argue that international human rights law could be suspended, or displaced by the more permissive laws of armed conflict, which, by turning criminals into combatants, gives the security forces a license to kill.<sup>8</sup>

At the same time, the supposed benefits of bringing to bear military planning, strategy and coordination has excited policy-makers frustrated by the failures of traditional policing in some settings. Operations such as the one described in this paper have attracted international attention because they appear to offer lessons both to those involved in formal counter-insurgency situations and to those struggling to uphold law and order in the face of extreme crime and violence. For humanitarians, accustomed to working in complex emergencies, this places the old dilemmas of host-state consent and civil-military cooperation in a new, and sometimes unsettling context when delivering social services or stimulating economic activity in territories that have been 'pacified' or otherwise brought under state control.

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militaristic connotations obviously make it controversial from a human rights point of view.

5 See, for example, Philip Wilkinson, *The Military Contribution to Peace Support Operations, Joint Warfare Publication (JWP) 3-50, Second Edition*, Shrivenham: Ministry of Defence, 2004; Robert B. Oakley, Michael J. Dziedzic, Eliot M. Goldberg (eds), *Policing The New World Disorder: Peace Operations And Public Security*, Washington DC: National Defense University Press, 1998.

6 Robert Muggah, (ed), *Stabilization operations, security and development: states of fragility*, London and New York: Routledge, 2014.

7 Oliver Ramsbotham, Hugh Miall, Tom Woodhouse, *The Dilemmas of Statebuilding: Confronting the Contradictions of Post War Peace Operations*, Abingdon: Routledge, 2009; Beth Cole and Emily Hsu (lead writers), *Guiding Principles for Stabilization and Reconstruction*, Washington: United States Institute for Peace, 2009; OECD-DAC *Supporting Statebuilding in Situations of Conflict and Fragility: Policy Guidance*, DAC Guidelines and Reference Series, Paris: OECD, 2011.

8 Noam Lubell, *Extraterritorial Use of Force Against Non-State Actors*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.

This paper does not seek to deny or diminish the achievements of the 'pacification' process. By driving organized armed gangs out of a significant number of Rio de Janeiro's *favelas*, the police have brought a relative degree of stability to places for the first time in a generation. At the same time, it will be argued, that the 'pacification' has not been the 'silver bullet' that is sometimes portrayed. The real lesson is that there is no short-cut from long-term reform of policing and the criminal justice system as well as tackling the corruption, poverty, inequality and social exclusion that give rise to states of fragility to begin with. Humanitarian action can also only ever be a palliative and agencies would be advised to continue with a gradual and incremental approach towards such engagement.

## Introduction

*Pelo Telefone*

*'O Chefe da polícia*

*Pelo telefone manda me avisar*

*Que na carioca tem uma roleta para se jogar'*

### Translation

'The Chief of the Police

By the telephone he warned me

That in Rio there is a roulette game to play'

It was described as the largest security operation in Brazilian history.<sup>9</sup> At the end of November 2010 a combined force of two thousand seven hundred soldiers, and civil and military police, aided by air force attack helicopters, navy marines, armored cars, tanks, high velocity weapons, and elite special forces launched an all-out assault on Complexo do Alemão where the three main crime gangs of Rio de Janeiro had mounted an open challenge to the authority of the Brazilian state. Over the previous week the gangs had attacked police stations, burned buses and cars, blocked streets with barricades and engaged the police in gun battles while terrified civilians tried to avoid getting caught in the cross-fire.<sup>10</sup>

By 28 November the security forces had taken full control of the complex, for the first time in decades.<sup>11</sup> The Brazilian national flag was symbolically raised over the territory while the police announced the seizure of over forty tons of drugs and a vast arsenal of weapons as well as the capture of a gang leader notorious for his role in the kidnapping torture and murder of a Brazilian investigative journalist.<sup>12</sup> The authorities also found a weapons repair shop, a trafficker's social club and a luxurious mansion, equipped with several large plasma screen TVs, a swimming pool and air conditioning system. Local street-children could be seen enjoying the facilities on

<sup>9</sup> *BBC News*, 'Rio drug traffickers are surrounded by the police and army, 28 November 2010.

<sup>10</sup> *Rio Times*, 'Brazilian Forces Take Complexo do Alemão Favela', 28 November 2010.

<sup>11</sup> *BBC News*, 'Brazilian forces seize Rio drug trafficker stronghold', 28 November 2010.

<sup>12</sup> In June 2002 Tim Lopes was kidnapped, tied to a tree and subjected to a mock trial. He was then tortured by having his hands, arms, and legs severed with a sword while still alive. The gang then placed him in tires, which they covered in gasoline and set on fire. Nine gang members were subsequently convicted of his killing and sentenced to prison terms. One of them, Elizeu Felício de Souza, skipped parole and fled to the Complexo do Alemão, where he was later secretly filmed working as a drug trafficker.

*The number of homicides carried out in Brazil is around 50,000 people a year, which is higher than that recorded in many conflict zones.*

that evening news bulletin while the City Mayor, unveiled a multi-million dollar plan of social development of new schools, health, education and recreational facilities to be implemented within the next three years.<sup>13</sup>

Although the run-up to the operation was violent, the final 'pacification' was carried out with few casualties and marked a significant change of strategy by the Brazilian authorities. Three years earlier, in June 2007, a series of similar large-scale operations in Complexo do Alemão resulted in 40 people being shot dead over a three month period.<sup>14</sup> In a subsequent investigation the UN Special Rapporteur on extra-judicial executions stated that: 'I received credible accounts from residents and family members of victims that victims were shot in the back whilst walking away from police, or dragged out of homes unarmed and executed, or disarmed and then shot in the head.'<sup>15</sup> This followed a familiar pattern where the police would 'invade' territories looking for guns, drugs and criminals, in quick in-and-out raids that often killed completely uninvolved people and left neighborhoods in ruins, while having little impact on the crime gangs, who resumed their activities after the police had gone.<sup>16</sup>

The number of homicides carried out in Brazil is around 50,000 people a year, which is higher than that recorded in many conflict zones.<sup>17</sup> Between 1980 and 2002, its homicide rate (per 100,000 people) nearly tripled – to a peak of 30.4 in 2002, which made it amongst the highest in the world.<sup>18</sup> The favelas of Rio de Janeiro were one of

13 *BBC News* 'Rio Police raids: fatal blow to favela drug gangs?', 29 November 2010.

13 See *National report submitted in accordance with paragraph 15(a) of the annex to Human Rights Council Resolution 5/1, Brazil, Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review, First session Geneva, 7–18 April 2008, A/HRC/WG.6/1/BRA/1, 7 March 2008, para 51.* 'In June 2007, for example, an operation against drug dealing in the "Complexo do Alemão", a complex of slums in Rio de Janeiro left 19 dead people, among which were alleged victims of extrajudicial executions, according to civil society entities. Upon request of the Government of the State of Rio de Janeiro, which ha[s] already made the technical expert examination, the Special Department of Human Rights of the Presidency of the Republic carried out an independent study, which confirmed signs of executions.

14 *Report of the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, Mr Philip Alston, Mission to Brazil, A/HRC/11/2/Add.2 future, 28 August 2008, para 22.*

15 Maria Alves and Philip Evanson, *Living in the Crossfire, Favela Residents, Drug Dealers and Police Violence in Rio de Janeiro*, Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2011.

16 See Julio Jacobo Waiselfisz, *Mapa da Violência 2013: Homicídios e Juventude no Brasil*, Rio de Janeiro: Centro Brasileiro de Estudos Latino-Americanos e FLASCO Brasil, 2013. This provides the following figures per year: 2002 49.695; 2003 51.043; 2004 48.374; 2005 47.578; 2006 49.145; 2007 47.707; 2008 50.113; 2009 51.434; 2010 52.260; 2011 52.198. This is based figures from Brazil's Ministry of Health. See also *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, Homicide Trends and Characteristics – Brazil, 1980–2002*, 5 March 2004.

17 *Report of the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, Mr Philip Alston, Mission to Brazil, A/HRC/11/2/Add.2 future, 28 August 2008, para 8.* See also *Making Brazilians Safer: Analyzing the dynamics of violent crime*, World Bank, January 2013, pp.17-22. This gives slightly different homicide rates per 100,000 and other studies, again yield different rates. Official statistics in Brazil are not always completely reliable and should best be seen as indications of general trends.

the worst affected places with a staggering rate of 80 victims per 100,000 people.<sup>19</sup> An analysis carried out in 2003 concluded that the 'extreme levels of armed violence are generating numbers of firearm-related deaths in the city of Rio de Janeiro that are comparable, if not greater, than the number of conflict-related casualties in many armed conflicts'.<sup>20</sup>

The authorities responded with a range of measures in the 1990s from the introduction of community policing, to the granting of a 'Wild West Bonus', according to how many criminals their officers killed. None proved effective and some clearly exacerbated the situation.<sup>21</sup>

In 2008 the authorities unveiled a new strategy based on the permanent deployment of specially trained police pacification units (*Unidades de Polícia Pacificadora* – UPPs) which would be sent into areas to stay. The UPPs are composed of new police recruits, who are, at least in theory, supposed to receive special training in human rights and community policing strategies as well as higher pay and other benefits, which it is hoped will make them less easy to corrupt. The strategy rests on four sequential steps. First, physically retaking control of a territory (*retomada*) through a massive show of force, often using officers from the elite special operations police battalion (*Batalhão de Operações Policiais Especiais* – BOPE); next the *stabilization* of the territory through highly visible patrolling, again, often under responsibility of the BOPE; then a definitive occupation in which the UPP assumes the main responsibility for policing; and finally a shock of order (*choque de ordem*) against various forms of petty illegality and irregular practices in which the state begins to reassert its social control. During the latter two phases of the operation 'pacified' territories are supposed to be targeted for social investment, vocational training and job creation schemes as well as a coordinated delivery of social services that aims to 'integrate' them into the rest of the city.<sup>22</sup>

The first territory to be 'pacified' was Santa Marta, in the south of the city, in December 2008.<sup>23</sup> This was followed in 2009 by Cidade de Deus, made famous by

18 The figure of 80 per 100,000 people is quoted in Ignacio Cano, *Os Donos do Morro: Uma avaliação exploratória do impacto das Unidades de Polícia Pacificadoras (UPPs) do Rio de Janeiro*, Rio de Janeiro: Universidade Estadual do Rio de Janeiro (UERJ) and Fórum Brasileiro de Segurança Pública (FBSP), 2012. Other studies give lower figures of 61-3, per 100,000.

19 Luke Dowdney, *Children of the drug trade, a case study of children in organised armed violence in Rio de Janeiro* (Rio de Janeiro: 7Letras, 2003), p.117.

20 Ludmila Mendonça Lopes Ribeiro, (coord.); Silva, Klarissa Almeida; and Silva, Marcella Carvalho de Araújo. *Cronologia das políticas de segurança pública e dos modelos de policiamento: Rio de Janeiro, 1983-2010*. Projeto História do Policiamento Comunitário do Rio de Janeiro, CPDOC/FGV, n.d.

21 *Bringing the state back into the favelas of Rio de Janeiro: Understanding changes in community life after the UPP pacification process* World Bank, October 2012, p.37.

22 Stephanie Gimenez Stahlberg, *The Pacification of Favelas in Rio de Janeiro: Why the program is working and what are the lessons for other countries*, Stanford University, no date.

*The crime gangs became increasingly concerned that the UPPs represented an existential threat to control of the city's drug trade and began to mount a series of 'retaliatory' attacks in protest.*

the film of the same name, and Batam, where the militia had kidnapped and tortured three journalists, the previous year. Initially the *retomada's* were carried out without warning, which resulted in heavy fighting between the crime gangs and police. In a change of tactics the authorities began to announce pacifications in advance to give the gangs warning either to leave voluntarily or turn over their arms. This was based on the fact that the strategic objective was to re-establish territorial control rather than to capture or kill the criminals. The authorities also increasingly stressed that the goal of the program was 'to rid the streets of weapons of war, not necessarily to end drug dealing'.<sup>24</sup> Nevertheless, the crime gangs became increasingly concerned that the UPPs represented an existential threat to control of the city's drug trade and began to mount a series of 'retaliatory' attacks in protest. In October 2009, a police helicopter was shot down in the city's North Zone, killing both officers on board, while the police killed 10 alleged gang members in follow-up operations. The violent spiral of attacks and counter-attacks continued alongside the implementation of the UPP strategy culminating in the decisive confrontation in Complexo do Alemão described above.

Seven territories were 'pacified' in 2010, almost all of them in the northern area of the city. A further six were 'pacified' in 2011, while nine were 'pacified' in 2012, including Rocinha in the south and Vila Cruzeiro in the north. By December 2013 there were 37 UPPs, staffed by over 8,000 police officers, spread across the city, covering over 100 territories and more than 500,000 people.<sup>25</sup> By the end of 2014 the authorities hope to have 40 UPPs established involving 12,000 officers and covering territories inhabited by between 750,000 and one million people.<sup>26</sup>

In August 2010 the social development phase of the program was formally launched as UPP Social.<sup>27</sup> This will also be discussed in more detail below, but was initially designed by the state authorities to coordinate social and urban development interventions, with the explicit aim of 'multiplying' the impact of the UPPs. According to a report by the World Bank:

The fact that the UPP Social Program was so labeled according to a drafted agenda of initiatives to be followed in the aftermath of police occupation is a strong indicator of this. Access to social programs and social inclusion initiatives that multiply in UPP areas is thereby dependent upon a certain deconstruction of the *favela* as a locus par excellence for crime. The sequencing of the program is

23 *New York Times*, 'In Rough Slum, Brazil's Police Try Soft Touch', October 11, 2010.

24 Ana Carolina Pekny, *Pacifying Rio de Janeiro: transforming a drug war?*, unpublished dissertation, Geneva: 2013.

25 *Bringing the state back into the favelas of Rio de Janeiro: Understanding changes in community life after the UPP pacification process* World Bank, October 2012, p.24.

26 Ricardo Henriques and Silvia Ramos, 'UPPs Social: ações para a consolidação da pacificação', in André Urani and Fabio Giambiagi (eds), *Rio: A Hora da Virada*, Rio de Janeiro: Elsevier, 2011, pp. 242-254.



therefore crucial, with the expansion and intensification of a social development agenda only being able to be implemented after the policing phase – retake of the territorial – is concluded. At the same time, these same social initiatives are necessary in order to sustain the program's effects and achieve its ultimate goals.<sup>28</sup>

The introduction of the UPPs coincided with a big decrease in some forms of violent crime. The most comprehensive analysis carried out so far shows that from January 2006 to June 2011 violent deaths (e.g. homicides and deaths in encounters with the police) decreased 78 percent in areas where the UPPs have been introduced.<sup>29</sup> Opinion polls conducted in the first territories to be 'pacified' also show that people felt themselves to be safer. In a survey conducted, in June 2009, in Santa Marta and Cidade de Deus, between 90 and 95 per cent of people surveyed supported the continued expansion of the program,<sup>30</sup> while a survey conducted in January 2010, in Cidade de Deus and Batam showed that 93 per cent of people considered their community to be 'secure' or 'very secure' and 86 per cent believed that this security had improved over the previous year.<sup>31</sup> The UPPs have also won broad support from politicians of the left and right, through the media and business community to wider society. The initials – UPP – have even become a brand name; stamped on billboards and bus advertisements.

