

"WHO'S GOING TO COUNT THE BODIES?":

Dossier of the deaths of black children resulting from action by the Bahia Military Police



*Wherever I go, God goes with me
Keep calm...
Where can I go
if I'm a criminal, whenever there're police?
It's fucked up, being black is fucked up
Of course it bothers me
500 years and nothing has changed
Shiiiiit...*

*Black people said that and they killed them
In the classroom, in their first seat, waiting for an exam
If I'd known what was going to happen
I wouldn't have gone through that door
And on the way back, they accused a student of carrying
a gun
Inside the school
Denouncing a racist
And I have proof.
The riot police have arrived, now what?
Coming towards me
Pointing his piece, calling me a thief
Hands on your head, cross your fingers, look at the floor!
Where's the piece? Where's the piece?
Shut up, you trash!
Give me the drugs and the piece
If not....
no...
no...
It was my fault
Wearing nice clothes,
the latest iPhone,
today's chain
It was my fault
But how come white people can have all these things
And not go through the same pain?*

(Caíque Miguel)

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The line "Who's going to count the bodies?" from which this document gets its name and which is cited throughout the text, is from the song "Cabô" (It's Over), composed and sung by Luedji Luna. Other lines are also cited.



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SUMMARY

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INTRODUCTION

The Odara – Institute for Black Women (*Odara – Instituto da Mulher Negra*) is a black feminist organization, set up in 2010, in the city of Salvador in the state of Bahia, committed to strengthening the autonomy and guaranteeing the rights of black women, and to confronting racial and gender violence from a national perspective, with a focus on the Northeast region, and from a transnational one, focused on Latin America.

The institute acts radically to defend a fairer and more egalitarian society, where Universal Human Rights are truly guaranteed for all – observing the unique aspects of diverse groups. One where racism, sexism and LGBTphobia – the structural violence resulting from colonization – no longer affect the lives of black women, and where they have sufficient material and symbolic conditions to forge a society of Good Living.

Good Living, as a paradigm mobilized by black women, proposes a rupture from the individualist and capitalist idea of “well-being.” Good Living represents the extension of the democratic rule of law based on a collective perspective, that aspires to: observe the multiculturalism of peoples; remove white supremacy from the universalism of fundamental rights, and focus on overcoming inequalities based on race, gender, sexual orientation, age and territory; and prioritize social power in the socially vulnerable sectors. Good Living, in truth, is the construction of a new language, of a new social order and the realization of new values.

Anchored in the construct of Good Living, Odara develops and supports projects in Human Rights, Communications, Education and Political Training, and the Health of Black Women and Girls.

The Human Rights Programme aims to advocate for the black population's right to life, based on confronting oppressions caused by systemic violence, such as: racism; sexism; gender violence and femicide; political violence; the extermination of black youth and LGBTQIAPN+phobias, by strengthening black women as active political subjects in the construction of a society centred on Good Living.

One project within the Human Rights Programme is “My Mother Doesn't Sleep Until I Come Home”. This works in Salvador's peripheral communities and is focused on raising awareness in Brazilian and Bahian society of the harm and impacts caused by police violence and drug trafficking on the lives of black adolescents and young black men and women, their mothers and other family members.

The “My Mother Doesn't Sleep Until I Come Home” project works in support and networking, strengthening and holding dialogue with mothers of young people killed as a result of violence; raising young people's and adolescents' awareness of police violence, human rights and the construction of a culture of peace, through workshops in Salvador's public schools; and legal advice aimed at black women and family members of murdered youth, and at the criminal proceedings arising from these murders.

Legal advice for the “My Mother Doesn't Sleep Until I Come Home” project emerged in 2023, as a result of a diagnosis based on networking and accompanying the struggles of mothers and other relatives of the victims of police violence and deadly force, in their attempts to hold the state public security officers who took the lives of their children to account.

Despite the fact that ownership of criminal cases in the Brazilian justice system falls to each federal state's Public Prosecutor's Office (*Ministério Público do Estado*), the creation of grassroots legal advisors to act as assistant prosecutors meets a specific demand from mothers and relatives for access to justice. The service has three objectives: legal education; procedural and

pre-procedural support; and legal support for mothers and relatives.

