

# A STATE OF INSECURITY: THE CASE OF RIO DE JANEIRO<sup>1</sup>

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**ABSTRACT:** Brazil's public security situation is volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous. The country's exceedingly high rates of violent crime are a product of structural institutional weaknesses in the criminal justice sector and aggravated by routine political and economic crises. Rio de Janeiro is particularly vulnerable to outbreaks of criminal violence owing to failures in governance and systemic corruption together with competition between territorial drug factions and sharp socio-economic inequalities. Rio de Janeiro state and metropolitan region suffered a dramatic deterioration in security since 2016 and the situation is likely to worsen in the foreseeable future. It is unlikely that the return of the armed forces to the streets of Rio de Janeiro is going to positively affect the situation chronic institutional weaknesses. This article considers the state of insecurity in Rio de Janeiro, highlighting official trends in crime prevalence and the dynamics of criminal governance.

**KEYWORDS:** Public security. Organized crime. Drug policy. Violence reduction. Corruption.

## Introduction

Brazil is facing a range of crises, not least in relation to public security. Rio de Janeiro's security environment can be described as VUCA - volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous. It is volatile owing to a spike in crime in 2016 and

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early 2017. It is uncertain in that the ongoing political and economic crises, including the imprisonment of high-level public and private sector officials, are precipitating a re-organization of organized crime. There is complexity due to competing criminal interests across the state and metropolitan region. Finally, there is ambiguity due to ongoing corruption (Lava Jato) investigations that have only recently kicked-off in Rio de Janeiro with far-reaching implications.

The manifestation of these characteristics is a highly dynamic security environment. Ever since 2015 there has been a sharp and significant increase in lethal and non-lethal crime including homicide, violent assault, rape, street robberies, car-jackings, disappearances and cargo-theft. There is partly due to a significant re-organization of criminal governance in and around metropolitan Rio de Janeiro, due in part by the premature termination of long-standing truce between the country's two primary drug-trafficking factions. Insecurity is also exacerbated by a significant crisis of leadership at the state and municipal level and severe austerity measures that are affecting the delivery of basic services, including the delivery of law enforcement.

This article considers Rio de Janeiro's past and future challenges with public security. The first section features a statistical overview of spatial and temporal "hot spots" in Rio de Janeiro state and metropolitan region. Section two considers recent shifts in the geopolitics and organized crime, in particular among the so-called drug factions. Section three hones in on the resurgence of militia groups in Rio de Janeiro. The fourth section reviews the state of the public and private security sector at the national, state and metropolitan scales. The article provides a preliminary overview of historical trends and patterns of crime, together with projections looking forward. As with all studies based on primary and secondary crime statistics, the findings are tentative.

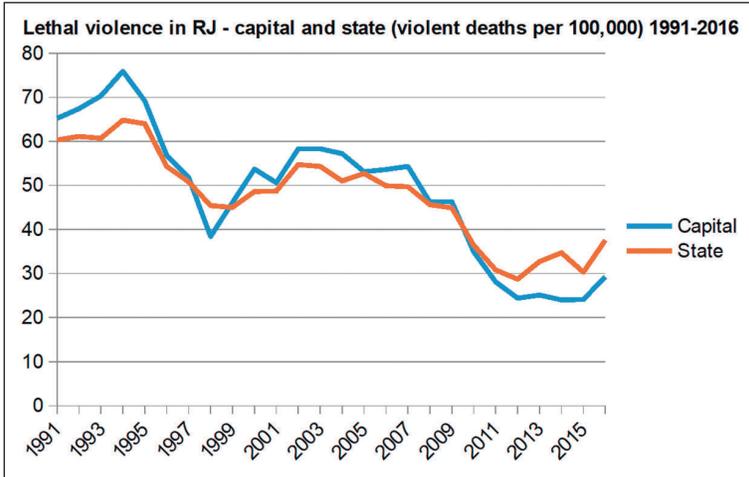
## **Violent crime in the state**

Rio de Janeiro witnessed a sharp rise in violent crime in 2016 and early 2017. The Institute for Public Security (ISP) reported that some 5,033 people were intentionally murdered between January and December 2016 (RJ, 2017). The absolute toll was 20% higher than 2015 when 4,200 people were murdered. It is, according to ISP, the worst absolute toll in more than six years<sup>3</sup>. This sharp

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<sup>3</sup> To put these numbers in perspective, 29 people were murdered in all of Norway in 2015, a rate of 0.6 per 100,000. See [homicide.igarape.org.br](http://homicide.igarape.org.br).

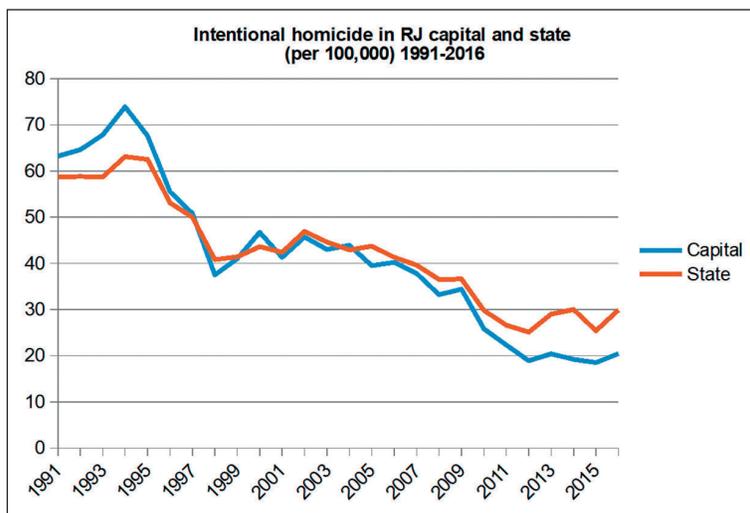
increase coincides with the decline of the state's flagship pacification program – or UPP – over the past 24 months. It also stands in contrast to a downward trend in murder that started in 2009 and reached some of the lowest rates in 25 years<sup>4</sup>.



Source: Elaborated by the author using Instituto de Segurança Pública (ISP) data.

It is not just homicide, but virtually all forms of crime that increased in 2016 and early 2017. In 2016, over 208,908 assaults were reported by the Institute for Public Security (ISP) across the state of Rio de Janeiro, the highest absolute number since records were tallied in 2003. By way of comparison, there were 147,933 reported cases in 2015. This is partly due to the higher-than-normal numbers of visitors to Rio during the summer Olympics in 2016. But this is far from the only reason and is a significant cause for concern.

<sup>4</sup> In 2015, Rio de Janeiro reduced the homicide rate by 15, 1% compared to 2014 reaching the second lowest rate (25,4 per 100,000 inhabitants) since 1991. See Nascimento and Antais (2016).



Source: Elaborated by the author using Instituto de Segurança Pública (ISP) data.

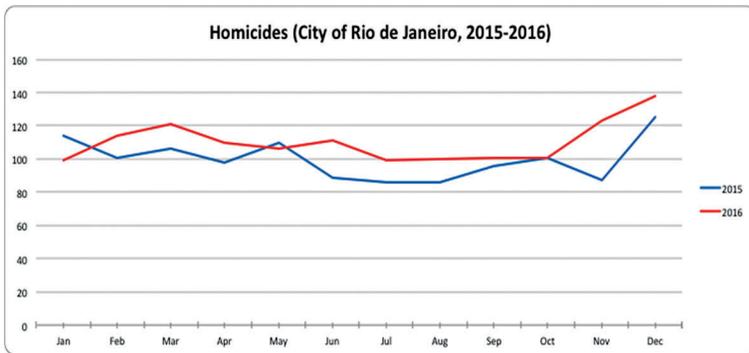
A particular worry is the alarming spike in street crime. Some 93,955 street robberies were reported in 2016 as compared to 65,437 in 2015. Likewise, more than 41,700 vehicles were stolen in 2016 as compared to 31,035 in 2015. That amounts to 113 cars per day or a car every 12 minutes. At least 19,583 phones were reported stolen in 2016 as compared to 12,038 in 2015. The “true” magnitude of crime is difficult to discern since many of these crimes are under-reported or not properly registered.