The 'pacification' process has also attracted international attention with counter-insurgency specialists from Europe and the United States queuing up to see what lessons can be learnt.<sup>32</sup> Some of the tactics used – such as the emphasis on securing territory rather than pursuing gang members – closely coincide with theories associated with the 'surge' in Iraq and recent operations in Afghanistan.<sup>33</sup> Brazil's police and army now have considerable practical experience working in an international context through the UN mission to Haiti since 2004 and so interest has been expressed in whether the strategy may have applicability in wider operations to protect civilians in conflict zones.<sup>34</sup> As Muggah has noted, conflicts around the world

27 *Bringing the state back into the favelas of Rio de Janeiro: Understanding changes in community life after the UPP pacification process* World Bank, October 2012, p.43.

28 Ignacio Cano, *Os Donos do Morro: Uma avaliação exploratória do impacto das Unidades de Polícia Pacificadoras (UPPs) do Rio de Janeiro*, Rio de Janeiro: Universidade Estadual do Rio de Janeiro (UERJ) and Fórum Brasileiro de Segurança Pública (FBSP), 2012.

29 Fundação Getulio Vargas, *Avaliação do Impacto do Policiamento Comunitário na Cidade de Deus e no Dona Marta*, Relatório de Pesquisa, Rio de Janeiro: FGV, Junho de 2009.

30 Instituto Brasileiro de Pesquisa Social, 'Pesquisa sobre a percepção acerca das unidades de Polícia Pacificadora. Pesquisa PR 004-10-UPP-25.01. Relatório de Pesquisa. Janeiro de Janeiro: IBPS, 2010.

31 Rob Muggah and Albert Suza Mulli, 'Rio Tries Counterinsurgency' (2012), *Current History*, February 2012.

32 For details see David Kilcullen, *The Accidental Guerilla, fighting small wars in the midst of a big one*, London: Hurst & Co., 2009.

33 The UN Stabilisation Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) has a Chapter VII Security Council mandate which includes the 'protection of civilians'. The tasks set out in UN Security Council Resolution 2119 (2013),



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are 'increasingly low-intensity, protracted and adaptable' and the slums of urban metropolises may be becoming 'the new battlegrounds of the twenty-first century'.<sup>35</sup>

The 'pacification' process and the introduction of the UPPs should not, in fact, be confused with a military operation.<sup>36</sup> The police and soldiers who have taken part are bound by human rights law rather than international humanitarian law (IHL), which is a crucial distinction given the latter's necessarily more permissive rules governing the use of lethal force.<sup>37</sup> Nevertheless, there may be lessons to be learnt for those providing social services and protection to people during complex emergencies, characterized by large-scale violence and where the state's authority is contested.<sup>38</sup>

The inhabitants of the territories which are currently the subject of the 'pacification' process also do not fit the traditional definition of 'internally displaced persons' (IDPs), because most have lived in these territories all their lives, while others have migrated for primarily social and economic reasons.<sup>39</sup> Yet the social and legal precariousness of their situation, because of who they are and where they live, closely parallels the situation of many people who have been living in displacement for extended periods. Indeed as the number of peri-urban settlements in the world continues to grow and increasing numbers of people suffer displacement in 'humanitarian situations other than war', the pacification process may provide a valuable insight into some of the challenges facing aid workers in the future.<sup>40</sup>

The concepts of 'humanitarian neutrality' and 'humanitarian space' also, obviously, do not directly apply to national agencies working alongside their own police forces

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include *inter alia*, paras 13 and 19. to 'in cooperation with the appropriate international actors, to assist the Government in effectively tackling gang violence, organized crime, drug trafficking and trafficking of persons, especially children' and 'to continue assisting the Government of Haiti in providing adequate protection to the civilian population, with particular attention to the needs of internally displaced persons and other vulnerable groups, especially women and children, including through joint community policing in the camps'.

34 Robert Muggah (ed) *Stabilization Operations, Security and Development*, London and New York: Routledge, 2014, p.2.

35 Sven Peterke, 'Urban Insurgency, 'Drug War' and International Humanitarian Law: The Case of Rio de Janeiro'. *Journal of International Humanitarian Legal Studies* 1 (1): 165-187, 2010.

36 The rules of IHL are mainly found in the Geneva Conventions, which essentially provide a set of rules governing the conduct of armed conflicts. Soldiers are permitted to kill other combatants, but must observe rules such as the principles of distinction and proportionality to minimize the risks to civilians. The protection offered is, however, considerably less than that contained in human rights law.

37 See David Keen, *Complex emergencies*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 2008.

38 The Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, Introduction, para. 2. Internally displaced persons are 'persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalised violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognised State border.'

39 See Humanitarian Situations other than War website <http://www.hasow.org/> accessed 10 December 2013.

reestablishing control of part of their national territory.<sup>41</sup> However, the experiences of UPP Social deserve critical analysis. In explicitly linking the delivery of social services to a security agenda it took on a role similar to that which some aid agencies were prepared to adopt in Iraq and Afghanistan. UPP Social has come under serious criticism in recent years and some of its original supporters have voiced doubt about the concept. As will be discussed in subsequent sections, some of the claims about the pacification process itself also now look over-blown, and the model of a coordinated delivery of services to 'sustain' and 'multiply' its impact seems to have been particularly flawed.

To place these discussions in context it is first necessary to provide a brief historical discussion of how, what are commonly known as the '*favelas*' of Rio de Janeiro came into existence, how they were taken over by organized crime and how the authorities responded to this development, leading up to the deployment of the UPPs. This will be followed by a description of the UPPs themselves as well as the creation, deployment and development of UPP Social. There are hundreds of social projects being implemented in various favelas and part of the original rationale of UPP Social was to provide some coordination of their activities. Although this has not in fact occurred the briefing provides an overview of the work of two international humanitarian agencies that have implemented projects in some of Rio's favelas and whose experiences may be useful to others operating in similar environments of urban violence elsewhere. The final section of the briefing reflects on the significance of the 'pacification' process from a human rights and humanitarian perspective.

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40 For background discussion see Conor Foley, *The Thin Blue Line: how humanitarianism went to war*, London: Verso 2010.

## Chapter One

### A short history of Rio's favelas

The first of Rio de Janeiro's *favelas* was established in 1897 on a hillside encampment of what is now known as Morro da Providência by decommissioned soldiers from the Canudos war.<sup>42</sup>

Brazil had finally abolished slavery in 1888, one of the last major countries in the world to do so, and the following year a bloodless military coup overthrew the Brazilian Emperor Don Pedro II, establishing a Republic backed by the land-owning elites.<sup>43</sup> Famines in the late 1870s and 1880s had devastated the interior of the country causing up to half a million deaths and the freed slaves, indigenous people and landless farmers faced destitution. A charismatic preacher, Antonio Conselheiro, established a community in Canudos in the north-east of the country, which was run on religious egalitarian lines, while still pledging allegiance to the Brazilian monarchy. It soon attracted thousands of the rural poor.<sup>44</sup>

The republican federal government made repeated attempts to crush the community, finally succeeding, with considerable brutality, in the autumn of 1897.<sup>45</sup> The soldiers who had taken part in this campaign had been promised land and homes in Rio de Janeiro, which was then Brazil's capital city. As they waited in vain for their allocations, they began to replace their tents with hand-built shacks. In the same year a city landlord evicted around a thousand people from an overcrowded tenement, which he subsequently razed to the ground. He also owned a plot of empty plot of land in Morro da Providência and granted his former tenants permission to build shacks there on a temporary basis. The Canudos community had been established at the foot of Monte Favela, which itself takes its name from a bush that is indigenous to the area and can survive in stony soil. The veterans of the campaign that had crushed the community named their new settlement *favela* and this become a generic term as similar settlements spread.

But while there is a general consensus about the origins of the word *favela*, defining its precise meaning is far harder. As Perlman has noted virtually all of the standard definitions of what constitutes a *favela* are inaccurate.<sup>46</sup> *Favelas* are no longer 'jerry-

41 Jailson de Souza e Silva e Jorge Luiz Barbosa, *Favela: alegria e dor na Cidade, Rio de Janeiro*. Editora Senac Rio [X] Brasil e ao Serviço Nacional de Aprendizagem Comercial, 2005.

42 E. Bradford Burns, *A History of Brazil*, Colombia University Press, 1993.

43 For an overview see Boris Fausto, *Historia do Brasil*, Universidade de São Paulo, 2000.

44 Around 15,000 men were massacred and most of the women were raped and sent to brothels in Salvador, the capital of Bahia.

45 Janice Perlman, *Favela: four decades of living on the edge in Rio de Janeiro*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010, pp.30-9. See also Janice Perlman *The Myth of Marginality: Urban Poverty and Politics in Rio de Janeiro*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976.

*Between 1892 and 1916 up to 80 per cent of arrests were for minor misdemeanors such as vagrancy, disorder and drunkenness in the major Brazilian cities.*

built shacks on the outskirts of a Brazilian city',<sup>47</sup> nor can they be defined by 'no land titles as the juridical condition; absence of public services such as water, sanitation and plumbing, electricity and telephone; and lack of paved streets.'<sup>48</sup> Many of Rio's *favelas* today are either close to the city center or in the heart of its prosperous South Zone, overlooking its famous tourist beaches. The previous wooden structures have been replaced by brick and mortar buildings often several stories high. Most have obtained access to electricity, sewerage systems and piped water and many people in them also possess land titles. Although the phrases *asfalto* (pavement) and *morro* (hill) are often used to distinguish *favelas* from the city, this is increasingly a metaphoric rather than a literal description. As a World Bank report has noted: 'Looking at it objectively today, it is difficult to identify what singles out them from other urban dwelling systems with lower-income housing in Rio de Janeiro, such as irregular lots and housing units. It is hard to find any truly objective criterion, whether the type of legal relationship with urban land, type of housing construction or socioeconomic characteristics of residents.'<sup>49</sup>

Nevertheless there is little doubt about where the *asfalto* ends and the *morro* begins. *Favelas* are basically distinguished by marginalization, social exclusion and stigmatization. The phrase *favelado*, which literally means person who lives in a *favela*, is universally considered pejorative because of its negative connotations and many people avoid the use of the word *favela* itself for the same reason, preferring 'territory' or 'community'.

Throughout their history the *favelas* have been seen as dangerous, violent places whose existence threatens the 'respectable neighborhoods' adjacent to them.<sup>50</sup> Property prices tend to be lower in streets that border *favelas* and Rio's physical geography, which results in hill-top *favelas* overlooking some of its most exclusive neighborhoods adds to the sense of menace that many rich *Carriocas* (residents of Rio) feel.<sup>51</sup> In a survey conducted in 2001, 84 per cent of respondents identified living in a *favela* as a source of social stigma, while 80 per cent identified skin color and 74 per cent thought it was based on 'general appearance'.<sup>52</sup> Since *favela* residents are disproportionately black or mulatto, these three sources of discrimination are likely to be mutually reinforcing.

47 This description is from Webster's Dictionary.

48 This is taken from the 1950 census.

48 *Bringing the state back into the favelas of Rio de Janeiro: Understanding changes in community life after the UPP pacification process* World Bank, October 2012, p.32.

50 Claudio Frischtak, and Benjamin Mandel, 'Crime, house prices, and inequality: the effect of UPPs in Rio,' Staff Reports 542, Federal Reserve Bank of New York.

50 Brodwyn Fischer, *A Poverty of Rights: Citizenship and Inequality in Twentieth Century Rio de Janeiro*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008.

52 Perlman, 2010, pp.153-5.

The first residents of Morro da Providência were served with an eviction order, giving them 10 days to quit, soon after their settlement was established, but the *favela* survived. Pressure increased after the election of Antonio Pereira Passos as Mayor of the City in 1902.<sup>53</sup> Pereira Passos believed that Rio could be transformed into a 'tropical Paris', with majestic boulevards, gardens and monuments. He embarked on a huge 'slum-clearance' program, destroying old tenements and other residential buildings as well as the self-constructed settlements that were now springing up all around the city. Thousands of poor people were evicted from their homes and it was in this context that, two years later, the city rose in a violent revolt against a, probably well-intentioned, compulsory vaccination campaign.<sup>54</sup>

The slum clearance program paradoxically boosted the number of people living in *favelas*, as poor people were pushed out of their homes and had nowhere else to go. By 1933 the city's *favela* population was estimated at around 10,000 people and the numbers continued to grow.<sup>55</sup> A Building Code in 1937 which expressly forbade the building of new *favelas*, the expansion of existing ones or the use of permanent materials in *favela* construction, had similarly little effect, although residents were now being legally prohibited from improving the buildings whose poor state of repair was one of the main arguments used against them.

The police also targeted the residents of *favelas* for frequent summary justice using powers inherited from the slavery era.<sup>56</sup> Prior to 1871 the police had legal authority to administer 'correctional detention' and 'corporal punishment' and beatings and arbitrary arrest remained an essential part of police strategy long afterwards.<sup>57</sup> Between 1892 and 1916 up to 80 per cent of arrests were for minor misdemeanors such as vagrancy, disorder and drunkenness in the major Brazilian cities.<sup>58</sup> *Capoeira*, an African dance ritual that draws on martial arts, which thrived in the *favelas*, was

52 Mauricio Abreu, *Evolução Urbana do Rio de Janeiro*. Rio de Janeiro: IPLANRIO/Jorge Zahar Editor, 1987.

53 The Vaccine Revolt, was a period of civil disorder in November 1904, which left 30 people dead. Shops were looted, trams overturned and burned, streets were barricaded and government forces attacked. The protests were against a Mandatory Vaccine Law initiated by the Health Secretary, Oswaldo Cruz to execute sweeping sanitary improvements in the city. It permitted sanitary brigade workers, accompanied by police, to enter homes to apply the vaccine by force. This was associated in the popular mind with the slum clearance program, popularly termed the *bota abaixo* (throwing out). On 14 November the cadets of the *Escola Militar da Praia Vermelha* (military college) also mutinied against the government's actions and the Vaccine program was suspended.

55 Perlman, 2010, p.27.

55 See Guaracy Mingardi, *Tiras, gansos e trutas: cotidiano e reforma na policia civil*, Scritta, 1992. See also Roberto Kant de Lima, Legal theory and judicial practice: paradoxes of police work in the Rio de Janeiro city, PhD thesis, 1986.

57 Thomas Holloway, *Policing Rio de Janeiro: repression and resistance in a nineteenth century city*, Stanford University Press, 1993, p.284.

