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English Edition

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Forced Disappearances?

Bridget Conley-Zilkic

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Rafael Dias — Global Justice Researcher

José Marcelo Zacchi — Research Associate, Institute for Studies
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INTRODUCTION



SUR 16 was produced in collaboration with the **Regional Coalition on Citizen Security and Human Rights**.¹ Every day individuals are subjected to countless forms of violations of their security. Entire impoverished communities have been deprived of their right to participate in the decisions about their own security; in some areas, citizens are exposed to violence both from criminals and from police allegedly combating crime; developments in the regional and international levels as well as in the local and national levels have been disparate and unsatisfactory. By discussing those topics and others, the articles in the dossier exemplify both the challenges and the opportunities in the field of citizen security and human rights.

The non-thematic articles published in this issue, some of which also touch upon the issue of security, albeit more tangentially, provide insightful analyses of other pressing matters relating to the field of human rights: violence against women, forced disappearances, genocide, the right to self-determination, and migrations.

Thematic dossier: Citizen Security and Human Rights

Security and human rights hold an intrinsic – and problematic – relationship in regions with high rates of criminal violence. In these contexts, lack of security can be both a consequence and a pretext for human rights violations, as human rights can be presented as impediments to effective policies against crime. It is precisely to conciliate the agendas of security and human rights, particularly in Latin America, that the concept of citizen security has emerged.

Citizen security places the person (rather than the state or a political regime) as the main focus of policies directed at preventing and controlling crime and violence. In Latin America, such paradigm shift took place in the last few decades, as part of the transition from military dictatorships to democratic regimes. The concept of citizen security seeks to reinforce the idea that security goes hand-in-hand with protecting human rights, and therefore clearly departs from the authoritarian idea of security as protection of the State, common in the times of military dictatorships in Latin America and elsewhere.

In its 2009 “Report on Citizen Security and Human Rights”,² the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) defines citizen security in the following terms: “The concept of citizen security involves those rights to which all members of a society are entitled, so that they are able to live their daily lives with as little threat as possible to their personal security, their civic rights and their right to the use and enjoyment of their property” (para. 23). Thus, the concept of citizen security used by the IACHR includes the issues of crime and violence and their impact on the enjoyment of personal freedom, specifically property and civil rights.

The report by the IACHR also intends to inform the design and implementation of public policies in this area. In paragraphs 39-49, the Commission highlights the States’ obligations regarding citizen security: (i) Taking responsibility for the acts of its agents as well as for ensuring the respect of human rights by third parties; (ii) Adopting legal, political, administrative and cultural measures to prevent the violation of rights linked to citizen security, including reparation mechanisms for the victims; (iii) Investigating human rights violations; (iv) Preventing, punishing, and eradicating violence against women, pursuant to the Convention of Belém do Pará.

In order to fulfill such obligations, the States should adopt public policies in the area of citizen security that incorporate human rights principles and that are comprehensive in their rights’ scope; intersectorial; participatory in regards to the population affected; universal, i.e. inclusive without discriminating vulnerable groups; and, finally, intergovernmental, involving different levels of government (para. 52). Even though these guidelines do not serve as a prescription, their focus on the actual impact of security policies on the enjoyment of the rights of individuals, their attention to the multi-sectorial nature and participatory mechanisms of those policies, as well as the obligation of preventing crime and violence by tackling its causes, serve as solid guide for States or for civil society organizations and victims wishing to advocate for security policies that promote human rights.

In other words, the concept of citizen security highlights that security policies must be, at very least, people-oriented, multi-sectorial, comprehen-

1. The Coalition is formed by the following organizations: Center for Legal and Social Studies (CELS) – Argentina, Brazilian Public Security Forum – Brazil, *Instituto Sou da Paz* – Brazil, Center for Development Studies (CED) – Chile, Center for Studies on Citizenship Security (CESC) – Chile, Center for the Study of Law, Justice and Society (Dejusticia) – Colombia, Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA) – United States, Myrna Mack Foundation – Guatemala, Institute for Security and Democracy (INSYDE) – Mexico, Miguel Agustín Pro Juárez Human Rights Center (Prodh Center) – Mexico, Fundar, Center of Analysis and Research – Mexico, *Ciudad Nuestra* – Peru, Legal Defense Institute (IDL) – Peru, Support Network for Justice and Peace – Venezuela. Representatives of the Andean Development Corporation (CAF) and the Open Society Foundations also took part in some of the meetings of the coalition.

2. Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, “Report on Citizen Security and Human Rights”, Doc. OEA/Ser.L/V/II. Doc.57, 31 December 2009, available at: <http://www.cidh.org/countryrep/Seguridad.eng/CitizenSecurity.Toc.htm>. Last Accessed on: May 2012.

sive, context-specific and prevention-oriented,³ as well as participatory and non-discriminatory. The papers in the present dossier reveal how daunting and necessary this task is.

In **Citizen Security and Transnational Organized Crime in the Americas: Challenges in the Inter-American Arena**, Peru's former interior minister Gino Costa examines some of the main challenges and advances in inter-American efforts to combat organized transnational crime using the concept of citizen security. In **The Current Agenda of Security and Human Rights in Argentina**, researchers from Argentina's Center for Legal and Social Studies (CELS) describe the public security agenda in Argentina within the regional context, analyzing the first year of operations of the country's Ministry of Security and its attempt to implement policies incorporating the concept of citizen security. This same department is the subject of an additional article appearing in this issue. In **Civic Participation, Democratic Security and Conflict between Political Cultures - First Notes on an Experiment in the City of Buenos Aires**, Manuel Tufro examines a pilot program recently implemented by the Argentinian ministry with the aim of expanding public participation in the planning of local public safety policies. In the essay, Tufro analyzes the conflicts arising from this attempt to disseminate a practice in line with the ministry's agenda of promoting "democratic security" in places in which mechanisms of participation owing their existence to what he calls a "neighborhood political culture".

In **The March of Folly and Drug Policy**, Pedro Abramovay uses Barbara Tuchman's work to examine drug policies that have been implemented since 1912, arguing that they are example of policies that are not in the interest of the community being served by the policymakers who designed them.

Finally, this issue's dossier includes a double interview about the recent implementation of UPPs (Pacifying Police Units) in poor communities of Rio de Janeiro (Brazil) previously dominated by criminal organizations. The interviewees are José Marcelo Zacchi, who helped design and implement a government program to expand social and urban services in the areas served by the UPPs, and Rafael Dias, a researcher at human rights NGO Justiça Global.

Non-thematic articles

This issue includes five additional articles relating to important human rights issues.

In **Extraordinary Renditions in the Fight against Terrorism – Forced Disappearances?**, Patrício Galella and Carlos Espósito argue that the practice of kidnappings, detentions and transfers of presumed terrorists by United States officials to secret prisons in third-party States where they are presumably tortured – euphemistically called "extraordinary renditions" – guard similarities with the forced disappearance of persons. The distinction is important because

it means that perpetrators of forced disappearances may be prosecuted as having committed crimes against humanity.

Also dealing with crimes against humanity is an article by Bridget Conley-Zilkic in which she examines the field of genocide prevention and response as it furthers its professional development. In her essay, titled **A Challenge to Those Working in the Field of Genocide Prevention and Response** she explores some of the conceptual and practical challenges facing this field, such as how to define genocide, what can organizations do to prevent it, who are the subjects of these organizations' work, and how to measure success.

Another article, **The ACHPR in the Case of Southern Cameroons**, critically analyses decisions by the African Commission on Human and People's Rights concerning the right of self-determination. In it, Simon M. Weldehaimanot proposes that the case of Southern Cameroons has ignored previous jurisprudence and made this right unavailable for "peoples".

Also touching upon challenges to the sovereignty of nation-states is **The Role of the Universalization of Human Rights and Migration in the Formation of a New Global Governance**, in which André Luiz Siciliano reviews the literature on migration to propose that it is an issue which is still mired in anachronistic Westphalian notions that impede the broad and effective protection of fundamental human rights, as opposed to recent concepts such as cosmopolitan citizenship and the responsibility to protect.

In our final article, researchers from Brazilian think-tank Cebrap (Centro Brasileiro de Análise e Planejamento) examine challenges to the constitutionality of recent legislation on domestic violence, the so-called Maria da Penha law. In **Law Enforcement at Issue: Constitutionality of the Maria da Penha Law in Brazilian Courts**, the authors show that most judicial opinions favor positive discrimination of women in order to combat a scenario of chronic inequality. In a context of historical and ongoing oppression of women by men, they argue, treating men who commit domestic violence against women more stringently than women does not hurt the over-arching principle of non-discrimination.