There are also very real concerns about the striking rise in cargo theft across Rio de Janeiro. Brazil’s rate of cargo theft is the highest in Latin America and has surged 150% over the past three years in Rio de Janeiro. There were close to 8,000 such hits in 2016, most of them clustered in the northern zone of Rio such as Chapadão and Pedreira. The recession is clearly part of the problem, and many of the thefts – of food products and alcohol to pharmaceuticals and cell phones – are a result of inside jobs<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>5</sup> The estimated value of these thefts range wildly from \$100 million to \$1 billion a year. See Biller (2016).

## Violent crime in the city

In 2016, the municipality of Rio de Janeiro experienced steady increases in violent crime<sup>6</sup>. Homicide in the city rose by 10% in 2016 (1,323 murders) from the year before. At least 453 people were killed in 2016 as a result of police intervention – what is still popularly known as “auto de resistência”, despite the official name having changed to “homicídio decorrente de intervenção policial”. The final months of 2016 saw a sharp spike in police killings, indicating a more forceful engagement strategy<sup>7</sup>. Overall, there were 50% more people who died in encounters with the police in 2016 as compared to 2015 (304 killed).

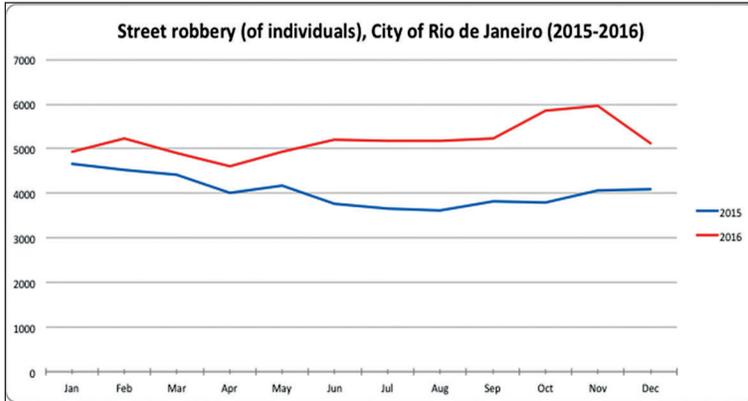


Source: Elaborated by the author using Instituto de Segurança Pública (ISP) data.

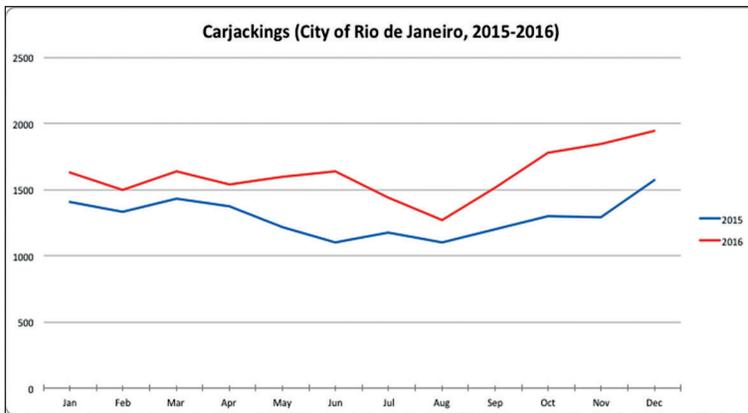
Recent trends in theft suggest a more mixed scenario in the city of Rio. Street robbery of individuals in the city rose by 28% in 2016 (62,346 total robberies). Street robbery was up 25% in December 2016 from December 2015. Robbery at ATM withdrawal machines, on the other hand, declined significantly by nearly 40% from 2015 to 2016. Meanwhile car-jackings in the municipal area rose by 25% to 19,326 incidents in 2016, following an upward trend in recent months. In December of 2016 alone, there were nearly 2,000 car-jackings in the city of Rio de Janeiro.

<sup>6</sup> See descriptive statistics in tables and figures immediately below, which include comparisons by month for selected types of crimes in 2015 and 2016.

<sup>7</sup> Specifically, October, November and December of 2016 saw increases of 137 percent, 175 percent and 169 percent, respectively, over the same period in 2015.



**Source:** Elaborated by the author using Instituto de Segurança Pública (ISP) data.



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Some parts of the Rio de Janeiro metropolitan area inevitably experience a higher incidence of crime than others – including homicide, violent assault, rape, missing persons, street robbery, cell phone theft and carjacking. According to ISPGEO, roughly 50% of all homicides occur in less than 1.2% of street addresses (MONTEIRO, 2017). In order to provide a baseline for comparison, this report presents a rank order (the top 10) of the neighborhoods with the highest number of crimes in select categories of crime, using the most recent available disaggregated data for RJ neighborhoods<sup>8</sup>.

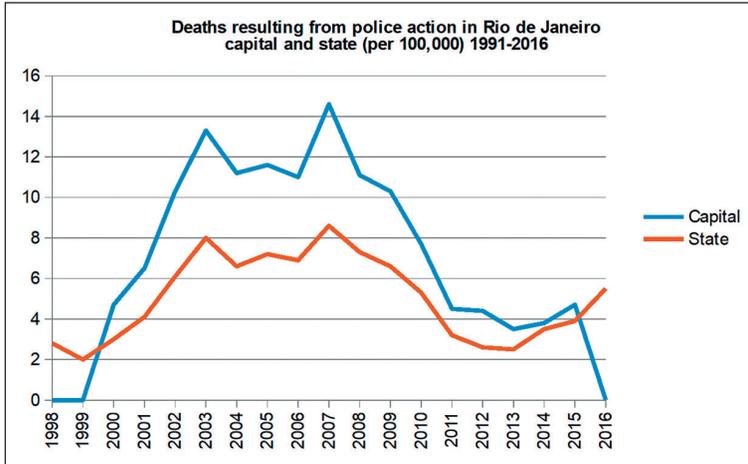
<sup>8</sup> Disaggregated data is only available for April-September 2016. In future reports, Igarapé Institute will provide a longer time series, including 2017 data. The current assessment offers illustrative trends, though it should be noted that there are reasonable factors that can shape crime trends.

It is important to note that crime and victimization tends to concentrate – in space, time and among specific people. It is also quite persistent, though can change depending on seasons and events. There appears to be a high clustering of violent (lethal and non-lethal) crime in the North and West Zones, as well as downtown Rio (Centro). For example, in the period of April to September 2016, Bangu and Santa Cruz registered the most homicides (41 each), followed by Campo Grande (26), Realengo (23) and Penha (19) (see neighborhood rankings immediately below). But these rankings can shift from month to month.

There are similar types of clustering effects when it comes to violent assault, though the data skews more heavily toward the West Zone. Specifically, Campo Grande in the West Zone registered the most violent assaults (*lesão corporal dolosa*), with Barra da Tijuca, Santa Cruz and Centro also high on the list. Only one neighborhood in the South Zone – Copacabana – was in the top 10 neighborhoods for violent assault, with 287 registered during this 6-month period – more than one occurrence per day. Of the 10 neighborhoods with the highest number of rapes reported during the 6-month period, eight of the 10 neighborhoods were in the West Zone. Downtown Rio and Copacabana were the exceptions, each registering 16 rapes during the period.