57 Boris Fausto, *Crime e cotidiano: a criminalidade em Sao Paulo 1880 – 1924*, Brasiliense, 1984, p.46. These figures are for neighbouring in Sao Paulo. Crimes against property accounted for around 11 per cent of arrests and crimes of violence were only around 8 per cent.

also formally banned between 1890 and the 1930s.<sup>59</sup> Un-licensed drinking bars were frequently raided and the first ever recorded Samba song, *Pelo Telefone*, released in 1916, is an ironic account of the police tipping off the owners of a club that they are going to visit. Between the 1920s and the 1950s the police also repeatedly tried to stamp-out the so-called *jogo do bicho* gambling game, citing clashes over territory between rival *bicheiros* as a major cause of violence in the city. By the 1960s shacks selling marijuana: *bocas de fumo* (literally mouths of smoke) became a target. Caldeira argues that 'the practices of violence and arbitrariness have been constitutive of the Brazilian police, to varying degrees, since its creation and that policing has largely been aimed at controlling the poorest and most vulnerable sections of Brazilian society. Such practices were permitted to continue because the weakness of Brazilian democracy meant their victims were largely powerless, while the Brazilian wealthy remained unaffected'.<sup>60</sup>

*The number of favelas in Rio grew from around 100 in 1950 to at least 600 over the next fifty years.*

The attempts by the authorities to prevent the growth of the *favelas*, however, were directly countered by wider economic and social changes taking place in Brazil.<sup>61</sup> Rio's population had first swelled after the abolition of slavery in 1889 led to a rural exodus from the notorious coffee plantations. It grew further as a result of large scale immigration from Europe. Almost three million immigrants came to Brazil between 1887 and 1914. The First World War brought a temporary halt to the flow, but it began again in the 1920s. This immigration was strongly encouraged by the Brazilian government, partly to find substitute workers to pick coffee and partly to 'whiten' the population. Racist European writers like Arthur de Gobineau, who was to develop the theory of the Aryan master race, and served as a diplomat to Brazil, described its people as 'a population totally mulatto, vitiated and blood and spirit and fearfully ugly... everyone is ugly here, unbelievably ugly like apes'.<sup>62</sup> He claimed that the Brazilian 'white race' would disappear in 'less than 200 years' unless it took steps to 'fortify itself' through a fresh injection of European blood. It was as a counter-weight to these arguments that writers such as Gilberto Freyre began to celebrate the inter-racial sex that had turned 'beautiful Brazil' into a racial melting-pot.<sup>63</sup> The musician

58 See Thomas E. Skidmore, *Black Into White: Race and Nationality in Brazilian Thought*, Duke University Press, 1993.

59 Teresea Caldeira, *City of walls: crime, segregation and citizenship in Sao Paulo*, University of California Press, 2000, p.145.

60 See Boris Fausto, *A Concise History of Brazil*, Cambridge University Press, 1999.

61 Quoted in Thomas E. Skidmore, *Black Into White: Race and Nationality in Brazilian Thought*, Duke University Press, 1993, p.23.

62 See Gilberto Freyre, *The Masters and the Slaves: a study in the development of Brazilian civilization*. First published in Portuguese in 1933, as *Casa-Grande & Senzala*. This famously stated that: 'Every Brazilian, even the light skinned fair haired one carries about him on his soul, when not on soul and body alike, the shadow or at least the birthmark of the aborigine or the negro, in our affections, our excessive mimicry, our Catholicism which so delights the senses, our music, our gait, our speech, our cradle songs, in everything that is a sincere expression of our lives, we almost all of us bear the mark of that influence.'



Caetano Veloso subsequently noted that many young Brazilians began to take pride in the *favelas* as repositories of their country's diverse cultural expression.<sup>64</sup>

Between 1870 and 1980, Brazil's economy grew at a faster rate than virtually any major country in the world. During the 1950s, it was on a trajectory to overtake the United States by the end of the 20th century.<sup>65</sup> This led to a period of dramatic social change, which transformed the country from an overwhelmingly rural to a predominantly urban society in the space of a few decades. Between 1950 and 1980, around 20 million people moved from the countryside to the cities, one of the biggest such movements in world history.<sup>66</sup> Some Brazilians also became very rich and society stratified into what became the most unequal major country in the world. The proportion of income appropriated by the richest fifth of the population grew from 54 per cent in 1960 to 62 per cent in 1970, 63 per cent in 1980 and 65 per cent in 1990, while that of the poorest half dropped from 18 per cent in 1960, to 15 per cent in 1970, 14 per cent in 1980 and 12 per cent in 1990.<sup>67</sup> By 2003 the top 10 per cent of the population earned 50 per cent of the national income and the bottom 20 per cent earned 2.5 per cent, with around a third of the population living below the poverty line.<sup>68</sup>

Many of the new urban poor settled in self-built shacks clustered on vacant land. Some were attracted to the city for economic reasons while others were pushed off their land by a series of devastating droughts in the north-east of Brazil. The number of *favelas* in Rio grew from around 100 in 1950 to at least 600 over the next fifty years.<sup>69</sup> The proportion of people living in *favelas* also grew much faster than the growth of the rest of the city so that by the year 2000 they made up around a third of the city's six million inhabitants.<sup>70</sup> This growing electoral block could not be ignored

63 Patrick Neate and Damian Platt, *Culture is Our Weapon: Making Music and Changing Lives in Rio de Janeiro*, London: Penguin Books, 2006, Foreword by Caetano Veloso.

64 Francisco Vidal Luna and Herbert Klein, *Brazil since 1980*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006, p.40.

65 Michael Reid, *Forgotten continent: the battle for Latin America's soul*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007).

66 Teresea Caldeira, *City of walls: crime, segregation and citizenship in São Paulo*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2000, p.47.

67 UN Development Program, *Human Development Report 2003: Millenium Development Goals: a compact to end human poverty*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2003; Instituto de Pesquisa Econômica Aplicada, *Caracterização e Tendências da Rede Urbana do Brasil*, Campinas: Universidade Estadual de Campinas, 1999.

68 Patrick Neate and Damian Platt, *Culture is Our Weapon: Making Music and Changing Lives in Rio de Janeiro*, London: Penguin Books, 2006, p.10. Other estimates give the total number of *favelas* anywhere between 500 and 1,000.

69 Ibid. Official statistics are, however, notoriously unreliable and Perlman notes that in 2005 various sources reported Rio's *favela* population anywhere between one and four million. This anomaly is partly because of difficulties in defining what exactly constitutes a favela and partly due to the difficulties in carrying out official head-counts in areas that are geographically inaccessible and controlled by armed



by the city's politicians and the authorities alternated between a policy of reform and repression: attempting to block the growth of new *favelas* wherever possible, but bowing to pressure to provide services and infra-structure to those that existed. This *ad hoc* approach, based on political expediency, is common in many other countries, though international best practice requires a more transparent set of criteria and roadmap for engagement with informal settlements.<sup>71</sup> Residents associations were created in each *favela* forming a federation in 1963, which became a state-wide organization in 1975. This gained official state recognition as a means by which the authorities could deal with a representative organization, rather than individual residents.

*The homicide rate (per 100,000 people) for Brazil as a whole reached over 30 per 100,000 in 2002. Rio de Janeiro was one of the worst affected places, with a murder rate at least twice the national average.*

Brazil's growth rate proved unsustainable and the inflationary pressures and growing public debt provided some of the background to the military coup of 1964. The new military government-appointed authorities launched a determined clamp-down against the *favelas* between 1970 and 1973, destroying 62 of them in Rio and physically deporting 100,000 people.<sup>72</sup> Many of these were placed in purposely built *conjuntos* (social housing) which were dense, dreary and undifferentiated five story blocks, often poorly constructed and with few social amenities. The new residents were supposed to make monthly payments towards a full purchase of their own homes, but many fell into arrears and others simply squatted. Failure to maintain the *conjuntos* meant their condition soon became functionally indistinguishable from the *favelas* that they were supposed to replace. The infamous Cidade de Deus was one of the first *conjuntos* and the incidences of fatal violence in *conjuntos* as a whole is estimated to be twice as high as in the *favelas*.<sup>73</sup>

Economic growth resumed under the dictatorship, after a period of brutally-enforced wage-restraint, but the debts ran up during this period were to effectively bankrupt the country by 1983.<sup>74</sup> The return to democracy was accompanied by hyper-inflation, which reached 2,709 per cent in 1993, and a complete collapse in economic growth. Between 1940 and 1980, gross domestic product (GDP) had grown 6.9 per cent annually (four per cent in capita terms). Between 1980 and 1992, it grew only 1.25 per cent per year.<sup>75</sup> The real minimum wage decreased by 46 per cent and per capita income dropped 7.6 per cent in what Brazilians often refer to as the 'lost decade'.

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gangs. See Perlman, 2010, p.59.

70 Winter King, "Illegal Settlements and the Impact of Titling programmes". 44 *Harvard Int Law Journal*. 2003, reprinted in: Sprankling, J., Raymond Coletta, and M.C. Mirow. (eds) *Global Issues in Property law*. Thomson West. St Paul, MN. 2006.

72 Perlman, 2010, p.53.

73 Ibid.

74 Luna and Klein, 2006, p.40.

74 Teresea Caldeira, *City of walls: crime, segregation and citizenship in São Paulo*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2000, p. 45.

Crime rates also soared with a particularly marked increase in the number of violent crimes. Brazil did not collect official statistics on criminality for the country as a whole until the late 1990s. However, violent crime in the state of São Paulo increased as a proportion of total crime from around 20 per cent in 1980 to 30 per cent in 1984, to 36 per cent in 1996.<sup>76</sup> The homicide rate soared from around 15 per 100,000 in 1981 to 45 per 100,000 in 1995 and 54 per 100,000 in 2002.

A global survey on safety and security carried out by the Vera Institute of Justice in 2003 found that Brazil was the country where people said they were most afraid to walk the streets at night (followed by South Africa, Bolivia, Botswana, Zimbabwe and Colombia, in that order).<sup>77</sup> Conversely, Brazil had the second lowest rate of reporting crimes of robbery to the police (19 per cent compared to 37 per cent in South Africa, 45 per cent in Argentina, 59 per cent in Australia and 69 per cent in the United States), implying a level of distrust of the police that is more usually observed in countries that do not respect democratic norms. Another survey showed that 50 per cent of Brazilians state that they do not even report crimes to the police because they thought it would be a 'waste of time'.<sup>78</sup>

As discussed above, the homicide rate (per 100,000 people) for Brazil as a whole reached over 30 per 100,000 in 2002.<sup>79</sup> Rio de Janeiro was one of the worst affected places, with a murder rate at least twice the national average. From 1978 to 2000, it was estimated that 49,913 deaths were caused by firearms in Rio de Janeiro alone.<sup>80</sup> The decision to move Brazil's capital city to Brasilia in 1965 meant that Rio lost this status and the accompanying jobs and patronage. It was also increasingly overshadowed economically by Sao Paulo and other cities in the south. Deindustrialization and the decline of the city's steel and shipbuilding industries exacerbated the situation and led to a sharp increase in unemployment.

The economic vacuum was increasingly filled by drug-trafficking, or '*o movimento*' as it became known.<sup>81</sup> The systematic organization of Rio de Janeiro's retail drug market has its roots in prison with the creation of the first drug faction, the *Comando Vermelho* (Red Command), which drew some inspiration from political prisoners, under the dictatorship in the late 1960s. By the end of the 1970s, the *Comando*

76 Ibid., p.119.

76 *Measuring progress towards safety and justice: a global guide to the design of performance indicators across the justicesector*, Vera Institute of Justice, November 2003.

77 William C Prillaman, *Crime, Democracy, and Development in Latin America*, Centre for Strategic and International Studies, Policy Papers on the Americas, Volume XIV, Study 6, June 2003, p.9.

78 *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, Homicide Trends and Characteristics – Brazil, 1980–2002, 5 March 2004. Figures cited from Brazil's Ministry of Health.

80 Figures from DATASUS – Brazilian Health Ministry, Rio de Janeiro Health Secretary database.

80 The following account draws mainly from Luke Downey, 'Fighting for Peace in Rio's favelas and beyond', in Conor Foley (ed) *Another System is Possible: Reforming Brazilian Justice*, London: International Bar Association, 2012, p.151-2.

*Vermelho* began to organize criminal activity – primarily bank robberies and kidnappings – from inside the prisons, a pattern which has continued to this day. This coincided with the arrival of cocaine, transported to Rio from Bolivia, Peru and Colombia for export to the West and local sales.<sup>82</sup>

The term 'organized armed violence' should be used to describe situations of 'neither war nor peace' and that the criminal justice system was unable to deal with the scale of the problem.

The *bocas de fumo* were viewed as the ideal distribution base for trafficking cocaine sales.<sup>83</sup> Affiliated members of the *Comando Vermelho* began organizing their *favela* territories within a loose structure of mutual support. Hierarchically structured *quadrilhas* (squads) were established to defend sales points and the surrounding communities from police invasion or attack from other gangs. Between 1984 and 1986, the first *soldados do tráfico* (soldiers of the traffic) began to appear. Similar structures began to be replicated in different *favela* territories. The local organization was based on military needs for defense and invasion and a simple division of labor for the bagging and sales of drugs. From 1986 onwards, the *Comando Vermelho* began to fragment internally and disputes for territorial control became commonplace and increasingly violent. By the mid-1990s, three rival factions had emerged within Rio de Janeiro: *Comando Vermelho*; *Terceiro Comando* (Third Command); and *Amigos dos Amigos* (Friends of Friends).<sup>84</sup>

Armed confrontations between rival traffic factions or the police have become commonplace and a militarized subculture has been established within the *favelas*, with heavily armed groups in intermittent but regular conflict. For many *Cariocas* it has been a war in all but name.

81 Jailson de Souza e Silva Fernando Lannes Fernandes, and Raquel Willadino Braga. 'Grupos Criminosos Armados com Domínio de Território: Reflexões sobre a Territorialidade do Crime na Região Metropolitana' in *Segurança, Milícias e Tráfico no Rio de Janeiro*, 16-24. Rio de Janeiro: Justiça Global, 2008.

82 Elizabeth Leeds, 'Cocaine and Parallel Polities in the Brazilian Urban Periphery: Constraints on Local-Level Democratization' *Latin American Research Review*, 31 (3):47-84, 1996.

83 Elizabeth Leeds, 'Rio de Janeiro', in Kees Koonings and Dirk Kruijt (eds) *Fractured Cities: Social Exclusion, Urban Violence and Contested Spaces in Latin America*, London: Zed Book, 2007, pp. 23-35

## Chapter Two

### Humanitarian situations other than war

It is estimated that at its peak there were around 10,000 young people involved in Rio de Janeiro's drug trade.<sup>85</sup> During the 1990s, many children and teenagers joined the drug market, as first-generation dealers were arrested or killed. Dowdney has noted that the 'utilization of high powered weapons and the types of armed violence caused by inter-faction disputes and confrontations between the police and factions' mean that 'stark similarities exist between children employed in [the city's] drug factions and "child soldiers" in almost every functional and definitive aspect'.<sup>86</sup> Prior to the pacification the entrances to many *favelas* were guarded by armed *soldados*. Weapons such as assault rifles, machine guns and rocket propelled grenades were carried openly and it was not uncommon to see children armed with armaments that they were barely able to lift.<sup>87</sup>

The gangs also took over the residents associations and began to impose certain rules of social behavior, using physical punishments that included arbitrary executions on those who transgressed. This meant that street crime became rare in some *favelas* as the traffic took on many policing functions. In many cases the gang members had been born and raised in the *favelas* that they dominated, but as turf wars continued rival factions captured the territory of other gangs, which placed them in a position of 'occupation' over local communities.

Another study by Dowdney suggested that the term 'organized armed violence' should be used to describe situations of 'neither war nor peace' and that the criminal justice system was unable to deal with the scale of the problem. He recommended the adoption of approaches such as Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) projects that have been developed in officially recognized conflict zones.<sup>88</sup>

There is little doubt that Brazil's beleaguered police has not been able to cope with the explosion of violent crime in cities such as Rio de Janeiro. The police are poorly educated, trained and paid. As a result, they often take second jobs as security guards and may be easily corrupted. For example, nearly four times as many police were killed while off-duty as on-duty in Rio de Janeiro in 2007.<sup>89</sup> As will be discussed

84 Luke Dowdney, *Children of the drug trade, a case study of children in organized armed violence in Rio de Janeiro* (Rio de Janeiro: 7Letras, 2003), p.117.