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3. See the report developed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in partnership with the Inter-American Institute of Human Rights (Costa Rica), available at: http://www.iidh.ed.cr/multic/default_12.aspx?contentid=ea75e2b1-9265-4296-9d8c-3391de83fb42. Last accessed on: May 2012.



RAFAEL DIAS

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INTERVIEW – VIEWS ON THE SPECIAL POLICE UNITS FOR NEIGHBORHOOD PACIFICATION (UPPs) IN RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL

By Conectas Human Rights.
Interview conducted in March 2012.
Original in Portuguese. Translated by Thalia Cerqueira.

In 2008, the Department of Security of the state of Rio de Janeiro (RJ) set up its first Special Police Unit for Neighborhood Pacification (UPP) in the community Dona Marta in the city of Rio de Janeiro. To date (March 2012), about 20 units are in operation and by 2014 it is expected that up to 40 units will be active. These figures show the extent of this policy and, thus, the importance of studying and discussing UPPs by activists, government officials and experts from Brazil and from other countries in the Global South.

According to the Department of Security of the state of Rio de Janeiro, the UPPs represent a new model of public policy in the field of security. Their stated goal is “to regain territories previously dominated by criminal gangs and establish a democratic rule of law”* through community law enforcement, in conjunction with social and urban projects.

Considering the magnitude of social issues it seeks to address, this policy has received widespread media attention both nationally and internationally, as well as the heavy criticism of many experts. For example, after a visit to Brazil, Philip Alston, the UN Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, welcomed the UPP project, although he noted that there are increasing reports of abuses by police officers against residents of the communities assisted and pointed to a failure to provide the social services assigned to these units.**

With this discussion in mind, *Sur – International Journal on Human Rights*, released an issue on Citizen Security and Human Rights and interviewed two UPP experts to contribute to public debate on effective policies to ensure the right to security.

*State Government of Rio de Janeiro. More information is available at: <http://www.rj.gov.br/web/mapa/exibeconteudo?article-id=566038>. Last accessed on: 29 Mar. 2012.

**ACNUDH, *UN Special Rapporteur finds that killings by Brazilian police continue at alarming rates, Government has failed to take all necessary action*, available at: <http://www.ohchr.org/en/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=10089&LangID=E>. Last accessed on: 29 Mar. 2012.

INTERVIEW 1

Rafael Dias — Global Justice Researcher

How do you view the Special Police Units for Neighborhood Pacification policy (UPPs) in Rio de Janeiro? To what extent do the UPPs represent a progress or a setback in relation to other policies in place in Rio de Janeiro?

From a conceptual standpoint, the Special Police Units for Neighborhood Pacification (UPPs) cannot be regarded as public policy because we believe that the “public” aspect of policy depends on social participation in all stages of implementation (i.e. planning, performance and implementation). An effective public policy is delivered with the massive participation of society. This is not the case of the UPPs, which were designed and executed by the government without any participation from society, without any mechanisms for external control or any real dialogue with the communities where they were established. Moreover, there is no law or rule governing the UPPs and their operating model, operating limits, and institutional objectives. Therefore, we consider the UPPs to be, at best, a governmental policy, since they express a particular project of the state government of Rio de Janeiro. The UPPs are subject to government strategies and their specific interests, which cannot be confused with the interests of society as a whole or human rights in general. On the whole, the UPPs add value to the communities in which they are implemented by stopping, if momentarily, the conflicts between the police and armed groups. This produces an immediate relief in the daily life of residents who were in the crossfire. The criminalizing, random and violent character of police actions have not only resulted in serious human rights violations, but also demand the constant attention of those living in the slums, even though they face a permanent barrier built by the government and the media that prevents them from filing their complaints and making political demands to end this type of action.