## **Police violence and police killings**

Police violence continues to be a major cause for concern. Rio de Janeiro's military and civil police involvement in the excessive use of force is systematic and widespread (MUGGAH, 2016). This is not a new challenge; in 2003 Rio de Janeiro's police killed 1,195 civilians (classified as *auto de resistência, at the time*), most of them young black men. In 2007, 1,330 citizens reportedly died in the course of police action. These numbers are astonishing when you consider that in 2015, across the whole of the United States (a country with a population more than 50% larger than Brazil's) an estimated 1,134 people were killed by police.



**Source:** Elaborated by the author using Instituto de Segurança Pública (ISP) data.

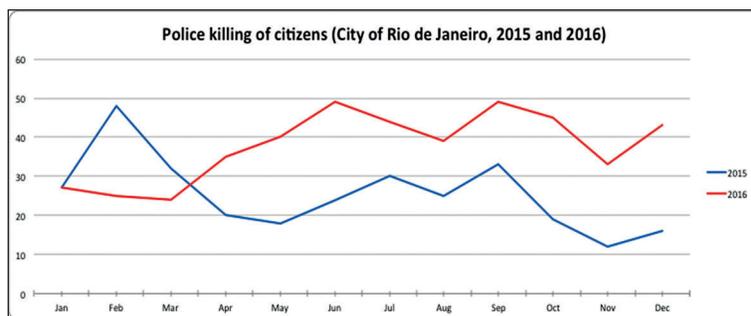
More positively, police killings declined dramatically between 2003 and 2015. Between 2003 and 2015, the number of auto-resistance deaths actually fell by 46% across the entire state of Rio de Janeiro, and 62% in the capital. In 2013, for example, there were just 416 civilians killed – intolerably high, but down almost threefold. This is not to excuse the police but to put the statistics in historical perspective. The drop in killing is attributed to improvements in training and pay generated by the pacification program. Indeed, such killings dropped by more than 85% in areas where the UPPs were introduced.

Yet police-led killings are now on the rise. In 2014 there were 584 people killed during the course of arrest; in 2015, the number rose again to 645. In 2016 more than 920 people were killed as a result of police interventions in the state of Rio de Janeiro, a sharp increase over the same period last year according to the state's Institute for Public Security. There are several competing theories explaining the rise in killings.<sup>9</sup>

Police are also being killed in growing numbers. There were 142 police killed in the line of duty in 2016, the highest number since 2004 when 191 officials were murdered. It represents a 30% increase on the previous year. So far

<sup>9</sup> One of the reasons why such violence is rising is due to the institutional crisis in the police and the rising levels of factional violence. Another has to do with the considerable levels of mental stress in Rio's two police forces. A 2014 Stanford-University-led survey of Rio's military police officers found that many experienced high levels of violence during childhood. Roughly 18% of respondents witnessed a homicide as a child. Another 25% were victims of a violent assault at a young age and 32% said they had a friend or family member murdered. It is widely known that previous exposure to violence can reproduce aggressive behaviour.

in January and February 2017 another 17 police officers have been assassinated, underlining a dangerous escalation. A military police commission analyzing risk determined that its officers have a greater chance of dying in the line of duty in Rio de Janeiro (3.6 percent) than did U.S. soldiers in World War II (2.5 percent) (GOULART, 2017).



Source: Elaborated by the author using Instituto de Segurança Pública (ISP) data.

## Geopolitics of crime

Gang violence is endemic in Rio de Janeiro and across many major Brazilian cities. There are literally dozens of different criminal groups, the locally called factions, in Brazil – all the relevant ones aligned in one way or another with PCC or CV. The Federal Prison Bureau has detected PCC and CV presence, along with another 23 distinct groups in federal Brazilian prisons. There is no equivalent map for state prisons, where the majority of the prison population resides. There has until recently been an unspoken embargo on naming specific factions in media outlets for fear of legitimizing them (GLENNY, 2016). This is a common challenge across Latin America, where public authorities do not want to provide criminal groups with so-called “diplomatic recognition”. It appears that this informal embargo no longer applies, with major news outlets now reporting gang faction activities in more detail. There is growing scrutiny of gang activities after a decades-long truce between the PCC and CV has crumbled, resulting in a sharp increase in violent competition.

As is widely reported in the academic literature, the PCC and CV have vastly different models of organization (WILLIS, 2015).<sup>10</sup> The former is on the ascendant and operates through robust codes of conduct (ESTATUTO...

<sup>10</sup> See also Penglase (2008), Biderman et al. (2014) and Feltran (2010).

2017), a vertical command and control structure and a system of welfare in and out of prisons. The latter is much more territorial and has been fragmented over the years on account of the ongoing pacification program in Rio de Janeiro.

The PCC was formed in 1993 has clear international (i.e. Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia, Paraguay, Peru and Venezuela) and national (active in 23 of 27 Brazilian states) presence (GENTILE, 2017). They also have a tight hierarchical organization and local chapters with a very strong code/ethos of behavior. They are especially strong in SP, their state of origin, but also Paraná, Mato Grosso and Mato Grosso do Sul. They are traditionally enemies of ADA and TCP, due to their historical alliance with the CV, but that is now changing as they seek to control various municipalities across Rio de Janeiro state.

Meanwhile, the CV was formed in 1979, is more decentralized and works through local factions who loosely affiliate themselves with the carioca group. It has a long established connection to Colombian cartels. Its international presence was shaken in the last decade, as the UPP program in Rio started gaining ground in CV-held favelas. But it has grown back in recent years (especially in Argentina and Paraguay, as well as via proxies with groups like the FARC in Colombia).

The CV is very territorial with a stronghold is Rio, where it competes with other factions – TCP, ADA, Povo de Israel, and the militia. This ongoing dispute over territory has shaped the group and determines many of the differences it has when compared with the PCC. Its membership in Rio is young and exceedingly violent. The CV is especially well distributed in the North, Center and South Zone. Meanwhile, ADA is primarily in the South Zone, while TCP is based in the North.

## **The end of the gang truce**

The PCC and CV essentially abided by a truce for two decades – this guaranteed a steady flow of drugs and guns to the cities. But this arrangement started to fray in the beginning of 2016. The underlying shift is partly structural - due to a growing demand for cocaine in Brazil and collapsing public security capacity in the country starting in 2014 and 2015. In a sense, the context for taking a large slice of the drug trade “ripened” and the PCC has taken the initiative. CV, on the other hand, is fighting back.

There was evidence of the PCC conspiring against the CV in early 2016. The PCC purportedly began expanding its operations into Rio de Janeiro in

early 2016, if not before. Police intercepted calls from a prison in SP between PCC members plotting their Rio expansion. The PCC were seeking to co opt people affiliated with the CV and have them move drugs, arms, housing subsidies and legal assistance on the PCC's behalf. They claimed as many as 80 new recruits and local reports confirmed a growing PCC presence in selected areas of Rio de Janeiro (WERNECK, 2016).

Signs of a more violent rupture between the PCC and CV emerged in April 2016. There were concerns that the PCC was preparing for "war" from their branch in the Paraguayan city of Pedro Juan Caballero. The PCC has had an active presence in Paraguay since the country is the center of marijuana trade (largest producer in South America) and an ample source of weaponry and ammunition. There is a long history of gang violence in the Tri-border areas, with significant outbursts in 2014 between two Brazilian crime bosses. CV and ADA, also a faction from Rio, are known to be active there as well.