86 Ibid.

87 Interviews carried out by the author, December 2013.

87 Luke Dowdney, *Neither war nor peace, international comparisons of children and youth in organised armed violence*, Viva Rio, no date.

89 A/HRC/11/2/Add.2 future, para 32, citing statistics from the Public Security Institute (Instituto de Segurança Pública), 19 March 2008. These show that 119 members of the police were killed while off-duty while 32 were killed while on-duty in 2007 while in 2006, the numbers were 93 off-duty and 29 on-duty.

*In Rio when a  
new inmate has  
no gang affiliation  
he may be  
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administrators to  
pick a gang or  
simply be assigned  
to one by them.*

below, many police are involved in the militias, who have seized control of many favelas and are also involved in protection rackets and other criminal activity.

The lack of adequate training, along with a militaristic legacy from the dictatorship contributes to the excessive use of force by the police and their frequent involvement in extrajudicial killings.<sup>90</sup> Two of the most famous massacres occurred in 1993, one in July when a police death squad murdered eight street children in front of the Candelária church in the city center, and the following month when they murdered 21 people in Vigário Geral, a *favela* in the north.<sup>91</sup> The latter attack was in revenge for the killing of four police officers by drug traffickers, from whom they had allegedly been trying to extort payments. Such killings have since become common place. Of the 62 street children survived the Candelária massacre, 39 were subsequently killed by the police, criminals or in other confrontations.<sup>92</sup> The Vigário Geral massacre was brutally re-enacted in April 2005 when rogue police officers massacred 30 people in Baixada Fluminense. This was in reprisal for the arrests of eight officers suspected of a separate double murder, who were filmed throwing the severed head of one victim over the wall of a police station.<sup>93</sup>

In its report to the UN Human Rights Council in 2008 the Brazilian government noted that: 'Official data of the States of São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro – the only states of the federation that have [a] database for public consultation about accusations against police officers – appoint that 8,520 people have been killed by police officers in these states [i]n the last five years.'<sup>94</sup> The UN Special Rapporteur on extra judicial executions noted the previous year that 'on duty police' in Rio 'kill three people every day' and that: 'Extrajudicial executions are committed by police who murder rather than arrest criminal suspects, and also during large-scale confrontational "war" style policing, in which excessive use of force results in the deaths of suspected criminals and bystanders.'<sup>95</sup> He stated that: 'The degree to which the killing of "criminals" is tolerated and even publicly encouraged by high level Government officials goes a long way to explaining why the numbers of killings by police are so high, and why they are so inadequately investigated'. He particularly criticized the current Secretary

89 Rodrigo Ghiringhelli de Azevedo, 'Crime and criminal justice in Latin America', *Sociologias*, vol.2 no. se Porto Alegre, 2006.

90 Amnesty International, *Brazil: Rio de Janeiro 2003: Candelaria and Vigario Geral 10 Years On*, AMR 19/015/2003, 27 August 2003/19/015/2003, 27 August 2003.

92 The story of some of these is told in the acclaimed Brazilian documentary film *Bus 174*.

92 *Washington Post*, 'At Least 30 Are Killed In Rio Shooting Spree', 2 April 2005. The original killings were an attempt to intimidate other police officers involved in a corruption investigation against the officers.

94 National report submitted in accordance with paragraph 15(a) of the annex to Human Rights Council Resolution 5/1, Brazil, Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review, First session Geneva, 7–18 April 2008, A/HRC/WG.6/1/BRA/1, 7 March 2008, para 51.

95 *Report of the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, Mr Philip Alston, Mission to Brazil*, A/HRC/11/2/Add.2 future, 28 August 2008, para 9.

for Public Security in Rio, José Mariano Beltrame, who had drawn the analogy of breaking eggs to make an omelette while referring to police killing innocent bystanders during security operations, concluding that: 'The official rhetoric of "war", the acquisition of military hardware, and violent police symbols only make these views more broadly acceptable.'<sup>96</sup>

Brazil's criminal justice system is also straining under the impact. Its prison population in 2013 was around 550,000 people, with the number of prisoners increasing by approximately 3,000 per month, which has overwhelmed the capacity of the already overcrowded system.<sup>97</sup> There has been a particularly marked growth in the numbers being held in pre-trial detention, with an almost 90 per cent increase between 2003 and 2007, compared to a 37 per cent increase in the prison population as a whole.<sup>98</sup> In 2008 the Brazilian Supreme Court established the *Mutirão Carcerário* (prison task force) as an *ad hoc* initiative to review a backlog of cases that had built up in Rio de Janeiro's court system. It subsequently developed into a national review mechanism and, in August 2012, announced that after examining 413,236 cases, it had freed 36,673 prisoners and reduced the security levels of 72,317 other prisoners.<sup>99</sup> This means that over 100,000 people were either being wrongfully detained or held in excessively harsh conditions in relation to the prison sentence that they received.<sup>100</sup>

It is widely recognized that Brazil's criminal gangs recruit most of their members in prison and organize many of their activities from there. In Rio when a new inmate has no gang affiliation he may be required by prison administrators to pick a gang or simply be assigned to one by them.<sup>101</sup> The large recent increase in the number of people who are being held in pre-trial custody, often only charged with relatively minor offences, is likely to strengthen the influence of these gangs and make the prisons more difficult to control.<sup>102</sup> An Amnesty International report in 2008 noted that:

Severe overcrowding, poor sanitary conditions, gang violence and riots continue to blight the prison system, where ill-treatment, including beatings and torture are commonplace. Figures released by the prison system showed that 30% of all inmate deaths were

<sup>96</sup> A/HRC/11/2/Add.2 future, para 26.

<sup>97</sup> Ministry of Justice, Execução Penal, Sistema Prisional, Informações InfoPen, – Estatística Formulário Categoria e Indicadores Preenchidos, Referência:12/2012, lists the total number as 548,003. The same report in June 2012 listed the total as 549,577. As discussed earlier the discrepancy between the two figures is due to the problems of collecting reliable official data in Brazil.

<sup>98</sup> Ministry of Justice, DEPEN, InfoPen, Consolidated Data 2008.

<sup>99</sup> *Sistema de Mutirão Carcerário*, Relatório Geral, 10 January 2012, [www.cnj.jus.br/relatorio\\_mutirao/relatorio/](http://www.cnj.jus.br/relatorio_mutirao/relatorio/). Relatório geral.wsp accessed January 2012.

<sup>100</sup> Conor Foley (ed) *Another System is Possible: Reforming Brazilian Justice*, London: International Bar Association, 2012, p.14-29.

<sup>101</sup> A/HRC/11/2/Add.2 future, 2008, para 46.

<sup>102</sup> *Guardian*, Conor Foley 'Fuelling the war in Brazil', 12 December 2009.



as a result of homicide – six times the rate in the wider population. In August, 25 inmates were burnt to death in the Ponte Nova in Minas Gerais after factional fighting. In Espírito Santo state, amid accusations of torture and ill-treatment, the government barred entry to prison cells to the Community Council (*Conselho Da Comunidade*), an officially mandated body, which under state law has the duty to monitor the prison system. In the Aníbal Bruno prison in Pernambuco, at least three died and 43 were injured after a riot broke out in November 2007. Chronically understaffed and three times over capacity, the prison has long been subject to allegations of torture and ill-treatment. Over 60 deaths were reported in the Pernambucan prison system in 2007, more than 20 of them in the Aníbal Bruno prison. . . . In November 2007 a 15 year old girl suffered extensive sexual abuse while held in a police cell with 20 adult men for a period of a month, in the northern state of Pará.<sup>103</sup>

*Viewing the violence in Rio de Janeiro through an armed conflict paradigm is problematic and risks militarizing the situation further.*

In the mid-2000s, the situation in Rio was further complicated by the rise of a new armed movement: the militias. Formed by off-duty or retired policemen and other public agents, the militias initially claimed that they wanted to liberate the *favelas* from drug trafficking. In many places they decreed an end to the *baile funk* parties held in some *favelas* at which drugs are routinely sold. In turn, residents had to pay fees for different services and a 'security tax'. As Cano has observed, the main motivation for the formation of the militias seems to have been that some police officers realized that they could make more money controlling territories than receiving bribes from traffickers whose profits were decreasing, due to the decline in income generated by the drugs trade.<sup>104</sup> Militias extra-judicially execute suspected traffickers and other suspected criminals, intimidate residents, and threaten and kill those who speak out or are perceived to have allegiances to other groups. In August 2009, seven residents of the Barbante *favela* were shot dead by members of a militia.<sup>105</sup>

In May 2008 three undercover journalists were kidnapped and tortured by militia members in Batan.<sup>106</sup> The public outrage that followed led the government to set up a Parliamentary Commission of Inquiry (CPI) whose report concluded that the militias

<sup>103</sup> Amnesty International, *Brazil Submission to the UN Universal Periodic Review, First session of the UPR Working Group, 7–11 April 2008* AI Index: AMR 19/023/2007.

<sup>104</sup> Ignacio Cano, 'Seis por meia dúzia? Um estudo exploratório do fenômeno das chamadas "Milícias" no Rio de Janeiro' in *Segurança, Milícias e Tráfico no Rio de Janeiro*: 48-83. Rio de Janeiro: Justiça Global, 2008.

<sup>105</sup> *Report of the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, Philip Alston, Addendum, Follow-up to country recommendations – Brazil, A/HRC/14/24/Add.4*, 28 May 2010, para.

<sup>106</sup> "Milícias: política do terror," O Dia Online, 31 May 2008; Human Rights Watch, *World Report 2009 – Brazil* (January 2009).



dominated 171 *favelas*, nearly twice the previously assumed number.<sup>107</sup> It also found extensive evidence of official state involvement in the militias, including election-related corruption, official membership in militias, and militias benefiting from the use of public resources, such as weapons and cars.<sup>108</sup> Two hundred alleged militia members were arrested including a state deputy. In August 2009 a member of the current Governor Sergio Cabral's personal security detail was arrested on charges of alleged participation in a militia that had recently murdered four people.<sup>109</sup> It is noticeable that, so far, Batan is the only *favela* controlled by the militia to have been targeted for 'pacification'.

Violence and crime in Rio can only be tackled through understanding the complex webs of political interest and economic profit and corruption in which elements of the state itself are deeply enmeshed. However, much the same could also be said of officially-recognized 'armed conflicts', such as Afghanistan, Darfur, Somalia and the Democratic Republic of Congo, where 'war economies' have taken on a self-perpetuating dynamic.<sup>110</sup> Viewing the violence in Rio de Janeiro through an armed conflict paradigm is problematic and risks militarizing the situation further. Nevertheless, there are lessons to be learnt from comparable situations, which provide a useful framework for analyzing the UPPs and the 'pacification' process.

The first of these lessons is a negative one. Rio de Janeiro's experiences prove that security policies require planning, investment and consistent application over time if they are to be successful. Since Brazil's return to democracy in the 1980s security policy in Rio became increasingly politicized as governors alternated between 'harsh' and 'soft' approaches. Leonel Brizola, who was elected Governor from 1982 – 1986 and then again from 1991 – 1994, stressed the importance of human rights and community policing, based on respect for citizenship and the rule of law.<sup>111</sup> He was twice replaced by Governors elected on diametrically opposed platforms of being 'tough on criminals'. Wellington Moreira Franco was Governor of Rio from 1987 – 1991, promised to 'put an end to violent criminality in six months', principally by providing the police with better weapons and equipment and expanding the work

107 Assembleia Legislativa do Estado do Rio de Janeiro (ALERJ), Relatório Final da Comissão Parlamentar de Inquérito destinada a investigar a ação de Milícias no âmbito do estado do Rio de Janeiro (November 2008).

108 *Report of the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions*, Philip Alston, Addendum, Follow-up to country recommendations – Brazil, A/HRC/14/24/Add.4, 28 May 2010, para 29.

109 Ibid.

109 For further discussion on the respective roles of 'greed' and 'grievance' in sustaining armed conflicts see Paul Collier, *The Bottom Billion*, Oxford University Press, 2007; and David Keen, *Complex emergencies*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 2008.

111 Fiona Macaulay, 'Civil Society-State Partnerships for the Promotion of Citizen Security in Brazil', *SUR: international journal on human rights*, Year 2, Number 2, 2005, p. 152-3.

*The number of civilians killed by the police rose from 355 in 1998 to 900 in 2002, a 153 per cent increase, as the administration adopted an increasingly confrontational approach.*

of the infamous Special Police Operations Battalion (BOPE).<sup>112</sup> Marcello Alencar, Governor from 1994 – 1999, instituted an 'award for bravery', which established that policemen who excelled in fighting criminals, measured by the number that they killed, would receive military honors and bonus cash payments of up to 150 per cent of their monthly salary.<sup>113</sup> This so-called Wild West Bonus had a dramatic impact on the police's killing rate, which jumped from an average of 3.2 people per month between January and May of 1995, to 20.55 per month between June 1995 and February 1996.<sup>114</sup> However, overall rates of crime and violence continued to increase under both the 'soft' and 'hard-line' policies. As Hinton has noted, 'Amid such political whims, shifting standards and contradictory signals, it is difficult to imagine how any reform agenda could take root.'<sup>115</sup>

Between 1999 and 2007 Rio was governed by Antonio Garotinho and his wife Rosinha,<sup>116</sup> with a security policy best described as schizophrenic. Garotinho invited a well-known reformer, Luiz Eduardo Soares, to coordinate his program of public security while appointing a hard-liner, José Siqueira to be the new Secretary of Public Security, creating a tension within the heart of the administration that was finally resolved by Soares' dismissal in 2000. Community policing was officially reinstated and one project was opened in the *favela* of Cantagalo. Garotinho also announced a *Mutirão pela Paz* (Mobilization for Peace), aimed at combining police occupation with social actions to promote a new relationship between communities and police forces. A disarmament project, implemented in conjunction with Viva Rio, a non-governmental organization (NGO), saw the buy-back and destruction of over 100,000 weapons.<sup>117</sup>

112 Leandro Carneiro, 'Mudança de Guarda: As Agendas da Segurança Pública no Rio de Janeiro', *Revista Brasileira de Segurança Pública* 4 (7): 48-71, 2010.

113 Luiz E. Soares and João T. Sento-Sé, *Estado e Segurança Pública no Rio de Janeiro: Dilemas de um Aprendizado Difícil*. Programa Maré-CAPES-CNPQ - Reforma do Estado, 2000.

114 Jailson de Souza e Silva e Jorge Luiz Barbosa, *Favela: alegria e dor na Cidade, Rio de Janeiro*: Editora Senac Rio [X] Brasil e ao Serviço Nacional de Aprendizagem Comercial, 2005.

115 Mercedes Hinton, 'A distant reality: democratic policing in Argentina and Brazil', in *Criminal Justice*, Sage publications, 2005, p.87.

116 Antonio Garotinho a former sports broadcaster and evangelist preacher was elected in 1999, but stood down from office to run for President of Brazil in 2002. His wife was elected in 2003 and governed until 2007. Garotinho was charged with corruption in 2008 and disbarred from public office in 2010, although this was overturned on appeal.