Before the UPPs, the much touted “politics of confrontation” was responsible for the exponential growth of “resistance killings” — a way of covering up the summary executions carried out by the police. In 2007, the first year of Sérgio Cabral Filho’s administration, these executions reached 1,330 cases (an average of 3 events per day). By the end of 2008, criticism of this type of policy caused the state government to change its discourse and present UPPs as “new” in the realm of public security policy, setting up one unit in the community of Santa Marta. However, this law enforcement model cannot be considered something new. The development of GPAE (Policing Group for Special Areas) in the community of Cavalão in Niterói and Cantagalo/Pavão-Pavãozinho in Copacabana in the early 2000s operated much like a community policing group and demonstrate the existence of a public security project similar to the UPPs, although the project was subsequently weakened and dismantled. The difference between the two projects is the massive investment in assigning legitimacy to the UPPs, often uncritically. UPPs are elevated as a magical solution to public security issues, while overlooking some elements that remain unchanged in this security policy. Moreover, the principles of community policing are not applied in the UPPs,

who conduct routine patrols in the slums and impose their organizational culture coercively instead of mediating conflicts.

A breakthrough would be to address the issue of drug trafficking without resorting to the logic of war, which stimulates the production of a violent society.

Do the consequences of the UPPs include the militarization of the communities where they are set up?

The overt and permanent presence of the armed police implies the militarization of everyday life in these communities. While we cannot deny the power exercised by armed groups in the favelas, either by the drug trafficking activities or by the militia, the State is expected to refrain from following the same logic of armed occupation of urban spaces.

UPP commanders operate at their own discretion as a kind of “general administrator” of the community they are in charge of and instill the culture of barracks into the minds of those living around the UPPs. Moreover, the commander is the one who authorizes funk parties and other events in favelas with a UPP. Another indication of militarization is that the political mediation of the community, which could be coordinated by neighborhood associations or local groups and organizations, are conducted by the police force. The political mediation exercised by the military police undermines residents’ capacity to coordinate their own territory. The criminalization of residents remains unchanged, as there are an increasing number of arrests due to contempt toward military officers in areas controlled by the UPPs. Furthermore, the UPP design is conceptually tied to the military occupation of territories in order to allegedly regain state sovereignty through their “pacification.” In Complexo do Alemão and Penha, the army fulfilled this role before the UPP was fully deployed. The truth is that the state has always been present in the favelas, either with its armed wing, or by providing some essential services, albeit poorly.

To what extent do the UPPs contribute to ensuring citizens’ right to security?

The right to security should be understood broadly, as a result of a set of social policies in which public security is one but not the only way to ensure its effectiveness. We should not confuse public security with police intervention, because viewing public security merely as a police duty is a very simplistic way of addressing the issue. With the UPPs, the state can no longer escape its public duties and accountability to the society, since it has regained control over the territory allegedly relinquished to drug trafficking. What we see is that the situation of inequality and the poor quality of public services remains unchanged after the entry of UPPs. If we can no longer blame the drug dealers, the ineffective pursuit of public policies can only be ascribed to the State, even though police intervention was expected to guarantee the successful implementation of these policies for the whole population. What other explanation do we have for the fact that public services do not reach the community of Santa Marta, located in Botafogo, with the same quality and quantity as others living in the same neighborhood?

The way the UPPs are deployed and their territorial intervention seems to

imply that the favela is a place of crime, but we know that violent crime has much more complex dynamics, which cannot be directly associated to the favela itself. Therefore, government action reinforces this view by monitoring and controlling those who are seen as potentially dangerous ones instead of promoting the welfare of the residents.

Besides the security aspect, do the UPPs contribute to ensuring other rights of those living in the communities served?

The UPPs cannot be analyzed apart from the current model of “business management of the city” that has been put into place in Rio de Janeiro. The staging of major sports events (2014 World Cup and Olympic Games 2016) has sped up the authoritarian and militarized management of urban spaces. Most UPPs have been deployed in the southern region of Rio, close to hotels and to the games venues (like Tijuca to the north and Cidade de Deus to the west) — the only exception is the Batan, the only militia-controlled area that was “pacified,” where journalists from the newspaper *O Dia* were tortured in 2007. Other areas of the state were not assisted by this public investment. Law enforcement authorities conveniently forgot the area called “Baixada Fluminense,” which has the highest crime rates in Rio de Janeiro.

The business management of urban spaces is conducive to the “harmless displacement” of those living in areas controlled by UPPs, who have seen the cost of living increase considerably, although the state has failed to establish consistent public policies in these spaces. What we see is the prohibition and criminalization of cultural traits of the favelas expressed in funk parties. So far, the belief that the “pacification” promoted by the police would be the gateway to the development of welfare policies has not manifested. The blatant inequality among the favelas’ residents and those living elsewhere in the city remains unchanged. Also, it sounds a bit strange to attribute the fulfillment of human rights to police action.