Brazilian and Paraguayan news reported on the PCC arming up in the first two quarters of 2016. The spark emerged on June 14th with the killing of a notorious drugs and arms dealer, Rafaat Toumanit. Rafaat is known to have serviced both the PCC and CV over the years, as well as other crime factions on both sides of the border. He was killed in a gangland ambush when 10 men with a .50 cal machine gun unloaded 200 rounds. There are rumours that this action was led by Jarvis Pavão and involved a combination of gangsters, most of them PCC.

The circumstances of the killing of Rafaat are still murky. The PCC is almost certainly involved. But there is also some speculation that a local chapter of the CV may also have been involved in the hit. This has yet to be substantiated, though it is believed that both the PCC and CV had severed ties with Rafaat a year earlier when he refused to lower prices for his products. It may be the case that the PCC secured control (directly or by proxy) of this key distribution network.

## **Escalating violence in and outside prisons**

The PCC publicly declared war on the CV in September in a widely circulated letter signaling its reasons (RODRIGUES, 2016). The PCC said that the CV had formed partnerships with PCC enemies – some who killed PCC members. Violence followed. Deadly clashes broke out between the gangs over the course of 2016, but with a significant escalation from October onward. The

PCC has also started moving into municipalities in RJ, from Paraty and Angra to Baixada Fluminense and reportedly into Rocinha and other urban areas of Rio, though we have yet to see the outbreak of direct violence between the two factions on the city's streets.

There is a longtime link between drug gangs and the prison system in the country, which serves both as a recruiting ground for new labor and operates as headquarters of complex schemes. While in some prisons cell blocks are divided by different factions, in others the gangs exert direct control - sometimes of the whole unit - and will persecute rivals should their affiliation come to their attention. They also “baptize” newcomers and offer a de facto protection network for the prisoner's family, covering the state's lacking social services branch, in exchange for loyalty and latter contribution to the group.

Prison violence escalated in 2016 - much of it attributed to the fight between the PCC and CV. Some reports estimate that the prison system was 60% more violent in 2016. There were at least 88 murders in prison facilities located in Acre, Ceará, Mato Grosso do Sul, Piauí and Roraima in 2016, compared to 55 in 2015. Ceará has registered the greatest number of deaths (50), while Roraima saw a rise from 4 in 2015 to over 30 in 2016. Mato Grosso do Sul registered an increase from 9 to 17.

The escalation of violence really started in September and October 2016. In late September, roughly 200 inmates rioted and escaped from the overpopulated Jardimópolis prison in Sao Paulo state. They had good reason to flee - there were signs of major violence in the months to come. A prison riot in Roraima state on 16 October left as many as 18 killed. All the victims were allegedly CV. Members of the PCC invaded a prison wing where CV resided and attacked them with knives and batons. Two key gang leaders were decapitated - Valdineys de Alencar Sousa (Vida Loka) and Leno Rocha de Castro (G3).

Several other riots occurred in October including in Acre and Roraima. On 18 October, 25 inmates were injured at a prison in Acre. On 20 October, four inmates were killed and 19 injured during a prison riot at the same prison. Most of those killed were believed to be affiliated with the PCC. That week, many CV members incarcerated in SP prisons requested to be transferred to “neutral sites” and PCC members in Rio requested transfers to ADA-controlled cell blocks and prison units, raising a flag that a new alliance might be forming. The violence has escalated inside and outside prisons across Brazil in 2017. There have already been three dramatic massacres in 2017 resulting in over 130 killed - in Amazonas with 56 killed (all PCC in a privately run prison in Manaus), in

Roraima (on January 5) with 33 killed (mostly The Northern Family, associated with CV), and again in Manaus with four killed (on January 9), though the victims' affiliations are still not clear.

This wave appears to be linked to a dispute over the northern international drug trafficking route, over which the Família do Norte wants to consolidate its domain. Dozens more were assassinated outside the prison gates. Here the killings took on a new dimension and gave rise to a national crisis, as images of mutilated corpses stormed the country and led the federal government to take action. A state-level response in Rio is also under construction, as strain to the prison system increases. As shocking as the 2017 riots have been, the violence is not unprecedented. The most lethal episode of prison violence in Brazil occurred in 1992 when 111 inmates were killed during a riot in the Carandiru prison in São Paulo. Other outbreaks occurred in Rondônia in 2002, Maranhão in 2010, Pernambuco in 2011, Rio de Janeiro in 2014 and Roraima last year. Prison violence has been registered in virtually all of Brazil's states over the past decade.

## **Militia reconfiguration**

The militia challenge is not new to Rio de Janeiro. Militia have existed in the state since the 1970s, though they began expanding in power and influence in the 1990s. These groups originally emerged in the Rio das Pedras favela as informal "security patrols". Then, as now, they combined active-duty and retired police, firefighters and prison guards who offered security services in return for payment (ZALUAR, 2012). They were quietly tolerated by law enforcement and the potential threat they posed to public security was ignored by scholars.

Attitudes toward the militia were initially sympathetic. Cesar Maia claims that militia were "seen by the people and the authorities as much better than the traffickers"<sup>11</sup>, constituting not so much a failure of existing policies than as quasi-legitimate forms of "community self-defense".<sup>12</sup> These attitudes are often amplified by elected officials. Former mayor Eduardo Paes once claimed that the "polícia mineira", as militia were known, offered a better alternative to drug factions and could ensure the safety of the residents of Jacarepaguá, Vila Sapê and Curicica (EDUARDO..., 2012). Sergio Cabral also met with notorious militia

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<sup>11</sup> Quoted in Schmidt (2006).

<sup>12</sup> Quoted in Bottari and Ramalho (2006).

leaders, praising them for their community leadership role and dedication to Rio de Janeiro's West Zone.<sup>13</sup>

Public opinion turned abruptly against the militia after a highly visible episode of violence. In 2008, three journalists assigned to covering the activities of the militia and their interaction with local residents in Batan, a favela bordering Rio's main avenue, were kidnaped and tortured. Before being released, the three were brutally assaulted, had their equipment broken and received death threats demanding that they curtail their publishing on militia activities. Once the story hit the news, local politicians rapidly distanced themselves from militia members who had previously networked with cabinet-level secretaries. The militia has adopted a wide range of rents in communities where they are active. Drug factions typically establish territorial control to protect a single activity: retail of narcotics. By contrast, militia extract rents from community residents in exchange for protection, but also illegally pirate and tax basic public and private services such as gas, cable TV, energy access, and informal transport. Both groups prey on low-income neighborhoods in Rio de Janeiro and have interests in protecting turf, as well as attacking competitors where necessary.

The public outrage following the Batan incident opened a window of opportunity for tackling the growth and spread of militias. Marcelo Freixo, then already a state deputy for PSOL, led the charge to open a commission of parliamentary inquiry (or CPI) on the illegal machinations of armed groups in the West Zone. According to Freixo, "more than economic activity, militiamen are projecting power". When assessing the connections between militias and local politicians, Luiz Eduardo Soares, a former national secretary for public safety, observed that "[...] there are regions where the police and political institutions were captured by criminal organizations which submit the people to radical forms of despotism [...]" (HÁ LUGARES..., 2015).

The militia has successfully infiltrated some parts of the state and city government, in particular their legislative bodies.<sup>14</sup> In 2008, for example, state judges issued arrest warrants for Jerônimo Guimarães Filho and his brother Natalino José Guimarães, a city councilman and state legislator, respectively. They were accused of being part of one of Rio de Janeiro's most notorious militia, the *Justice League*, which operated in the West Zone. Carmen Guimarães,

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<sup>13</sup> In 2007, Sergio Cabral attended the inauguration of a water supply system in Paciência and not only sat next to well-known militiamen, but also praised them for their role as community leaders. Not that long ago, militias were described by the governor as "friends who had dedicated their life to the west zone. See Junqueira (2010).