117 In June 2001, Viva Rio, a non-governmental organization (NGO) collaborated with the state government of Rio de Janeiro and the military to destroy 100,000 weapons under police custody--the largest weapons destruction in history. A further 10,000 weapons were destroyed on 9 July 2002, and 5,000 more on the eve of the UN conference on Small Arms Trafficking in 2003. See Pablo Dreyfus, Luis Eduardo Guedes, Ben Lessing, Antônio Rangel Bandeira, Marcelo de Sousa Nascimento, and Patricia Silveira Rivero, *Small Arms in Rio de Janeiro. The Guns, the Buyback, and the Victims*, Rio de Janeiro and Geneva: Viva Rio and Small Arms Survey, 2008.

The Cantagalo project started well, but it was isolated from the mainstream of policing activity and boycotted by the municipal government, due to its political differences with the Garotinho administration.<sup>118</sup> It also received little support from the national government. Eventually 50 of the police officers involved were purged on charges of corruption and violence. The *mutirão* project was also cancelled in 2000, although it subsequently re-emerged under a new name, *Grupamento Policial em Áreas Especiais* (GPAE – Police Group for Special Areas) and had some successes. However, the number of civilians killed by the police rose from 355 in 1998 to 900 in 2002, a 153 per cent increase, as the administration adopted an increasingly confrontational approach.<sup>119</sup> The impact of the violence also began to reach well beyond the *favelas*. Following on from the brutal murder of the investigative journalist Tim Lopes in June 2002, *Comando Vermelho* deployed its members throughout the fashionable business-tourist districts of Ipanema and Leblon on 30 September 2002 to enforce a general strike to protest at the jailing of one of its leaders. They shut down the city's bus services, burning those that tried to operate and ordered banks, restaurants and even schools and hospitals to close down.<sup>120</sup> In January 2003 the police launched the first of what became known as their *mega-operações* deploying 250 military and civil police in 58 cars and two helicopters with a roving search warrant, which allowed them to search anywhere in any *favela* in the northern and western parts of Rio. By the end of the operation, fourteen people were dead, including three children and two policemen, although the targets of the operation were not apprehended.<sup>121</sup>

Garotinho, who was appointed Secretary of Public Security by his wife in August 2002, declared himself in favor of 'zero tolerance' and announced a series of operations such as 'Maximum Pressure' and 'Operation Asphyxia'.<sup>122</sup> Up to 20 *favelas* were occupied simultaneously by the police backed by armored vehicles known as *caveirões* (big skulls) which were to become infamous.<sup>123</sup> Complaints of police brutality soared and it was also during this period that allegations of support for the militias from within the state authorities began to emerge.<sup>124</sup> The drug traffickers

118 Macaulay, 2005, p.153.

119 Center of Criminal Research and Analysis, "Annual Crime Statistics for the Capitol of Rio De Janeiro, 1991-2002," Office of the Rio de Janeiro state Secretary of Security.

120 Richard Penglase, 'The shutdown of Rio de Janeiro. The poetics of drug trafficker violence', *Anthropology Today* 21 (5): 3-7, 2005.

121 Amnesty International, *Brazil: Rio de Janeiro 2003: Candelaria and Vigário Geral 10 Years On*, AMR 19/015/2003, 27 August 2003.

121 *Folha do São Paulo*, Garotinho Admite Situação de Descontrole no Rio', 5 July 2003; and *Folha do São Paulo*, 'Em Meio a Ataques, Garotinho Anuncia Medidas Contra a Violência,' 5 July 2003.

122 Amnesty International, 'We Have Come to Take your Souls ': the Caveirão and Policing in Rio de Janeiro, AMR 19/007/2006, 13 March 2006. See also Amnesty International, *Eles Entram Atirando: Policiamento de comunidades socialmente excluídas no Brasil*, 2005.

123 Eliana Silva, *O Contexto das Práticas Policiais nas Favelas da Maré: A Busca de Novos Caminhos A*

continued to stage their own violent incidents and in November 2006 they mounted a series of attacks in the city killing 18 people. At least 12 police stations and posts were attacked with grenades and automatic fire. Buses were also torched and gang members deliberately trapped the passengers of one bus inside, while they set it alight, killing several people inside.<sup>125</sup>

The following year, in 2007, a new Governor, Sergio Cabral, assumed office on a strong law-and-order platform. He appointed José Mariano Beltrame his Secretary for Public Security and promised to curb the use of the *caveirões*, but to continue the *mega-operações* reinforced by the military where necessary. His first year in office saw a series of large-scale confrontations in Complexo do Alemão in the run-up to the Pan American Games, which Rio was hosting, and drew strong criticism for the UN Special Rapporteur on extra-judicial executions. Alongside this, however, the administration began to develop what became known as its pacification policy and which will be discussed more fully in the next section.

## Chapter Three

### The UPPs

Although the 'pacification' process is strongly identified with Rio de Janeiro's current Governor, Sergio Cabral, the discussions which led to the policy being adopted pre-date his election. According to the World Bank, 'there is nothing written about this and no one discusses it or takes credit for it', but:

In 2006 a group of key advisors to the state governor, the intelligence sector and influential leaders from the private sector began a serious discussion of potential solutions to the city's public security dilemma. After a year of studying successful public security management in other cities in the Americas, they concluded that to move forward, the first action would have to be a definitive *retomada* (retaking) of territories lost to the control of the traffic, followed by the installation of permanent, preventative policing. The UPP was the result. The necessary collaboration between the local, state and Federal Government was possible due to a fortuitous alliance among the political parties at each level - a first, since the return of direct elections in 1985. The program was also met with strong support from the private sector and the media and with guarded optimism among the general public, fed up with the inability of the state to insure their personal safety and the obvious complicity between the gangs, the police and the judiciary.<sup>126</sup>

The strategy drew on both the 'soft' and 'hard-line' elements of previous security policies. Territories would be re-taken by a massive show of force, but then staffed by specially recruited officers trained in human rights and community policing, while social investment would be channeled at the communities affected to break the connection between social exclusion and violent crime.

The UPPs, themselves, were actually modeled on the GPAE of the Garotinho administration, although a crucial difference was that all of the officers were new recruits, who were trained separately from other police officers and who, it was hoped would not be 'contaminated' by the same levels of corruption and brutality.<sup>127</sup> UPP Social also draws on a variety of previous social programs which have been implemented in the *favelas* in recent decades with various degrees of success.

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<sup>126</sup> *Bringing the state back into the favelas of Rio de Janeiro: Understanding changes in community life after the UPP pacification process* World Bank, October 2012, p.23.

<sup>127</sup> Interview with the author and Coronel Robson Rodrigues da Silva Commander of the UPPs, Rio de Janeiro, March 2013.

*UPP Social was considerably weakened by changes which took place within the governing coalition after the state-wide elections of October 2010.*

As discussed above initially the *retomada's* were carried out without warning, and the UPP policy was also carried out alongside other *mega-operações*, which continued to lead to cause widespread death and destruction in the targeted *favelas*. The UN Special Rapporteur for extra-judicial executions, for example, noted in a 2010 report noted that:

- A December 2008 operation in Favela Mare resulted in 4 deaths.
- A February 2009 operation in Coreia, Taquaral, Rebu and Vila Aliança favelas, involving 300 police, resulted in 9 deaths.
- A March 2009 operation in Aço, Salgueiro, and Duque de Caxias favelas led to 9 deaths.
- An April 2009 operation involving 100 officers led to 8 deaths in Santa Theresa and Estacio.
- A May 2009 operation in Manguinhos favela involving 170 officers resulted in 4 deaths, and one wounded officer.
- A June 2009 operation in Mare resulted in 7 deaths, including of 2 officers.
- A July 2009 operation in Mangueira involving 100 officers led to 4 deaths.
- An August 2009 operation in Morro do Juramento involving 80 officers, led to 9 deaths and 5 wounded police.
- A September 2009 operation in Morro do Juramento involving 50 police backed by a helicopter, led to 4 deaths, and the wounding of 2 news cameramen.
- A February 2010 operation in Jacarezinho led to 8 deaths, including that of 1 officer.<sup>128</sup>

As the World Bank report notes the policy was made possible by a 'fortuitous alliance among the political parties', at the city, state and national level. Both the State Governor and City Mayor are members of the centrist Brazilian democratic movement party (PMDB), which is now in alliance with the Brazilian workers' party national (PT) that governs at the national level. This helped the authorities to work together to implement the policy rather than competing amongst themselves to gain credit from its successes and heap blame for any mistakes on their political opponents. The failure to implement consistent policies over time has been identified as one of the weaknesses of the authorities' response to the increase in violent crime in Rio de Janeiro. Maintaining such continuity will, however, always be challenging in a democracy, which, by definition are marked by changes in government. No politician can afford to ignore the views of his or her constituents on the issue of violent crime

and, even when there is an overwhelming consensus in favor of a particular policy, its implementation can be frustrated due to other political changes unrelated to the issue. As will be discussed below, UPP Social was considerably weakened by changes which took place within the governing coalition after the state-wide elections of October 2010.

In an effort to maintain support and momentum, the 'pacification' policy was shrewdly marketed, with considerable support from both the media and the private sector.<sup>129</sup> However, this has led to a rather credulous acceptance of the success of its impact in mainstream political discussion, which makes an objective assessment harder. The two criticisms that will be discussed further below are first of all that the pacification process coincided with rather than caused the drop in violent crime that occurred and secondly that UPP Social was based on a flawed conceptual model, which by explicitly linking itself to a security agenda has politicized the delivery of services that are actually basic rights.

The World Bank has noted that the pacification policy 'was intended to shift control of the *favelas* from the drug gangs and militias to the Brazilian state – *literally from one day to the next* – and provide their residents with the same kind of citizenship rights enjoyed by the rest of the city.' [emphasis added].<sup>130</sup> This was not intended to be mere rhetoric. Previous social initiatives in the *favelas* had focused on improving living conditions, but not in contesting physical control of the territories or extending the rule of law. The most ambitious of these was the *Favela-Bairro* project, which began in 1994 and was implemented in three five-year phases. This was subsequently subsumed under the program of accelerated growth (*Programa de Aceleração do Crescimento* – PAC), which was strongly identified with President Lula's government and President Dilma's election campaign. In July 2010 a new R\$8 billion social program, *Morar Carioca*, was launched to invest and urbanize all *favelas* in the city by 2025, as part of the legacy of the Olympic Games. This has now been supplemented by *Caminho Melhor*, which provides youth vulnerable to recruitment by criminal gangs with alternative education and leisure activities.

UPP Social intended to use both these resources, as well as those from the state and municipal administration and investment from the private sector, through a three stage participatory planning process. Residents of 'pacified' territories would be invited to discuss the priority needs of their communities, and how the state should respond, in a public consultation process. The program drew on similar

129 See Robert Muggah and Albert Walter Souza Mulli, 'Paving the hills and levelling the streets: counter-insurgency in Rio de Janeiro, in Robert Muggah (ed) *Stabilization Operations, Security and Development*, London and New York: Routledge, 2014.

130 *Bringing the state back into the favelas of Rio de Janeiro: Understanding changes in community life after the UPP pacification process* World Bank, October 2012, p.12.



*While policing is a state responsibility, the provision of most social services are under the responsibility of the city administration.*

projects implemented in other Brazilian cities, such as the program for the reduction of homicides in Diadema and project Stay Alive (*Fica Vivo*) in Belo Horizonte, as well as the Boston Gun Project and New York's Project Ceasefire in the United States.<sup>131</sup> It was also influenced by similar projects implemented as part of the counter-insurgency operations in the Colombian cities of Bogota and Medellín, and bears many similarities to the National Solidarity Program in Afghanistan.<sup>132</sup> The implementation process has been described as follows:

The pre-implementation phase starts after UPP takes over the territory, and UPP Social enters with a group of local coordinators who spend up to three weeks talking to local associations, community leaders and the general population, to get a sense of the most pressing demands. This process is followed by a Rapid Participatory Mapping exercise, which provides a socioeconomic assessment of each favela. Based on this initial diagnosis, a UPP Social Forum is held in each favela, bringing IPP [Instituto Pereira Passos] president and staff, representatives from all key municipal secretariats (health, education, housing, etc.; an average of 15 to 20 sectors are usually present), local leaders, the local UPP police commander, and private sector representatives discuss to the main demands identified and possible responses. The entire community is invited. The results of these forums, including the list of demands, participants, and agreements, are made available to the public via UPP Social's website. Lastly, a team of UPP Social local coordinators (two or three, depending on the community's size) is placed permanently in the communities, carrying out daily visits to be mediators between them, the government, and other services' providers.<sup>133</sup>

As Ricardo Henriques, the founder of UPP Social, has stressed the principal focus was the 'consolidation of territorial control and pacification' in the areas where the UPP was being implemented and it was not intended to be 'a general program to combat poverty and inequality.'<sup>134</sup> However, he also notes a paradoxical 'absence of the state' in the sense that it failed to make systematic provision for its citizens in the territories being pacified yet the presence of 'hundreds of uncoordinated

131 Ricardo Henriques and Sílvia Ramos, 'UPPs Social: ações para a consolidação da pacificação', in André Urani and Fábio Giambiagi (eds), Rio: *A Hora da Virada*, Rio de Janeiro: Elsevier, 2011, pp. 242-254.

132 Ibid. The link to Colombia is acknowledged in this article, although not the Afghanistan model, which is based on the author's own experiences of working for the Norwegian Refugee Council in both countries.

133 *Bringing the state back into the favelas of Rio de Janeiro: Understanding changes in community life after the UPP pacification process* World Bank, October 2012, p.38.

134 Ricardo Henriques and Sílvia Ramos, 'UPPs Social: ações para a consolidação da pacificação', in André Urani and Fábio Giambiagi (eds), Rio: *A Hora da Virada*, Rio de Janeiro: Elsevier, 2011, pp. 242-254.

social projects' that had been established to compensate for the 'fragility of public policy'.<sup>135</sup> It was hoped that UPP Social could integrate the supply and demand.

UPP Social was initially developed within the Secretariat for Social Assistance and Human Rights in the office of the Governor. Between August and December 2010 three pilot projects were launched in 'pacified' favelas: Providência, Cidade de Deus and Complexo do Borel. These were to serve as a model for the project's future expansion. Local coordinators were deployed, structures for consultations developed and mapping exercises carried out. During the *retomada* operations in Complexo do Alemão it was announced the Community Justice (*Justiça Comunitária*) projects would also be developed in seven 'pacified' communities in 2011.<sup>136</sup> This project first developed in the satellite cities around the capital Brasília aimed to mobilize marginalized communities, both to resolve their own conflicts through mediation, and also to raise awareness about their individual and collective rights.<sup>137</sup>

The elections of 2010, however, changed the political balance within the Rio state legislature, as a result of which Ricardo Henriques and his UPP Social team left the Governor's office and relocated themselves within Mayoral administration, under the administration of the Instituto Pereira Passos. The Governor created a new social program, Territories of Peace (*Territórios da Paz*), which continued to implement the *Justiça Comunitária* project and deployed its own local coordinators in the pacified territories. UPP Social retained the support of donors such as the World Bank and UN Habitat.<sup>138</sup>

While policing is a state responsibility, the provision of most social services are under the responsibility of the city administration. UPP Social essentially changed from a coordinating mechanism to a research and monitoring institute, without an implementation mandate.<sup>139</sup> Its staff continue to carry out physical and social mapping within the pacified territories, helping to establish community forums and encouraging dialogue between residents groups and the city authorities. Although it retained the name UPP Social it now has no formal link to the UPPs and some

135 Ibid.

136 UPP Social website, 'Programa Justiça Comunitária será lançado no complexo do Alemão', 19 dezembro 2010, <http://uppsocial.org/2010/12/programa-justica-comunitaria-sera-lancado-no-complexo-do-alemao/#sthash.8f5QJpAg.dpuf>, accessed 16 December 2013.