Should the UPP model apply to other areas outside of Rio de Janeiro?

The UPP is a model that came from Medellín in Colombia. There, crime rates initially declined and are now rising again. Rio de Janeiro’s security and law enforcement managers traveled to Medellín many times and brought this security package back with them. If we acknowledge that the context in Medellín is different from the context in Rio and that models cannot be simply transplanted from one city to another, we should also acknowledge that the model implemented in Rio, inspired by the Colombian experience, does not necessarily serve as a paradigm for other Brazilian cities. The UPP experiment is very recent and should be evaluated and even criticized. The conservative consensus around the UPPs does not add any value to the debate on public security. Public security should be demilitarized. The military occupation of certain urban areas does not contribute to building a democratic society. Instead, it encourages government strategies to control of a stratum of the population (i.e. the poor). This political strategy seeks to maintain social inequalities through ongoing monitoring and spiteful surveillance of those living in the favelas and peripheral areas

INTERVIEW 2

José Marcelo Zacchi — Research Associate, Institute for Studies
on Labor and Society — IETS

How do you view the Pacifying Police Units policy (UPPs) in Rio de Janeiro? To what extent do the UPPs represent a progress or setback in relation to other policies in place in Rio de Janeiro?

From the perspective of which results the UPPs have produced, one can say that they have extended regular law enforcement services to historically excluded areas in order to recover the government's capacity to promote public actions in these areas. This has had immediate positive effects in ensuring basic civil rights — rights to come and go, freedom of association, demonstration, physical and moral integrity, and security.

From the perspective of Rio de Janeiro's history of public security in the favelas, these results represent the practical expression of some key changes in the views and habits of the city.

The first change has been to amend the primary task of the police in the favelas and poor areas to provide security to citizens, instead of protecting the city from the alleged threat posed by these communities. The second change lies in defining the protection of life, physical integrity and basic freedoms as a top priority rather than fighting drug trafficking at any expense. The third change has been the recognition that this mission is better accomplished through regular presence and preventive efficiency combined with society and other public services rather than through willful military incursions.

These far-reaching changes were brought about gradually by the actions of various sectors of society and previous governmental experiences over the past two decades of democracy in the city. Not long ago, these experiences would not have been supported as they are today. The UPPs represent the institutional and programmatic breakdown of the renewal of assumptions combined with good news: since 2008 when the first unit was deployed, Rio de Janeiro's chiefs of police have demonstrated the commitment and competence required to transform these assumptions into new institutional practices.

One should not ignore the limits of such a policy: the UPPs are neither the solution to the problems found in the territories where they are present, nor a solution to public security in Rio de Janeiro. Nor should we overlook the challenges that lie ahead. However, we cannot take for granted the innovative character and the impressive results the UPPs have achieved thus far.

Do the consequences of the UPPs include the militarization of the communities where they are set up?

I do not see this happening in the practical experience of communities. To a large extent, it seems to be the opposite. The peculiar phenomenon of urban violence in Rio de Janeiro emerged in the 1980s due to high levels of crime and insecurity

and the overt control of armed criminal groups and the daily recurrence of armed conflicts among these groups, their opponents and the police.

Over the years, the presence of “soldiers” from these groups created terror: they had rifles and other powerful weapons at the entrance and within these communities, they built bunkers and barriers to vehicles and people, they restricted the movement of residents to other areas of the city and the adopted “martial laws,” prohibiting people from wearing clothes with the colors of rival gangs or from carrying cameras, as well as organizing trials and executions. Besides this, the communities were repeatedly exposed to shootings and explicit combat situations.

Only the profound naturalization of this reality or the deep-seated distrust of police activity can make one classify the context described above as less militarized than one in which armed violence is close to zero, civil liberties are exercised, democratic law and due process are the guiding principles of relationships and any violations are subject to public criticism and sanctions by the law. If we believe in the democratic rule of law as a desirable framework for collective organization, we must acknowledge the notable advances made in this direction.

It is clear that a shift towards democratic rule requires far more than the initial step of setting up the UPPs. The permanent presence of police forces, to begin, must be quickly combined with new means of conflict resolution and social participation. Everyday policing efforts should be adequately limited in terms of, for example, the routine practices of enforcement and patrolling, carrying weapons, and the ratio of police officers to inhabitant — and it is of pivotal importance to prevent any of these correct measures from being publicly confused with policy weakening. The regulation by public authorities of dimensions of daily life it has so far neglected — from neighborhood disputes to urban organization rules, from the use of public spaces to the legal provision of urban services — must resort to well-balanced channels of dialogue and transition rules, engaging more public officials than just the police.