<sup>14</sup> For example, Natalino Guimarães (DEM-RJ), elected in 2006 with 50 thousand votes.

Jerônimo's daughter and political heir was arrested later that year under similar charges and stepped down from her position on the city council. There were also attempts to legislate the formalization of militia. In 2008, before the incident involving the journalists, Guimaraes submitted a bill to legalize the militias (MENDONÇA, 2008a). The proposal was approved by the state legislature, but later buried by the executive (MENDONÇA (2008b). Nevertheless, the Freixo-led CPI highlighted the relationships between Alvaro Lins (the former-head of the Civil Police) and Jorge Babu (a widely known politician from Santa Cruz) and various militia groups. Several other public figures were cited in the final report for having established alliances with militias in a few territories during electoral campaigns, notably the police inspector Marina Maggesi and the former secretary for public safety Marcelo Itagiba (CHAVES, 2014).

While the CPI did not deter the territorial expansion of militia groups, it nevertheless exposed many of their political connections and forced a retreat behind the curtain. Even so, they continue exerting political clout. As gatekeepers for key electoral strongholds, they have tremendous influence over political campaigns for municipal and state government (GOMBATA, 2014). They have also funded several political campaigns, an issue raised by Justice Gilmar Mendes, the president of Brazil's Superior Electoral Tribunal (TSE), during the municipal elections in 2016 (CAMPOS, 2016). Furthermore, the militia has been linked to at list six politically-motivated killings during last year's elections.

There are also signs of increasing tension between militia and gang factions. During 2016, tensions flared over the control of favelas at least two dozen times, especially in Praça Seca, Jordão, Carobinha, Morro do 18 and Fubá. In other cases, such as in Campo Grande, the conflicts are among distinct militia groups (SOARES, 2016). After a few years operating under the radar, these violent disputes and political assassinations indicate that militias are once more seeking to exert political leverage. While police forces focused on expanding the UPPs and breaking the spine of Comando Vermelho from 2009 to the present, the militias quietly consolidated their domains.

The extent of militia control is disconcerting. There is evidence of militia group activity in Baixada Fluminense (especially São João do Meriti)<sup>15</sup>, in the south (Angra dos Reis to Paraty)<sup>16</sup>, in the north of the state (Campos dos

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<sup>15</sup> See Marins and Vasconcelos (2016).

<sup>16</sup> See JUSTIÇA... (2010).

Goytacazes and Macaé)<sup>17</sup> and in heavily touristed coastal cities such as Cabo Frio, Rio das Ostras and São Pedro da Aldeia (OPERAÇÃO..., (2016a). An example of violent competition over territory occurred recently when the militia controlling Gardênia Azul became involved in a violent conflict with the Comando Vermelho (CV), who control Cidade de Deus. Locals report that the CV attempted to invade Gardênia Azul several times during 2016. The most brazen attempt in late November 2016 resulted in gunfights with the UPP and the crashing of a military police helicopter, killing four police officers. The next day seven bodies were found in Cidade de Deus (O QUE ESTÁ ACONTECENDO..., 2016).

There are no reasons to believe that the militia will slow their expansion in Rio de Janeiro state and city. Recent investigations into the Justice League have revealed that they already oversee a vast network of pharmacies, bakeries, beauty salons and street vendor collectives in Itaguaí, Seropédica and Queimados. The militia-supported businesses have also diversified into small and medium-sized hotels, local non-profit organizations and public-housing projects (NUNES, 2016). There are also signs that militia have expanded their reach outside of Rio de Janeiro, with separate operations identified in Pará, São Paulo, Bahia, Ceará, and Mato Grosso do Sul (MISSE, 2011).

## **The state of public security**

Brazil's public security sectors at the national, state and metropolitan levels are under tremendous stress. The national authorities – in particular the Ministry of Justice – are preparing to authorize a public security plan that prioritizes homicide reduction, prison reform and fighting organized crime. The state authorities – especially the secretary of public security and the civil and military police – recently experienced a transition in leadership and rolling strikes. The municipal authorities, notably the municipal guard, are also exploring a more proactive approach to public safety, including patrolling in hot spot areas.

The tough-on-crime approach is widely supported at the national, state and municipal levels. This is because Brazilians overwhelmingly adopt conservative approaches to public security. The public is broadly supportive of reducing the age of criminal responsibility from 18 to 16 (87%) and of stiffening pen-

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<sup>17</sup> See OPERAÇÃO... (2016a).

alties for so-called heinous crimes. While vigorously criticized by the human rights community, there are signs of increasingly forceful approaches to law and order at all levels of government, including in Rio de Janeiro where the secretary of public security has vigorously advocated for raising penalties for gun- and drug-related crime. Indeed, in 2017, the Rio de Janeiro government requested (and received) more than 8,500 soldiers to shore-up public security efforts (MUGGAH, 2017b). This was the twelfth time the military has been deployed to Rio de Janeiro since 1992 (MUGGAH, 2017a).

At all levels – whether national, state or municipal – public security strategies are hampered by relentless political and economic crises. There are growing demands for greater austerity and cutbacks. National public expenditures for public security increased in 2015 by 11% from the previous year (to \$23.7 billion) in the wake of the World Cup and preparation for the Olympics, but dropped in 2016<sup>18</sup>. Likewise, Rio de Janeiro state’s public security budget was curtailed by more than 30% in 2016. As a result, public security programs – including UPP intervention – have literally ground to a halt or gone in reverse. Police morale has plummeted, partly because police officers are rarely paid on time, if at all.

The prison violence crisis that started in late 2016 escalated in 2017, and is likely to spread to Rio de Janeiro. Rival gangs are fighting a war over the drug trade and control of the country’s prisons. The continued policy of mass incarceration and the appalling conditions of Brazil’s prison conditions will exacerbate the situation. There are signs that Rio de Janeiro’s more than 50 prison facilities are suffering from a chronic water shortage, and this in a city that reaches 35-40°C temperatures in the summer. All of these issues suggest that the structural conditions for increased violence are ripe.

## National strategies

The government has struggled to get ahead of the public security crisis - including the recent wave of prison massacres. The announcement of building

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<sup>18</sup> Brazilian expenditures on public security are also difficult to measure. According to the Brazilian Public Security Forum, some \$23.7 billion was spent on public security nationally in 2015, an 11.5% increase from the previous year. There are many budget lines including state-level public security budgets: Sao Paulo spent the most – \$3.5 billion. Municipalities spent just \$1.3 billion on public security in 2015, and this represents an increase of 394% since 1998. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Justice spent \$3.5 billion, the Federal Police spent \$1.7 billion and the Federal Highway Police spent \$1 billion.

more prisons has been met with derision. But this is somewhat unfair. Today's catastrophic violence is ultimately a result of decades of neglect in Brazil's overcrowded jails, a reluctance to invest in violence prevention and a festering organized crime problem.

The Ministry of Justice is nevertheless expected to formally launch a national public security plan<sup>19</sup>. The draft national strategy features several genuine innovations. It proposes an integrated approach - bringing together homicide reduction, measures to fight organized crime and prison reform - rather than a collection of "projects" as is often the case. The Ministry has also stressed the critical role of federal, state and municipal government cooperation. This is new. The federal government typically skirts public security claiming that it is the constitutional responsibility of states. What distinguishes the current draft strategy from earlier proposals is its focus on homicide and prison reform. For example, the plan also sets out an ambitious target - 7.5% reduction in homicide a year. What is more, the draft plan also proposes measures to address the prison crisis - an issue that is impossible to avoid.