137 Juíza Gláucia Falsarella Foley, *Justiça Comunitária Uma experiência, Brasília*: Secretaria da Reforma do Judiciário.

138 See *World Bank*, 'Brazilian Favela Boasts top Education, safe Transportation', Feature story, 6 March 2013.

139 See website UPP Social, Questions and Answers, 'Does the UPP Social perform any type of service? No. The UPP Social articulates demands and actions concerned with the wide development of the pacified territories, supporting actions executed by the various secretaries and bodies of the City Hall and other public and private institutions. <http://uppsocial.org/about/>, accessed 16 December 2013.

current staff believe it may have been better to have renamed it when it left the state administration.<sup>140</sup>

*Territórios da Paz* was less well-funded and had a lower profile than UPP Social.<sup>141</sup> It established a coordinating committee of State Secretaries, to promote integrated action, along the lines of the original UPP Social proposal. These met monthly, but were not attended by staff of sufficient seniority to take decisions and so functioned as forums for information exchange rather than executive action. Similarly, social projects continued to be implemented rather haphazardly, depending on the priorities of individual donors, and sometimes according to rivalries between different state institutions. Crucially, neither initiative was able to establish an accountability mechanism over the UPPs by the pacified communities.

Between March and June 2011 a series of workshops were held in Cidade de Deus, Borel, Complexo do Alemão and Providencia to discuss the implementation of the *Justiça Comunitária* program.<sup>142</sup> The workshops were attended by between 50 and 180 residents who were asked to work in small groups to discuss three questions:

- what are the principal conflicts in this community,
- how are the conflicts currently resolved, and
- what would be the most just way of resolving these conflicts.

The responses from all participants were broadly similar. The sources of conflict were identified as: drugs, crime, disputes between neighbors, disputes within families, lack of facilities, lack of amenities, abuse of authority and a lack of a sense of citizenship. It was generally agreed that before the pacification process people looked to the drug trafficking organizations to resolve these conflicts, while since then people now looked to the UPPs. In response to the final question participants referred to both the formal justice system, but also to the need for dialogue, education, community mediation and a greater sense of citizenship. None felt that these options were currently available to their communities.

For the residents of the 'pacified' *favelas* the clear impact of the process was that the UPPs replaced the armed gangs of the traffic as the source of authority in their territory. As will be discussed below, this has meant that some crimes actually went up in pacified territories as the deadly restraining influence of the traffic was removed. It also gave the police officers of the UPPs a role resolving conflicts within communities that they were neither trained nor equipped to perform. Some

<sup>140</sup> Interview carried out on 20 December 2013.

<sup>141</sup> This paragraph is based on a series of interviews conducted in December 2013.

<sup>142</sup> The workshops were conducted by Judge Gláucia Falsarella Foley in an initiative jointly organized between the Brazilian Ministry of Justice, Secretary for Judicial Reform and *Territórios da Paz* of the state Governor's office.

of the UPPs, for example, decreed an end to *baile funk* parties, because residents complained about the noise and drug taking associated with them. In other cases UPP officers have mediated disputes between neighbors and even helped residents assert their rights as consumers.<sup>143</sup> Such activities bear some similarities with the 'hearts and minds' operations in military or counter-insurgency campaigns, but they are a long way from respecting the democratic and citizenship-orientated goals originally set out by UPP Social.

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143 Fabiani Luci de Oliveira, UPPs, *Direitos e Justiça: um estudo de caso das favelas do Vidigal e do Cantagalo*, Rio de Janeiro: FGV editorial and the Ford Foundation, 2012. She gives as one example, UPP officers accompanying a resident to a city centre shop so that he could demand a refund.

## Chapter Four

# Assessing the impact of the pacification process

A number of research studies have already been carried out trying to assess the overall impact of the pacification process. The two most comprehensive ones so far produced are: *Os Donos do Morro* (literally, 'the bosses of the hills/slums'), published in May 2012,<sup>144</sup> and *Bringing the state back into the favelas of Rio de Janeiro* published by the World Bank in October 2012.<sup>145</sup> As well as providing new primary research data, these summarize a number of other reports and opinion polls.

As stated above, opinion polls conducted in the first territories to be 'pacified' were generally positive. People in these *favelas* felt themselves to be safer and expressed strong support for the continued expansion of the program.<sup>146</sup> The results of these surveys were widely publicized in the Brazilian media and this undoubtedly helped to reinforce the positive image of the program. However, not all of the early results were quite as positive as some of the headlines suggested.

The first survey conducted by the Fundação Getulio Vargas was in in Santa Marta and Cidade de Deus, in May 2009 when the UPP program was still relatively unknown. It showed that while over 90 per cent of those surveyed supported the expansion of the program, this fell to 60 per cent who believed that security had improved 'as a result of the recent police intervention'. Only half of those surveyed agreed that there had been an improvement in the general human rights situation, including with regard to police violence.<sup>147</sup> Although 70 per cent of those surveyed said that there had been an improvement in the situation with regards to crimes of homicide and drug trafficking this dropped to between 55 and 58 per cent who said it was now easy to 'come and go' in the favelas. Residents also expressed concern about an increase in petty crime and some difficulties in police-community relations.

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144 Ignacio Cano,: *Uma avaliação exploratória do impacto das Unidades de Polícia Pacificadoras (UPPs) do Rio de Janeiro*, Rio de Janeiro: Universidade Estadual do Rio de Janeiro (UERJ) Laboratório de Análise da Violência (LAV) and Fórum Brasileiro de Segurança Pública (FBSP), 2012.

145 *Bringing the state back into the favelas of Rio de Janeiro: Understanding changes in community life after the UPP pacification process* World Bank, October 2012.

145 Fundação Getulio Vargas, *Avaliação do Impacto do Policiamento Comunitário na Cidade de Deus e no Dona Marta*, Relatório de Pesquisa, Rio de Janeiro: FGV, Junho de 2009; and IBSP, Pesquisa sobre a percepção acerca das unidades de Polícia Pacificadora. Pesquisa PR 004-10-UPP-25.01. Relatório de Pesquisa. Janeiro de 2010.

147 Fundação Getulio Vargas, *Avaliação do Impacto do Policiamento Comunitário na Cidade de Deus e no Dona Marta*, Relatório de Pesquisa, Rio de Janeiro: FGV, Junho de 2009.

In January 2010 a telephone survey carried out by the Brazilian Institute of Social Research for the newspaper, *O Globo*, in seven pacified territories.<sup>148</sup> This was followed in March 2010 by a survey carried out by the Nucleus for Studies, Research and Results for the lobby group Rio Against Crime (Rio contra o Crime) and a questionnaire-based survey carried out for the state government by the Mapping Institute (*Instituto Mapear*) in June 2010. In December the Centre for the Study of Security and Citizenship (CESeC) published the results of its own survey of how the police in the UPPs regarded their own participation in the process.

The first of the surveys found that 93 per cent of respondents considered their communities 'secure' or 'very secure' and 86 per cent believed that this security had increased over the previous year. Seventy-nine per cent said that armed men had disappeared, 62 per cent said that the sale of drugs had ended and 85 per cent said gun battles had stopped. Eighty per cent said the public image of the police had improved, although 84 per cent said that they had not had direct contact with the UPP officers. Seventy-two per cent said that they felt more respected by people outside their own communities and 75 per cent said they believed that they were now more likely to be listened to by the public authorities. Seventy-one per cent said that they believed their lives would improve as a result of the UPPs, although 68 per cent expressed a fear that the traffic would return in the future.

These findings were broadly borne out by the two subsequent surveys published in March and June. These showed a widespread satisfaction that the introduction of the UPPs had challenged the previously uncontested power of the traffic within the favelas and led to a significant drop in armed violence. Amongst the changes noted were that it had become easier to denounce crimes to the police, property prices were rising and children were now able to play in the streets. While 68 per cent of respondents in one survey declared themselves satisfied with the behavior of the police, 80 per cent said that there were still tensions in community-police relations and a quarter of the young people surveyed reported that the police behaved aggressively towards them.

The CESeC survey showed that the police themselves were still very divided about many of the concepts surrounding human rights and community policing, which appear to have received considerably less emphasis in the training that had initially been claimed. While 63 per cent considered their training to have been appropriate only 42 per cent and 43 per cent agreed with what they had been taught on two specific themes: the use of non-lethal force and intervention in cases of domestic violence. Large majorities agreed that policing tasks included catching criminals (79 per cent), receiving complaints (60 per cent) and recording crimes in police stations

*While 68 per cent of respondents in one survey declared themselves satisfied with the behavior of the police, 80 per cent were still tensions in community-police relations and a quarter of the young people surveyed reported that the police behaved aggressively towards them.*

148 *Instituto Brasileiro de Pesquisa Social*, 'Pesquisa sobre a percepção acerca das unidades de Polícia Pacificadora. Pesquisa PR 004-10-UPP-25.01. Relatório de Pesquisa. Janeiro de Janeiro: IBPS, 2010.

(45 per cent), but only 5 per cent thought that it should include frequent participation in meetings with the community. Ninety-four per cent believed that it was necessary for the police to be armed while carrying out their day to day tasks and 70 per cent said that they would rather be doing other types of policing work than that of a UPP. Only 31 per cent expressed themselves dissatisfied with their work, although there were strong complaints about their salaries and working conditions, despite the privileges that they receive over other police officers. The officers surveyed were also openly cynical about the motivation of the pacification process. Seventy per cent said that the UPPs had been created to guarantee the security of the World Cup and the Olympics and 68 per cent said that the main reason for the choice of which *favelas* had been pacified had been to allay the concerns of the middle class.

The World Bank report published in October 2012 showed similarly mixed views. Most residents in the communities surveyed recognized the 'transformational benefits of the pacification process'.<sup>149</sup> They expressed satisfaction that it was easier to 'come and go' without fear of being shot in cross-fire between rival gangs or the traffic and the police. They also felt that their economic prospects had improved since the pacification and that it had improved the image of the *favelas*, leading to greater possibilities of them being treated as equal citizens. However, the survey also noted concerns about certain aspects of the pacification process and its future prospects, suggesting that 'it caters to a larger city planning project centered on creating the conditions necessary to host global events such as the 2016 Olympic Games.' Residents surveyed also questioned 'the heavily armed presence of UPP police and the heavy handed techniques of some policemen, as well as the excessive regulation of certain community activities and the risk of taking over the legitimate role of community associations.' The report warned that:

Not everyone sees the arrival of the UPP as the "liberation" portrayed by the media; many residents feel that the occupation of their communities by drug gangs has simply been replaced by the occupation of the Military Police. They question the need for the pacification police to be visibly and heavily armed when the drug traffickers have been disarmed.

The report noted that 'in addition to their intended role of establishing the rule of law and enforcing disarmament in the favelas, the UPPs have assumed other de facto roles of local government, dispute mediation, conflict resolution, ombudsmen and ultimately decision-makers in most matters regarding community life.' It also warned that residents expressed fear that once the Olympic Games are over, the UPP would disappear, leaving them in the hands of traffickers yet again and that

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<sup>149</sup> *Bringing the state back into the favelas of Rio de Janeiro: Understanding changes in community life after the UPP pacification process* World Bank, October 2012, p.118-26.



*The pacification process has been heavily influenced by counter-insurgency strategies that stress the importance of capturing territory and securing community allegiance.*

'anyone who becomes too involved with the UPP will suffer the consequences if and when the gangs return.' Given the previous history of failed policing policies this is a reasonable concern, but it also underlines how politicized the pacification process is perceived to be by all sides. Asked how quickly the traffic would return if the UPP was withdrawn from their *favela* one resident said 'they would meet each other on the way out.'

The report concluded that 'for the UPP to be (and be perceived) as an irreversible process, it needs to link with a broader public security policy reform' and that: 'The UPP is, above all, a reorganization of the logic of police behavior. Although limited to favelas, it has the potential to establish the conditions for the eventual construction of a permanent public security policy, oriented towards citizens and communities. This goes beyond the impacts of the UPP on violence reduction. It encompasses transformations in the larger political culture, and changes of this nature require time.' One of its main recommendations was:

to strengthen the existing associational density in the pacified areas so that regular institutions can replace UPPs in the medium term. In order to make UPP impacts sustainable, Rio de Janeiro government will have to build a more long standing and "regular" institutional structure, the same that exists in the rest of the city and state, in the favelas. This structure will have to fill in the vacuum in local governance left by the drug traffic, now temporarily occupied by the UPP. The permanent presence of the police to restore and maintain order cannot, should not, and will not last forever... UPP Social is a good effort in that direction.

As Henriques has noted one of the main original objectives of UPP Social was to bring greater coordination to the delivery of social projects, in consultation with the communities of pacified *favelas*. This continued to be a professed goal of the project after it had been transformed from a state coordinating project to a city research institute, although, in practice, it could no longer fulfil this role. There is clearly a danger that the community consultation processes will create expectations that cannot be fulfilled.

The pacification process has been heavily influenced by counter-insurgency strategies that stress the importance of capturing territory and securing community allegiance. By forcing the traffic out of the *favelas*, it was hoped that this would deprive them of vital bases and isolate them from the communities that they had previously controlled. 'Integrating' *favela* residents into the formal city is intended to complete this process and prevent the traffic returning. Clearly a research institute cannot substitute itself for governance structures and so the assumption that UPP Social has transformative potential for the development of public security policy

seems to be based on dangerously wishful thinking. As well as providing a potential alibi for the state's failure to fill its own responsibility in this regard it could also associate UPP Social with a security policy that it is in fact unable to influence. During an interview a current member of the UPP Social team jokingly referred to the name of their organization as a 'cursed inheritance'.<sup>150</sup>

Community groups and NGOs implementing social projects within the *favelas* have been placed in a similarly vulnerable position. Prior to the pacification process these could only operate with the, at least tacit, acceptance of whichever armed gang controlled the territory in which they were working. Like the communities in which they are based, many are uncertain about the future. Most have, therefore, adopted a policy similar to that of 'humanitarian neutrality' towards the UPPs. The existing residents associations also often have an ambiguous relationship to the process since many of them were until recently controlled by the traffic. This will make it extremely challenging to establish accountability mechanisms over the UPPs, but without them it is difficult to see how the process can be made into a lasting one.

The pacification process has coincided with a big fall in some forms of violent crime. *Os Donos do Morro* shows that between 2006 and 2011 homicides and deaths due to encounters with the police decreased by 78 per cent in areas where the UPPs have been introduced.<sup>151</sup> Since the first UPP was not introduced until December 2008 this allows their introduction to be analyzed within a broader time-frame.