The positive fact is that this is all part of the agenda spelled out by state and local governments in Rio today and it has been reflected in actions and strategies following the pacification. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that much remains to be done at all these levels.

To what extent do the UPPs contribute to ensuring citizens’ right to security?

The first contribution of the UPP is to ensure liberties. This is, indeed, the central purpose of the UPPs. It means the freedom to move freely or to receive visits regardless of where in the city people come from. It means the freedom to organize associations and express oneself publicly without being intimidated by local “bosses.” It means to be able to experience public spaces without being exposed to armed conflicts. And all these prerogatives are advocated by a democratic sovereign state, which justifies the presence of the government and the police forces in other areas of the city and the country.

The change in the indicators of crime and violence in the communities served speaks for itself. Besides making firearm shootings infrequent episodes,

the 22 areas and 400,000 residents served by the program in 2008 experienced reductions of up to 80% in the rate of homicides and 30 to 70% in the rates of other violent crimes, while the levels of police lethality were close to zero. This trend has contributed to a decline in the city's overall crime rates during the same period, expressed in a 26% reduction in homicides and 60% reduction of deaths in clashes with the police.

Finally, these achievements gave rise to other agendas previously hidden by the prominence of armed conflicts. Issues such as domestic violence against women and reintegration programs for former members of criminal gangs or former convicts, the provision of health policies for drug addicts, the resolution of everyday conflicts, proper and daily regulation of police action, among others, are able to gain visibility and prominence in the local aspirations of the city. Most of these themes are increasingly present in public debate but not in actual policies, and we can draw an agenda for new steps forward to enhance security in these communities.

Besides the security aspect, do the UPPs contribute to ensuring other rights of those living in the communities served?

An interesting finding of the recent experience of Rio involves the interdependence between security and other social, economic and urban rights. In context of the establishment of armed boundaries within the city, such as the one in Rio, it is not just inequality and the restriction of opportunities that fuels conflicts, but also violence that undermines the possibility of other processes of social inclusion.

Urban policies designed to improve accessibility bump into armed patrols or physical barriers on roads and streets. Schools and health care centers find it difficult to attract professionals and operate within an area of risk and conflict. Companies avoid investing in these areas or hiring professionals who live there. Local associations are constrained or directly coopted, which makes the provision of basic services such as garbage collection and street lighting difficult or unfeasible.

The advent of security — or peace, if we want to call it that — thus implies breaking down these barriers. It brings with it both the opportunity and the challenge of fostering the so-called pacification intended to reintegrate underprivileged areas into the city.

Fortunately, the need for change is now clearly stated in Rio's governmental agenda. At the municipal level, the UPP Social program, whose creation and implementation I was pleased to participate in, coordinates the expansion of social and urban services into pacified areas and engages its residents in this process. Other state and federal programs play the same role at their respective levels. The private sector has also stepped into these areas and support for local entrepreneurship is gaining strength amidst a favorable economic setting.

There is clearly a long path ahead to pay off the burden of debt that mounted during the history of neglect. The extent of the progress achieved to date varies widely according to dimensions and territories, but security has played a starring role in efforts to trigger the movements of reintegration into the city.

Should the UPP model apply to other areas lying out of Rio de Janeiro?

Yes, if we view the UPPs as a benchmark for police work based on informed planning, minimized use of force and community-centered activities, and a commitment to ensuring rights and controlling misconduct. In this case, it was not exactly a “role-model UPP,” but a model of good police action anywhere in the world, which inspired the very design of the UPPs.

On the other hand, if we view the UPPs as an acronym for the process of restoring democratic sovereignty to urban areas dominated by gangs, then the model may make sense to other major cities exposed to similar phenomena. There are not many of these cities in the world: as it has been said here, the core issue in Rio is not the rate of crime and violence generally, but overstepping these boundaries and averting urban conflicts, which are very particular to Rio and not common in other places.

Rio is struggling to be a success case for plans of public security and social and urban inclusion, with a potentially exciting combination of these two initiatives. The only task we have now is to hope and work hard to make things happen.

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