## **State strategies**

Rio de Janeiro's public security infrastructure is under strain. A major factor continues to be the declining price of oil in 2015 and reduced investment by Petrobras and associated infrastructure and construction companies (ALVARENGA, 2015). These stresses are exacerbated by the ongoing Lava Jato investigations and the surging expenditures associated with the Rio 2016 Olympic Games in August. As a result, Rio de Janeiro's state government declared a "state of calamity" just prior to the mega-event (PUFF, 2016).

Overall public security investments have been volatile in recent years. In 2014, Rio de Janeiro's budget for public security amounted to R\$5.7 billion (REZENDE, 2014). In 2015, in preparation for the Olympics, it rose to R\$10.1 billion - though this amount was reduced by R\$85 million midway through the year. In 2016, the budget was set at R\$10.2 billion, but experienced a R\$2 billion reduction. The federal government provided supplementary support following the state of calamity to the tune of R\$2.9 billion to ensure salaries for police could be paid (RIO..., 2016).

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<sup>19</sup> Igarapé Institute personnel met with the Minister of Justice as well as several staff in Brasília, São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro between December 2016 and January 2017.

A major concern among public security specialists is the state's inability to pay basic salaries, ensure essential services and honor contracts. For example, police are complaining about lacking basic supplies – whether for forensic investigations, crime reporting or even cleaning services. Civil police employees have already started protesting – initiating the *Juntos Com a Polícia* campaign to solicit funds for basic materials. In early November 2016, for example, a public call was issued requesting that entrepreneurs provide free services to civil police or defray policing costs<sup>20</sup>. The question of non-adjusted salaries and back-payments is hugely controversial and a potential flashpoint<sup>21</sup>.

Notwithstanding a significant surge in investment to bolster public security for the 2016 Olympics, there appears to be little lasting legacy. Efforts to coordinate intelligence, defense, law enforcement and customs capabilities before and during the 2016 Olympics<sup>22</sup> were transient. Some legacy equipment – including surveillance balloons and CCTV cameras – were welcome by the military and civil police, but are expensive to operate and maintain. The political volatility and financial downturn are also generating additional tensions owing to the arrest of prominent politicians and – increasingly – judicial officials. Specifically, former governors Anthony Garotinho and Sérgio Cabral were jailed and implicated in a range of corruption and bribery scandals in the tens – perhaps hundreds – of millions of dollars. The jailing of business entrepreneur Eike Batista is also unsettling the elite. There are concerns of massive misappropriation of funds and the investigations have only just begun. This has fueled a sense of unease in the police and judicial sectors, including associated impunity.

There was an important transition of leadership in Rio de Janeiro's State Department for Public Security (SESEG) in 2016. After 10 years of leadership and steadily increasing budget, State Secretary José Mariano Beltrame stepped down in October 2016. He was the longest serving Secretary and responsible

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<sup>20</sup> Selected service providers, once hired by private companies, are also exempt from basic public tendering procurement procedures (BACELAR; RESENDE; BOTTARI, 2016).

<sup>21</sup> In 2014, Governor Pezão introduced a set of measures to address salaries – including an increase from 11-14% discount for pensioners and public employees earning more than R\$5,000 and a higher tax rate of 16% for public servants with salaries of more than R\$5,000/month. These salary readjustments have affected public security. Readjustments for military and civil police, however, were supposed to be due in 2017 but have been postponed to 2020. As of February 2017, the payment of extra time and bonuses for meeting crime reduction targets from 2016 were also delayed. See *Governo...* (2016), *Saveira* (2016) and *Rouvenat* (2016).

<sup>22</sup> See *Plano Estratégico de Segurança Integrada (PESI) Rio 2016*, approved by the interministerial ordinance nº 1.678 from September 30, 2015 (BRASIL, 2015).

for implementing the UPP program since 2008 and designing an integrated system of targets and results monitoring (SIM) in 2009. He is credited with helping lead a major reduction in criminal violence in the state (MAGALONI, 2015). His successor is Roberto Sá, a career federal and state police officer with a background in law who was himself part of Beltrame's cabinet<sup>23</sup>.

With new leadership come a number of subtle changes in the overall strategic direction of public security priorities. In addition to reorganizing the department<sup>24</sup>, the new Secretary's priorities are to improve intelligence cooperation between the military and civil police forces and to expand the fight against illicit firearms trafficking. He has announced a new special investigation division for firearms trafficking (Delegacia Desarme) see Boeckel (2017). He is also expected to invest in more robust firearms and ammunition control policies, including measures to reduce weapons diversion from law enforcement arsenals and private security companies and better ammunition tracing in Rio de Janeiro proper (TADEU, 2016).

There has also been a re-organization of the state police. Specifically, Roberto Sá appointed two new officials to head law enforcement – Carlos Augusto Leba as new chief of civil police and Wolney Dias Ferreira as general commander of the military police. All three share a strong connection and this is expected to help strengthen much-needed integration between the PCERJ and PMERJ. The Institute for Public Security has also launched a new data-driven crime mapping tool with support from the Igarapé Institute and several business leaders which is already improving information flow. However, there are still challenges with some units closing due to financial pressure.<sup>25</sup>

## **Penal strategies**

Rio de Janeiro has yet to see a mass outbreak of violence in its prison system, but the threat is chronic and rising. As in other states, Rio de Janeiro's 43

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<sup>23</sup> Sá had been the Undersecretary of Planning and Operational Integration, directly involved in the development and implementation of the System of Targets (SIM).

<sup>24</sup> Roberto Sá has been reorganizing SESEG's organizational charts after the resignation of several undersecretaries, the reduction of staff and departments (the Superintendence for Prevention, for example, was eliminated). A decree with SESEG's new organizational chart is expected to be published by February 2017. Interviews with Roberto Sá and others.

<sup>25</sup> For example, the so-called Coordination for Strategic Affairs (Coordenadoria de Assuntos Estratégicos – CAES) in the military police is being closed. It was responsible for managing the PMERJ's incident report system (BO PM) and the implementation of the Aptitude Index for the Use of Force (Índice de Aptidão ao Uso da Força – IAUF).

prisons are massively overcrowded. The stated registered a significant increase in its prison population in recent years: the tally grew from 33.627 inmates in December 2013 to 50.482 inmates in December 2016, an overall increase of 16.855 (50.1%)<sup>26</sup>. Of this total, about 21.450 inmates are in a pre-trial status, which corresponds to 42% of the prison population, slightly more than the national average of 40.13%.

The number of available places in the prison system increased from 27.069 in December 2013 to 27.242 in December 2016, an increase of just 173 vacancies (0.6%). The implications are obvious. In 2013, the state prisons' occupation rate was 124%; the number swelled to 185% above the total capacity available as of December 2016. This represents a startling deficit of 23.030 vacancies (RJ..., 2016).

The situation is extremely precarious and could dissolve rapidly. The state is currently unable to pay suppliers – including for meals to inmates. In late November 2016, the State Secretary for Correctional Administration (SEAP) estimated the debt to be roughly R\$172.7 million and there are still remnants debts of 2015 in the amount of over R\$46.6 million. The state's monthly cost for the provision of meals in the prison system was estimated in December at R\$28 million.