The research in fact shows that the biggest fall in recorded homicides and deaths following encounters with the police came over the course of 2008 and may be linked to the way in which the police began to record certain types of crimes. In that year a new bonus system was introduced in which officers began to receive cash rewards according to the number of recorded crimes in the communities that they were responsible for policing, giving them an incentive to keep the figures lower.<sup>152</sup> This may have led to an artificial reduction of certain crime rates due to under-reporting by some police officers and the re-classification of certain crimes.<sup>153</sup> While the homicide rate notably declined that year the number of registered 'disappearances'

150 Interview conducted 20 December 2013.

151 Ignacio Cano, *Os Donos do Morro: Uma avaliação exploratória do impacto das Unidades de Polícia Pacificadoras (UPPs) do Rio de Janeiro*, Rio de Janeiro: Universidade Estadual do Rio de Janeiro (UERJ) Laboratório de Análise da Violência (LAV) and Fórum Brasileiro de Segurança Pública (FBSP), 2012.

151 Sistema Integrado de Metas, criado em 2009, pelo Decreto 41.931 De 25 De Junho De 2009, Dispõe sobre o sistema de definição e gerenciamento de metas para os indicadores estratégicos de criminalidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro, See [www.rj.gov.br/web/seseg/exibeConteudo?article-id=1229317](http://www.rj.gov.br/web/seseg/exibeConteudo?article-id=1229317), accessed February 2014.

153 Daniel Ganem Misse, *Políticas Sociais em Territórios Pacificados*, Tese, não publicada, Universidade Federal Fluminense, Centro de Estudos Gerais, Centro de Estudos Sociais Aplicados, Programa de Pós-Graduação em Sociologia e Direito, Niterói, 2013.

*Each UPP contains between around 100 and 300 police officers, which means that the ratio of officers to members of the community that they are policing is about 18 per thousand, compared to a ratio of 2.3 per thousand for Rio as a whole.*

significantly increased and this trend has continued since the pacification.<sup>154</sup> In his 2010 report, the UN Special Rapporteur on extra-judicial executions notes that: 'Some concerns have been expressed about the integrity of Rio de Janeiro Government statistics on resistance killings, and homicides more generally.'<sup>155</sup>

Nevertheless, by comparing rates of violent killing in specific pacified favelas with those of the city as a whole *Os Donos do Morro* shows a decrease of 60 victims for every 100,000 inhabitants. This is a very significant fall, that explains why large majorities of residents felt themselves to be safer, despite the other reservations that some expressed about the process. The report also showed that incidents of armed robbery had similarly decreased, but that other crimes including petty theft, common assaults, threats, domestic violence, rape and drug-related crimes had all increased. It concludes that this is probably partly because it is now easier to record and denounce these crimes to the police, but also because of the removal of the traffic's own brutal enforcement of certain rules of social behavior.

It would, in fact, be very surprising if the pacification process had not led to a reduction in violent killings, given the resources mobilized around this specific objective. Each UPP contains between around 100 and 300 police officers, which means that the ratio of officers to members of the community that they are policing is about 18 per thousand, compared to a ratio of 2.3 per thousand for Rio as a whole. The fact that these officers are better paid and trained than ordinary police also makes the project very expensive, which is one of the principal concerns regarding its sustainability.

The success of the UPPs also needs to be seen in the context of broader trends across Brazil, which have seen strong falls in violent crime rates in the south-east of the country balanced by significant increases in the north-east of the country. A World Bank study noted that some other states, such as São Paulo, saw their homicide rate drop by 67 per cent between 2000 and 2010, while others like Bahia, Alagoas and Pará had witnessed their homicide rates double or triple during the same period.<sup>156</sup> It noted that the decreases in violent crime appear to be influenced by a range of factors, from demographic change and reduced income inequality, to specific public security policies such as results-oriented policing, gun and alcohol control, and programs targeting youth at risk and hot-spots of crime and violence. Rio's pacification policy is cited as a successful example of the last of these policies, but since other states have achieved similar results with a different policy mix it should

<sup>154</sup> <http://www.lav.uerj.br/bol.html>, accessed January 2014.

<sup>155</sup> *Report of the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, Philip Alston, Addendum, Follow-up to country recommendations – Brazil, A/HRC/14/24/Add.4*, 28 May 2010, para 17.

<sup>156</sup> *Making Brazilians safer: analyzing the dynamics of violent crime*, World Bank, 2013, p.12. The increases for the states were by 303 per cent, 160 per cent and 259 per cent respectively.

clearly not be seen as a 'silver bullet'. Indeed after falling for a decade Rio's homicide rate actually rose in 2013, particularly in the northern suburbs of Baixada Fluminense, where it is believed that many of the criminal gangs have relocated after being pushed out of the pacified *favelas*.<sup>157</sup> Figures released by the Instituto de Segurança Pública (ISP) in February 2014 show a 27 percent rise in homicides in Niterói and a 28 percent rise in the Baixada Fluminense, from January 2012 to September 2013.<sup>158</sup>

The World Bank report and other research show that improved police intelligence, better training and improved pay and conditions, crackdowns on corruption, a curb on police officers taking second jobs, and moves towards community-style policing have all been effective in the places where they have been attempted.<sup>159</sup> In São Paulo, a new murder squad has been established, which uses computer profiling to spot patterns and to act preventively. The state has invested in: a communications network to link military and civil police information; a geographic information system, so that crimes can be tracked by area; a criminal photographs database; and computer software linking police report information with bank records, telephone records and residence details. More emphasis has also been placed on crime prevention and building links with communities, whose willingness to provide information remains one of the most effective means by which the police can improve their detection rates.

In summary, if the introduction of the UPPs is part of a process of genuine reform of public security policy and policing there are good grounds for optimism about its success. However, the signs so far are extremely mixed. There have been a number of allegations of corruption and brutality levelled against UPP officers as well as complaints about excessive use of force. Amnesty International has announced that it will be distributing 'know your rights' information packs to residents in advance of future pacification operations following complaints about police invading homes and assaulting people.<sup>160</sup>

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156 See Ignacio Cano (Research Coordinator), *Boletim de Criminalidade – Atualização Está no ar os boletins de criminalidade do LAV dos meses de julho e agosto de 2013*, Universidade Estadual do Rio de Janeiro (UERJ) Laboratório de Análise da Violência (LAV) <http://www.lav.uerj.br/bol.html>, accessed January 2014. This gives a breakdown of violent crime statistics in Rio de Janeiro from May 2012 to August 2013.

See also Doriam Borges, Dayse Miranda, Thais Duarte, Fernanda Novaes, Kyssia Ettel, Tatiana Guimarães, and Thiago Ferreira, *Mortes violentas no Brasil: uma análise do fluxo de informações*, Rio de Janeiro: Universidade Estadual do Rio de Janeiro (UERJ) and Fórum Brasileiro de Segurança Pública (FBSP), 2012 157 *Rio Times*, 'UPPs in Baixada Fluminense, São Gonçalvo and Niterói', 4 February 2014.

158 See, for example, *Tackling Urban Violence in Latin America: Reversing Exclusion through smart policing and social investment*, Washington, DC: Washington Office on Latin America, 2011; and *Crime, Violence, and Economic Development in Brazil: Elements for Effective Public Policy*, Washington, DC: World Bank, 2006.

160 Amnesty International, News Release, 'Brazil: Slum campaign on human rights ahead of police operation', 5 November 2012.

UPP officers are suspected of involvement in the abduction and murder of Amarildo de Souza a resident of Rocinha who 'disappeared' after being taken into police custody in July 2013.<sup>161</sup> In October 2013 ten police officers were charged with his murder and the Public Prosecutor announced that he believed that de Souza had died as a result of torture in police custody.<sup>162</sup> In June 2013 ten people were killed in Complexo da Mare, which has not yet been pacified, during a police operation after a protest march in the city, resulted in looting and street robberies.<sup>163</sup> Plans for the 'pacification' of Maré, which is strategically located between some of Rio's most important highways and between the city and its international airport, have been repeatedly postponed due to the deteriorating security situation elsewhere.<sup>164</sup>

The UPPs also suffered their first casualty in July 2013 when a female police officer was shot dead in a small police station in Complexo do Alemão, which came under attack by 12 assailants, in what appears to have been a coordinated set of attacks.<sup>165</sup> In January 2014 another officer was shot dead in Complexo do Alemão and six people were killed by the police in follow up operations trying to locate the perpetrators.<sup>166</sup> There are also numerous reports of armed youth appearing in many 'pacified' *favelas* again and widespread fears that this could lead to renewed confrontations with the police. While the highly publicized flight of traffickers from Complexo do Alemão – who were filmed retreating in an armored column – attracted national and international attention, it appears that those who fled were mainly the subject of outstanding arrest warrants. Anecdotal evidence suggests that other gang members have stayed put, adopting a low profile and waiting for the opportunity to re-emerge again.<sup>167</sup>

161 *O Globo*, 'Imagens mostra Amarildo de Souza sendo levado pela policia no RJ', 9 de Agosto 2013.

162 *BBC News*, 'Brazil police charged with Rio murder over Amarildo case', 4 October 2013.

163 *BBC News*, 'Rio de Janeiro police operation leaves nine dead', 25 June 2013. See also *Latin American Bureau*, 'Never again: Mare remembers 10 killed in police operation', 5 July 2013.

164 *Rio Times*, 'UPPs in Baixada Fluminense, São Gonçalvo and Niterói', 4 February 2014.

165 *O Globo*, 'Trafico ataca UPP do Alemão e mata uma PM', 24 do julho 2013.

166 *AP News*, '6 killed in shootouts with Rio de Janeiro police', 4 February 2014.

167 Interviews conducted December 2013 and January 2014.

## Chapter Five

# International Humanitarian Agencies in Rio de Janeiro

As previously stated there are hundreds of social projects being run by various NGOs in Rio's *favelas*. Most of these are local, although some international organizations, such as the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), and non-governmental organizations, such as Médecins sans Frontières (MSF), have also run projects there. Both of these are humanitarian agencies with many projects in officially recognized conflict zones and other situations of violence and so their experiences of working in Rio may be of relevance to other international agencies.

The organized violence that has blighted Rio de Janeiro in recent decades can also be found in many other large cities around the world and the phenomenon of urban crime and disorder, in particular, are attracting increasing attention from security policy makers and practitioners.<sup>168</sup> Crucially, the experiences of both MSF and the ICRC show that the principles governing humanitarian neutrality and humanitarian advocacy can be used in situations of violence that do not reach the threshold of an armed conflict. They also provide important insights into the quite separate debate about the relationship between national authorities and international agencies in responding to natural and man-made humanitarian crises.<sup>169</sup>

MSF first arrived in Brazil in 1991 to help combat a cholera epidemic in the Amazon region between Brazil and Colombia.<sup>170</sup> The project began working with the Yanomami indigenous tribes and this subsequently extended to working with a number of other indigenous groups. The project has included developing preventative medicines and training health professionals to identify the parasite that causes the disease while screening for malaria. At the end of 1999 the Brazilian government assumed responsibility for the creation of a number of Special Indigenous Sanitary Districts (*Distritos Sanitários Especiais Indígenas* – DSEI) to provide basic medical care and MSF phased out its own activities in 2002.

In 1995 MSF opened its first project in Rio de Janeiro working with vulnerable street children in Vigário Geral in response to the massacre described earlier in this

<sup>168</sup> See, for example, *The World Development Report 2011: conflict, security and development*, Washington DC: World Bank, 2011.

<sup>169</sup> For further discussion see International Dialogue on Strengthening Partnership in Disaster Response: Bridging national and international support: <http://www.ifrc.org/en/what-we-do/idr/meetings-and-events/past-events/international-dialogue-on-strengthening-partnership-in-disaster-response/#sthash.VU2y1GDZ.dpuf>, accessed January 2014.

<sup>170</sup> For more details, see MSF Brasil website <http://www.msf.org.br/conteudo/114/msf-brasil/>, accessed January 2014.



*This first project became a model for many others both within Rio's favelas and in other parts of Brazil. Most were implemented in close collaboration with the Brazilian authorities and have been combined with training and sensitization techniques with Brazilian public health professionals, based on MSF's own experiences on implementing similar projects in other parts of the world.*

briefing. After consulting with the community about their most pressing needs, the project opened a public health post providing psycho-social support to children and young people as well as a general clinic providing gynecological, obstetric, dental and pediatric treatment. The project also ran a number of programs related to women's health pre-natal screening, prevention of cancer and Sexually Transmitted Disease and AIDS awareness. This first project became a model for many others both within Rio's favelas and in other parts of Brazil. Most were implemented in close collaboration with the Brazilian authorities and have been combined with training and sensitization techniques with Brazilian public health professionals, based on MSF's own experiences on implementing similar projects in other parts of the world. It is estimated that over a million Brazilian children have benefitted from these services. Amongst the *favelas* in Rio which MSF has worked since the mid-1990s are: Vigário Geral, Parada de Lucas, Portus (Costa Barros), Marcílio Dias (Complexo da Maré), Dique (Jardim América) and Telégrafos (Mangureira). All of these projects have subsequently been phased out or handed over to local partners.

In October 2007 MSF opened a center in Complexo do Alemão, providing emergency and mental health service as well as ambulatory referrals and an advisory service. It converted a van into a basic ambulance narrow enough to go through the alleyways and roadblocks, entering places where regular ambulances have never before ventured. It was also able to draw in its experiences working in conflict zones throughout the world to provide services such as advanced trauma life support, which establish an efficient triage system for the quick diagnosis of patient needs. In the two years that the project ran, MSF provided 19,000 medical consultations and undertook 650 emergency rescues using the customized ambulance. This included more than 3,000 psychological consultations to 1,300 patients in the area. Through individual consultations, a team of psychologists helped residents cope, and many for the first time in their lives took the opportunity to express their suffering in a professional and confidential environment. Psychosomatic complaints, depression and anxiety are the most common symptoms found in adults, whereas in children aggressiveness, behavioral problems and learning difficulties are common. Half the patients seen by MSF's psychologists had experienced violence. More than one third had been in a situation of conflict and, in one in five patients reported that a family member of theirs had been killed.

MSF ended its presence in Complexo do Alemão at the end of 2009. The decrease in violent clashes in the community and the creation of new health services nearby that are available for all residents meant MSF's emergency role was no longer needed. By the end of 2009, negotiations were in place with a local organization willing to take over the services established by MSF, ensuring continued medical and psychological care for local residents.



MSF has subsequently intervened to provide emergency support to the victims of the floods in Rio in January 2011, which killed over 700 people and displaced thousands from their homes, and similar floods elsewhere in the country. In December 2011 it also intervened to provide emergency support to thousands of Haitian refugees trapped on the border between Brazil, Colombia and Peru. MSF has also conducted advocacy campaigns, based on its project work, aimed at sensitizing the Brazilian authorities to particular issues within its mandate. However, as an emergency medical organization geared to providing services in places where the national state lacks the capacity to do so, it has taken a decision to devote its finite global resources to more pressing humanitarian crises.

In 2006 MSF opened an office in the country to recruit Brazilian doctors and other professionals to work in its missions abroad. So far MSF Brasil has deployed professional staff to over 35 countries, including: Sudan, Sri Lanka and the Democratic Republic of Congo, drawing on the experiences it has developed on treating the victims of violent conflict in Rio. MSF Brasil has also created a specific Brazilians Medical Unit (*Unidade Médica do Brasil* - BRAMU) to help field teams through the provision of technical support drawing on Brazil's medical and academic institutions as well as its close links with other leading countries in the global south, such as India, China and South Africa. BRAMU has established cooperation agreements with Brazilian centers of excellence in the areas of treatment of tuberculosis, infectious diseases, gynecology and pediatrics and has deployed a variety of field missions in Africa and Latin America. Through this office it continues to draw on Brazilian expertise for its worldwide work and also raises funds and awareness in Brazil about crises elsewhere in the world.

The ICRC has been present in Brazil for more than two decades, supporting the authorities in providing training to its armed forces in IHL. Since 1998, it has also helped a number of Brazilian states to integrate international standards on the use of force within police forces training, according to relevant human rights norms and instruments. This has included the development of e-learning modules with the National Secretariat of Public Security and a reform of the police education and training system in partnership with the State Secretariat of Security of Rio de Janeiro.<sup>171</sup>

In 2008, the ICRC took the initiative to offer its services to the Brazilian authorities to establish a five year pilot project in Rio de Janeiro, to try to address the humanitarian consequences of urban armed violence prevailing in many of the city's favelas.<sup>172</sup>

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170 The following account is a summary of Felipe Donoso, 'The International Committee of the Red Cross and its work in Rio de Janeiro's Civil Police Lockups', in Conor Foley (ed) *Another System is Possible: Reforming Brazilian Justice*, London: International Bar Association, 2012, pp.117-28.

172 Depending on the situation, there are various legal bases that the ICRC can invoke to undertake an

*The project was established, in 2009, in seven favelas which together contain over 335,000 inhabitants.*

This was approved during a series of high level meetings with the Brazilian Ministers of Justice, Defense and Foreign Affairs, who all gave their consent. The project was established, in 2009, in seven favelas: Cantagalo/Pavão-Pavãozinho, Cidade de Deus, Complexo da Maré, Complexo do Alemão, Parada de Lucas, Vigário Geral and Vila Vintém, which together contain over 335,000 inhabitants.

The ICRC's field operations, which were implemented until the end of 2013, mainly consisted in supporting state and municipal authorities to develop adapted strategies improving the provision of basic public services in areas of the city affected by armed violence. Meanwhile, in parallel with its traditional humanitarian dialogue with the various armed actors, the ICRC worked on empowering and reinforcing the resilience of people working and living in the favelas, in order them to adopt self-protection behaviours mitigating the effects of armed violence. During the five years of the pilot project (2009-2013), the ICRC carried out the following activities, a great part of which are now in the process to be taken over and replicated by its governmental and non-governmental partners:

- training residents of favelas in first aid and establishing more efficient chains of evacuation for medical emergencies, in cooperation with the Brazilian Red-Cross (BRC) and community-based first aid NGOs;
- improving access to primary health care, in particular through the implementation of 'Safer Access' protocols by health professionals from the programme Saúde da Família (PSF);
- supporting the municipal health authorities to develop adapted mental health care services to victims of violence;
- providing psychosocial assistance to teenage mothers and their children through regular home visits and group activities jointly carried out with municipal health authorities;
- protecting students from secondary schools from the effects of armed violence through the implementation of the projects 'Creating Humanitarian Spaces' and 'Safer Behaviour' in partnership with the State Secretariat of Education. While the former was geared towards raising awareness on the consequences of violence

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action: a) the four Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocol I confer on the ICRC a specific mandate to act in the event of international armed conflict. In particular, the ICRC has the right to visit prisoners of war and civilian internees. The Conventions also give the ICRC a broad right of initiative; b) In non-international armed conflicts, the ICRC enjoys a right of humanitarian initiative recognized by the international community and enshrined in Article 3 common to the four Geneva Conventions; and c) In the event of internal disturbances and tensions, and in any other situation that warrants humanitarian action, the ICRC also enjoys a right of initiative, which is recognized in the Statutes of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (Article 5). Thus, wherever international humanitarian law does not apply, the ICRC may offer its services to governments without that offer constituting interference in the internal affairs of the State concerned. In this case the ICRC relied on the last of these for its initiative.

and promoting humanitarian principles amongst students, the latter trained personnel of schools to assess risks and implement security procedures.

- supporting the State Secretariat of Security for the inclusion of international standards of human rights and on the use of force in the education and training curricula of military and civil police academies;
- limiting the impact of armed violence on the population and granting safe humanitarian access to the victims through regular confidential dialogue, at field level, with the police, the armed forces and Rio's armed gangs; and
- seeking to improve treatment of detainees and living conditions in places of detention under the responsibility of the State Civil Police of Rio de Janeiro.

Although it was only ever intended to be five year pilot project, the ICRC and its partners believe that the experiences were very encouraging. The project was well accepted by both the inhabitants and the armed actors in the seven neighborhoods where it worked every day. Teachers in the schools supported by the ICRC felt better equipped to cope with the day-to-day struggles their work entails, as did the healthcare workers who took part in the ICRC's 'Safer Access' workshops. More generally, the public institutions with whom the ICRC worked become increasingly aware of the fact that areas of the city chronically affected by armed violence need specific strategies and tailor-made approaches that guarantee the population access to basic services to which they are entitled.

As regards detention activities, Between February 2011 and April 2012, the ICRC conducted 24 visits to 1,877 detainees held in six police lock-ups (Duque de Caxias, Grajaú, Magé, Neves, Pavuna, São João de Meriti) in the State of Rio de Janeiro, according to its standard world-wide visiting procedures. Among other things, it helped the state and municipal health authorities to carry out a baseline survey to identify and address health needs of detainees in one of the detention facilities visited and has also distributed medical material and equipment to this lock-up. Several detainees who needed urgent medical care were transferred by the detaining authorities to penitentiary or civilian hospitals, following the ICRC's recommendations. These visits ended when all Rio de Janeiro police lock-ups were shut down in April 2012.

In the area of public security, the ICRC's long-term commitment aimed at improving police education and training, while leading in parallel a more operational dialogue on the ICRC's humanitarian concerns related to the favelas where it operates. In particular, confidential meetings regularly took place with military and civil police forces in order to discuss humanitarian problems observed by the ICRC in areas affected by armed violence. As a matter of priority, issues such as the need for medical personnel and school teachers to carry out their work in safety, for the injured

*The weight of international legal opinion rejects the view that the so-called 'war on terror', as a whole should be analyzed within this legal framework and insists that it should be treated as an issue of transnational law enforcement.*

to receive urgent medical attention, and for the dead to be handled with respect were evoked whenever needed.

In keeping with its international practices as a strictly neutral, impartial and independent, humanitarian organization the ICRC also attempted to develop a dialogue with the armed gangs that still dominate the unpacified favelas in which it worked as well as the places of detention which it monitored. Although these groups have no official legitimacy, the ICRC engaged with them for purely humanitarian purposes and as a mean to secure the safety of its teams when carrying out their activities. Explaining the nature of its work made it easier for the armed gangs and militias within the communities to accept the ICRC's presence. The ICRC treats these discussions as confidential, which is also a fundamental working modality of the international organization to enable it to safely reach people affected by violence.

There are a number of other international aid agencies with offices in Brazil and the purpose of this section is not to present an overview of their activities. Rather it is to show both the similarities and differences between working in situations of extreme urban violence and those of an officially recognized conflict zone from the perspective of a humanitarian agency. Both MSF and ICRC have drawn on their international experiences, including work in conflict zones, to strengthen their work in Brazil. Both have also used their Brazilian experiences to strengthen their international work. In both cases a clear commitment to work through the national authorities and not to duplicate or substitute themselves for the state's own responsibilities has enabled them to avoid the trap of 'humanitarian imperialism', which is sometimes leveled at international agencies in other complex emergencies.

The clear understanding of both agencies that the legal regime that they are operating under and that governs the behavior of Rio's various armed groups is human rights law, as it regulates the criminal justice system, is also an important point to stress. There has been much debate, particularly since the terrorist attacks in the United States on 11 September 2001, as to whether the wealthy states of the global north are, in the words of the counter-insurgency specialist 'fighting small wars in the midst of a big one'.<sup>173</sup> Some proponents of the 'war on drugs', which was followed by the 'war on terror' have argued that certain non-state groups have achieved levels of organization and territorial control to qualify for some type of combatant status, and so anti-terrorist operations should be governed by the laws of armed conflict rather than human rights law. Counter-terrorism operations, such as the one pursued in Afghanistan and, to a more limited extent, Iraq, did arguably fit within an IHL legal framework, not least because of the presence of foreign troops on Afghan and Iraqi territory. However, the weight of international legal opinion rejects the view that the so-

<sup>173</sup> David Kilcullen, *The Accidental Guerilla, fighting small wars in the midst of a big one*, London: Hurst & Co., 2009.

called 'war on terror', as a whole should be analyzed within this legal framework and insists that it should be treated as an issue of transnational law enforcement.<sup>174</sup>

As this briefing has shown the situation in Rio's favelas has often resembled that of an armed conflict in recent years and there is every reason to think that the longer term trends of organized violence in the world means that many officially designated conflict zones are likely to resemble increasingly the situation in Rio's favelas at the time of the 'pacification' campaign. Nevertheless, a broad lesson that can be drawn from Rio's recent experiences is that the key to reducing violent crime seems to have been much more due to long-term societal changes and reforms of the criminal justice system rather than a militarized 'victory' over 'enemy combatants'. For humanitarian agencies providing front-line services or monitoring the conditions of those whose lives are affected by serious violence there are important lessons of both principle and practice to be learned.

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174 Nigel Rodley and Matthew Pollard, *The Treatment of Prisoners under International Law* (3rd edn, Oxford University Press 2011, p.63.

## Chapter 6

# Conclusions

From a human rights and humanitarian perspective there are good reasons to be concerned about the fact that the term 'pacification' may be entering the security discourse alongside the lexicon of 'war on drugs', 'war on terror', 'surges', 'stabilization' and 'peace support operations'. As was discussed in the introduction, the pacification process has attracted considerable international attention from counter-insurgency specialists. It has clearly been influenced by and will in turn influence similar operations elsewhere in the world.

One of the biggest dangers of the quasi-militarization of what were traditionally police and law and order functions is potential confusion about the legal regime governing such operations. The critical difference is that under international humanitarian law (IHL) the military are permitted, and trained, to kill – or capture – enemy combatants; whereas under human rights law, the police have more closely defined powers of arrest and detention, and are restricted to using lethal force only as a last resort, when strictly necessary and in specific circumstances. Although IHL does require the military to distinguish between combatants and civilians and apply criteria such as proportionality when attacking military targets, it permits operations which may, in certain circumstances, inflict harm on civilians.

Confusion often arises because the vast majority of 'wars' that now take place are within states rather than between them. While non-international armed conflicts are governed by certain provisions of the Geneva Conventions (article 3 common to the four Geneva Convention), the 1977 Protocol II to the Geneva Conventions and customary IHL, these do not apply to situations of 'internal disturbances and tensions', which have not reached the threshold of an armed conflict<sup>175</sup> and to which human rights law still applies. Some countries have argued that certain extra-territorial actions carried out by their security forces are governed by IHL rather than human rights law. This argument could also impact on countries that contribute security personnel to UN peacekeeping missions which have mandates to protect civilians.

Although Brazilian politicians and commentators often rhetorically referred to the situation in Rio de Janeiro as a 'war', the Brazilian government has never argued that the human rights treaties to which it is a party do not apply during pacification operations. Reaffirming the primacy of human rights law is an important point of

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175 Additional Protocol II, Article 1. Factors often taken into account include levels and intensity of the violence, the degree of organization of the armed insurgent groups and whether or not they are physically in control of territory.

*There is no 'silver bullet' to restoring public security when law and order has broken down and the state's legitimacy is contested. It takes time, investment and training, and the consistent application of policies that are not driven by short-term political expediency.*

principle for human rights and humanitarian organizations operating in complex emergencies which often involve operations of a similar scale. International development and relief agencies should refrain from using a discourse that, even implicitly, suggests that IHL may be the applicable legal framework within which policing operations should be conducted.

The pacification process also shows, however, that mechanisms need to be created to ensure accountability over the security forces in practice. The failure to do this in Rio de Janeiro is almost universally agreed to be the biggest weakness of the UPPs. Given the history of the police and other security forces in Brazil, creating accountability will likely require sustained changes in political discourse and a fundamental institutional overhaul. The issue is not only lack of accountability but the historical systematic marginalization of favela populations, whose wellbeing should now be placed at the centre of the policing effort

For humanitarians this argument also has international implications, particularly for those agencies operating in countries where the UN has peacekeeping missions with mandates for the protection of civilians. The UN is notoriously reluctant to subject itself to the provisions of human rights law, which contains both positive and negative obligations, but without such accountability UN peacekeeping faces a growing crisis of credibility. In both cases such operations increasingly pose the question of 'who guards the guards?'

The third lesson with obvious applicability for humanitarian agencies relates to the problems of the coordination of service delivery and social and legal protection. In Rio de Janeiro it was originally envisaged that this would be coordinated by UPP Social, however, for the reasons described, principally its institutional shift from the state to the municipal administration, this role was lost and the resulting vacuum has not subsequently been filled. Worse still, the assumption that UPP Social, NGOs and social service delivery institutions are in fact coordinating their activities with the security forces implementing the pacification process could put them in physical danger. Aid agencies have long faced similar problems and are frequently seen as being on one side of a particular conflict despite their protestations of humanitarian neutrality. There is no easy answer to this problem, but Rio's experiences again highlight the danger of allowing the provision of social services to be determined or coordinated by a security agenda. For both principled and practical reasons, aid and social services should be delivered according to need rather than military strategy. However, human rights and humanitarian agencies should work with national state and non-state actors to develop more effective accountability mechanisms. Rio's experiences show both the difficulties and importance of this task.

The final lesson, which is perhaps the simplest, is that there is no 'silver bullet' to restoring public security when law and order has broken down and the state's



legitimacy is contested. It takes time, investment and training, and the consistent application of policies that are not driven by short-term political expediency. A failure to provide this in many parts of the world is one of the reasons why complex emergencies have so often become such protracted crises.

None of this is to detract from the undoubted achievements of the pacification process. Openly armed teenage gunmen, often high on drugs, have been replaced by uniformed police officers with at least a formal mandate to engage in community policing. Residents can now mainly go about their daily business without the constant fear of being caught in cross-fire in gun battles between the police and rival gangs. For the first time in a generation the word *favela* is not synonymous in the minds of most *Carriocas* with organized crime. Stability, at least, has been achieved, although most observers agree that the process is still fragile and could easily slip into reverse, unless further reforms are urgently implemented.

The pacification process was an achievement of the Brazilian state, accomplished almost entirely without international assistance, and its successes and failures are of obvious relevance to other states facing similar problems. International donors should encourage such south-south dialogue as part of the technical assistance that they provide. International humanitarian agencies can also learn from Rio's experiences, which may inform their work in other places. This briefing aims to provide an objective account of the lessons learned.

The Humanitarian Action in Situations other than War (HASOW) project is based at the International Relations Institute of the Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro (IRI-PUC) with support from the International Development Research Centre (IDRC). The aim of HASOW is to comprehensively assess the dynamics of urban violence and the changing face of humanitarian action. Administered between 2011 and 2013, HASOW focuses on the dynamics of organized violence in urban settings, including Rio de Janeiro, Ciudad Juarez, Medellin and Port-au-Prince.

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