The state appears to be unable to guarantee basic living conditions for inmates. For example, SEAP reported that prisons' overpopulation is leading to dangerous shortages of water supply for prisoners. What is more, prisons are by and large spaces that are extremely hostile and unhealthy, both physically and psychologically<sup>27</sup>. The excessive number of people per cell, the medieval conditions, the lack of preventive and curative care<sup>28</sup> and the countless reports of violence and brutality paint a scene of disorder, neglect and instability.

At least 716 inmates have died while in the state's prison system over the past 3 years, which represents an increase of 90.9% from the previous three-year period. The primary cause of death was illnesses, mainly tuberculosis, recurrent in overcrowded prison spaces. In the first month of 2017, the number of deaths from preventable disease in the penitentiary units of Rio totaled 11 people

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<sup>26</sup> Data from the State Secretary for Correctional Administration (SEAP) in 26.12.2016.

<sup>27</sup> See more on the health conditions of prisoners in the state of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil at Minayo and Ribeiro, (2016).

<sup>28</sup> The problem is such that in 2016 the Public Defender of Rio de Janeiro denounced - in a confidential report - that the penitentiary system of Rio de Janeiro has not bought medicines and supplies since 2014.

(PÔSSA, 2017). There are warning signs of outbreaks of other mosquito-borne illnesses as well.

There is considerable evidence from other Brazilian states of how overcrowding and misery can reinforce the influence and power of crime factions. Rio de Janeiro is no exception, and the influence of gangs is evident including in the complexes in Bangu and Campos. This is aggravated by the fact that screening processes currently allocate inmates according to their faction affiliation. According to SEAP, one of the most important criteria for prisoner allocation is the criminal faction of the inmate, as the detainees are sent to the units in which their respective criminal organizations command (BIANCHI, 2017).

## **Municipal strategies**

The 2016 municipal elections were unusual, not least in the prioritization of public security by both politicians and civil society in the political agenda. For the first time in history, virtually all-mayoral candidates set out comprehensive proposals in this area (ANDRADE; AZEVEDO, 2016). This is unexpected, since public security is constitutionally the purview of the state, even if there is a wide range of strategies where municipalities can play a proactive and preventive role.

The newly elected mayor – Marcelo Crivella – installed a hardliner as his Secretary of Public Order. In December 2016, Col. Paulo César Amendola took charge. Amendola is one of the original founders of the Special Operations Battalion of the PMERJ (BOPE) and has pending charges of torture and kidnapping that extend back to the dictatorship era (NOGUEIRA, 2016). Needless to say, his appointment is considered controversial in a city suffering from chronic police violence and excessive use of force.

The mayor's public safety team has prioritized the strengthening of the municipal guard. The new head of the municipal guard – Tatiana Mendes – is herself a former guard member, which distinguishes her from past directors.<sup>29</sup> The new secretary has already called for expanding the surveillance of bus lines servicing the principle beaches to avoid mass robberies (*arrastões*). The idea is to bring police and municipal guard together to stop and frisk adolescents and

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<sup>29</sup> The General Statute of the Municipal Guards recommends that a military police officer be designated as the Chief of the Municipal Guard. The new Chief, however, is a retired career officer from Rio's Municipal Guard, having been responsible for coordinating the School Patrol in the City of Rio de Janeiro and also headed the Tourism Support Group.

turn back minors from entering the area. The Childhood, Youth and Elders Court of the city of Rio de Janeiro in fact banned these practices in 2015. The new secretary is on record publicly dismissing the ruling<sup>30</sup>.

## Private security strategies

The private sector is also playing a growing role in the public security debate. In October 2015, together with former New York mayor Rudolph Giuliani, Governor Pezão and representatives of Rio de Janeiro's Federation of Commerce signed a new agreement for *Operação Segurança Presente*. The basic goal of the program was to finance public-private safety initiatives to leverage police activity in key neighborhoods. The initiative drew inspiration from *Lapa Presente*, which is believed to have significantly contributed to reducing crime in certain areas of downtown Rio de Janeiro between 2013-2015<sup>31</sup>.

The original focus of *Operação Segurança Presente* was on three sites. These include the *Aterro do Flamengo* (near Santos Dumont Airport), *Meier* (a middle-class area in the North Zone) and *Lagoa* (a wealthier neighborhood in the South Zone). Since December 2015, 363 security agents have been deployed to patrol these areas at a cost of R\$22 million. In July, just before the Olympic Games, the operation was extended to *Centro*, with special attention to *Praça Mauá* (including the Olympic Boulevard) and *Cinelândia*, where most of the tourists were expected to circulate. For *Centro* alone, 528 new agents cost approximately R\$47 million (COMEÇA..., 2016). In this latter case, the budget was divided between *Fecomercio* business members and the municipal government.

The *Operação Segurança Presente* initiative is costly, but straightforward. Patrols are made up of active police officers and off-duty police and reserve personnel from the state police and armed forces. Only active officers are permitted to carry firearms, while others are equipped with tasers and pepper-spray (and apparently cameras). Street patrols are carried out on bicycles, motorcycles and

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<sup>30</sup> In a G1 interview, the new Secretary said: "We are talking to the Prosecutor's Office to reach an agreement about how this work will be done. However, we know that some individuals that go to the beach do not go there for fun, but to practice large-scale lootings." See Brito (2017).

<sup>31</sup> According to "official" reports, between 2013 and 2015, while crime rates in the city as a whole skyrocketed, street-robbery in the area around *Lapa* fell by 95% and pick-pocketing was reduced by 93%. In the two-year period, the program was also responsible for nearly 4,400 detentions, mostly for drug possession (almost 3,000), robbery (219) and drug-trafficking (134). See Constancio (2016).

cars, though most happen on foot. Agents wear bright colored vests and are expected to undertake a wide range of tasks including public order, preventing street vending, deterring street crime and arresting drug dealers, as well as other tasks not ordinarily associated with policing<sup>32</sup>.

The program is also credited by some of its proponents with having made significant reductions in crime, though the results appear to be mixed. In Centro, for example, thefts of phones were purportedly 95% lower in 2016 when compared to 2015, as were robberies in public transport (83%) and in the street (81%)<sup>33</sup>. In Lagoa, results were similar: robberies were reportedly 83% lower in comparison to the previous year, with not a single report issued in September, October or November (OPERAÇÃO..., 2016b). There is also praise for the program's impact on altering the "perception" of security<sup>34</sup>.

In Meier, however, the results are less positive. While the area monitored by patrols experienced a 50% reduction in criminality (preliminary reports do not specify what kind), streets bordering that area had a 21% increase in car-jacking and 28% more robberies in public transportation (SALLES, 2016). It appears that criminal behavior may have adapted. There is an urgent need to subject the program to more robust evaluation to monitor results, not least given the considerable public expenses.

It is worth noting that these interventions are considered controversial and come at a significant social cost. Between January and October 2016, agents operating in Aterro do Flamengo, Lagoa and Meier reported 2.021 arrests. In Centro, four months after the beginning of operations 1.170 individuals (SEGURANÇA..., 2016) had already been detained. One of the programs managers, police commander Marcos Andrade, claims that all personnel are trained and monitored (SEGURANÇA..., 2016). These arguments are widely disputed (VIEIRA, 2016) with even some members of the program complaining about their treatment and tasks<sup>35</sup>.

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<sup>32</sup> These include providing social assistance (supporting the homeless to find public shelters), helping address congestion and assisting with major public events (street marathons, music concerts, carnival, etc.).

<sup>33</sup> Numbers for October 2016 compared to October 2015 (SATRIANO, 2016).

<sup>34</sup> Residents associations have mostly welcomed extra patrols around their areas, claiming that it is a smart solution for a police institution that is currently overstretched due to reduced personnel and overloaded by the concentration of financial and material resources in pacified favelas. See Magalhães (2015). Also, for what it's worth, the operation's Facebook page conducted a survey among its 9.300 followers and 92.5% considered the program to be 'great'. See OPERAÇÕES... (2016).

<sup>35</sup> Agents taking part in the Operação Segurança Presente have also complained against working conditions and personal security. Despite not being able to act like policemen and carry proper equipment, they are being requested

The zealous application of stop-and-frisk is a frequent concern registered by human rights groups in the city<sup>36</sup>. Several prominent academics have also disputed claims of the program's success, the quality of the training of its agents, the use of military personnel for ostensive policing, and the way the initiative diverts public forces from their routine work (VIEIRA, 2016). Some have expressed concern about the creation of what is described as an "official militia".<sup>37</sup> It is worth underlining that former public secretary Jose Beltrame was a strong opponent of *Operação Segurança Presente*, openly disagreeing with how it was forged (LEITÃO, 2015). Describing the program as "shopping mall surveillance", he objected to how it diverted resources and re-prioritized areas for police action (COSTA; SERRA, 2016).

Nevertheless, there is a strong demand for increased security, whether administered by public or private entities. Municipal politicians are competing for more patrols to their electoral jurisdictions. Many of them promised to ramp up security provision for their constituents. Those with privileged access to the governor and mayor hope to jump the queue. For his part, mayor Crivella has assured the public that current patrols will be sustained during his four-year mandate and he hopes to extend the operation to Barra da Tijuca and Copacabana.

There is a temptation in Brazil – and *Rio de Janeiro* in particular – to "projectize" public security. Strategic plans come and go, and *Operação Segurança Presente* is no exception. As pacification wanes (and is seen as tainted, having been a plan of previous governors), the new strategy catches on. What is more, it is starting to win supporters elsewhere. Police representatives from Alagoas state travelled to Rio to learn from the program, and announced that elements would be replicated in Maceió (SEGURANÇA..., 2016).

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to tackle violent crimes and produce arrests. In December, for example, during an operation to curb drug-trafficking in Centro, a homemade grenade was thrown at a patrol while suspects attempted to evade detention. Another agent had already been shot in Aterro do Flamengo in similar circumstances earlier that year (PM..., 2016; POLICIAIS..., 2016).

<sup>36</sup> A police officer interviewed by Agência Brasil reported that some individuals are specifically targeted by agents. They are taken to police stations almost every day, sometimes more than once.

<sup>37</sup> Pedro Chavarry, a retired police colonel, also criticized the operation for its bias. Instead of prioritizing areas with high levels of crime rates, such as the Baixada Fluminense or Bangu, state authorities and elite businessmen decided to build a guard to attend their own interests. He also raised concerns over what he called "the outsourcing of a constitutional obligation" to the private initiative. See Vieira (2016). Paulo Ramos, state legislator from the opposition (PSOL) also echoed these critiques classifying the program as 'official militias' paid by the commercial sector. See Beltrame... (2016).

## **Future trends and over-the-horizon issues**

The short- and medium-term security projections for Rio de Janeiro are dark. The state and city have yet to reach the bottom, and there are worrying signs that the situation could deteriorate further still in 2017. The reasons for this are wide-ranging, including the volatile political climate, the turbulent economic situation, the ever-expanding corruption investigations, the paralysis of the public security sector, the escalating gang and militia activity, and the tinderbox that are Rio de Janeiro's prisons.

There are several "known unknowns" that will certainly shape the trajectory of public security in Rio de Janeiro. One of them is Lava Jato, which has been nothing short of a game changer across Brazil. But the investigations in Rio de Janeiro have only just started and the consequences could be seismic. Already two former governors and a renowned business tycoon were jailed. Several politicians and businessmen have also followed including Jorge Picciani who was recently re-elected as the ALERJ president (PICCIANI..., 2017). But the concern is that the majority of elected officials in ALERJ and others in the judiciary are compromised.

There are several risks on the near-term horizon in 2017. All of them could have implications for the wider security environment. The federal government in Brasilia is distracted: Rio de Janeiro managed to hold public security partially together in 2016 because of massive financial injections from the federal government. Now that the Olympics have come and gone, there are fewer incentives and more constraints on providing federal transfers. What is more, the federal police and armed forces are less disposed to providing support given other priorities and cutbacks. Many agencies are launching their own initiatives and not coordinating.

*State and municipal politicians and civil servants implicated in Lava Jato:* There is guaranteed to be continued investigations and arrests linked to the sprawling corruption and bribery scandals. These are spreading also into an ever-widening array of business areas. All of this will ensure more instability, which in turn will undermine the continuity of public security programs. As more revelations come to light, this will also no doubt reveal insight into the criminal economy and relationships between factions.

*Weakening government and civil servant unrest:* continued scandals affecting state and municipal elected officials will undermine progress on much-needed fiscal and social welfare reforms. What is more, there will be continued impacts

on budgets and salaries. This will contribute to continued civil servant unrest, including de facto “strike action” and escalation of instability on the street. These strains will affect the authority of the secretary of public security and the capacity and resolve of police. There will be an effort to maintain the status quo with little ability to advance more proactive policing and justice measures.

*Increasing power of gang factions and risk of prison violence:* There is considerable evidence of growing tensions between the PCC and CV in Rio de Janeiro, especially outside the metropolitan region. There are signals of the CV increasing their stockpiles of arms, as well as PCC efforts to coopt groups aligned with the CV. PCC and CV could start open conflict in peri-urban and even downtown areas, though the incentive is to the contrary. It is more likely that violence will escalate in selected prisons, potentially triggered by issues related to over-capacity/under-service.

*The potential spark during 2018 elections:* there is traditionally an increase in violence before and during elections in Brazil, and Rio de Janeiro in particular. As groups jockey for position – especially given the resurgence of militia – this is to be expected in the lead up to 2018. There are also less restraints on violence given the vacuum of leadership (note that there are no longer politicians such as Cabral, Garotinho, Cunha and others on the scene). Likewise, there are uncertainties associated with the future role of Picciani and Paes, etc. There are risks of more populist and extremist candidates stepping into the breach.

*Continued brain-drain from Rio de Janeiro:* The more talented residents of Rio de Janeiro that leave, the more it undermines future investment and innovation. There are signs of continued and significant out-migration of high-net worth individuals and educated residents – either to other parts of Brazil or abroad. A closed and inefficient immigration system does not help. The loss of such individuals will also undermine domestic support for critical reform.

## **UM ESTADO DE INSEGURANÇA: O CASO DO RIO DE JANEIRO**

**RESUMO:** *A situação de segurança pública do Brasil é volátil, incerta, complexa e ambígua. As taxas excessivamente altas de crimes violentos do país são produto de fraquezas institucionais estruturais no setor de justiça criminal e agravadas por crises políticas e econômicas de rotina. O Rio de Janeiro é particularmente vulnerável a surtos de violência criminal devido a falhas na governança e corrupção sistêmica, juntamente com a concorrência entre facções de drogas territoriais e desigualdades socioeconômicas acentuadas.*

*O estado e a região metropolitana do Rio de Janeiro sofreram uma dramática deterioração da segurança desde 2016 e a situação provavelmente se agravará no futuro previsível. É improvável que o retorno das forças armadas às ruas do Rio de Janeiro afete positivamente a situação de fraqueza institucional crônica. Este artigo considera o estado de insegurança no Rio de Janeiro, destacando as tendências oficiais no predomínio do crime e a dinâmica da governança criminal.*

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** *Segurança pública. Crime organizado. Política de drogas. Redução de violência. Corrupção.*

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