It is important to note that all the criminal proceedings accompanied by Odara in the “My Mother Doesn’t Sleep Until I Come Home” project are of murders committed by public security officers in vulnerable areas, which are the target of ostensive policing, justified by the policy of the “war on drugs”. In all these proceedings, the victims are impoverished black children and young black men or women from these areas. In all, the argument used by the police defence is that a previous confrontation took place between “armed men” and the Military Police garrison or, even, that officers of the state were shot at. In all these proceedings, the victims were of good character, with no involvement in illegal activities, no police record and who did not resist the police action or operation.



Carlos Alberto Júnior

from his place of protection and shot him at point-blank range, without checking his documents, despite the fact that he had surrendered and was pleading for his life (according to witness reports). State public security officers will respond to the case, which is before the 1st Jury Court.

Carlos Alberto Júnior was murdered on 13 June 2013, during a police operation in the community of Olaria in the neighbourhood of Nordeste de Amaralina. Júnior was waiting to go to the beach with his cousin when he heard gunfire and ran to hide in a neighbour’s house. Three police officers, who were taking part in the operation, ordered the victim to come out



Wellington de Jesus

On 24 April 2023, **Wellington de Jesus** was shot when he was in a car on his way home from a football game, during an approach by the Military Police in Ceasinha, Nordeste de Amaralina. Witnesses saw Wellington being “rescued” by the garrison, having been shot once only in the leg. However, two hours later the victim’s lifeless body arrived at the State General Hospital, with seven gunshot wounds around his body. The case is under investigation by the Military Police’s Internal Affairs Department and the 7th Territorial Police Station, located in Rio Vermelho.



Marcelo Daniel

Marcelo Daniel, aged 19, was killed during a police operation on the night of 24 December (Christmas Eve) 2022, in Nordeste de Amaralina. Marcela and Adeilton (the surviving victim) were returning from the barber’s on a motorbike, when they were shot at by a Military Police detachment. Marcelo Daniel was taken to the State General Hospital, accompanied by his father, but died from his injuries. The case is under investigation

by the Military Police’s Internal Affairs Department and the 7th Territorial Police Station, located in Rio Vermelho.

João Vitor de Oliveira, aged 20, a well-known pizza chef in the region, was killed by a Military Police detachment on his way home in the early hours of 25 September 2023, also in Nordeste de Amaralina. Witnesses allege that João Vitor was on his motorbike at the end of the bus line when military police fired shots to disperse the population as a local party came to an end. The case is under investigation by the 1st Homicide Police Station and the Public Prosecu-



João Vitor de Oliveira

tor's Office, through its Jury Centre.

In July 2022, **Eliseu Silva** was killed in a friend's house by a Military Police garrison, which was carrying out an operation in the 8 de Maio community in Periperi. The police officers entered a residence, where they found Eliseu, his cousin and a friend (his cousin's boyfriend). There is a video recording of the police officers shooting the victim at point-blank range and then placing a plastic bag containing drugs next to the young man's body. It is worth noting that Eliseu was the grandson of a Military Police Sargent, but despite introducing himself to the garrison, Eliseu's grandfather was prevented from providing assistance. Eliseu died in front of his family aged 21 years old. The case is under investigation by the Military Police's Internal Affairs Department.



Marcus Vinicius Silva

Marcus Vinicius Silva Cidreira Santos was killed on 24 April 2020 by a Military Police detachment in Santa Cruz in Nordeste de Amaralina. Marcus left home to take out the rubbish and buy items for a breakfast in celebration of his son's first month of life. Marcus was shot in the back without presenting any danger or resisting the Military Police. There is a video recording showing the start of the police operation. The case is being monitored and investigated by the Military Police's Internal Affairs Department

In the cases of **Luciano Alves dos Santos**, **Ênio Matos Santos** and **Ricardo Matos Santos**, proceedings have come to an end. It is worth noting that in Luciano's case there is an outstanding arrest warrant and Dona Elenir, the victim's mother, claims that the police are complying with the court order very slowly because of corporatism. This is similar to the case of **Alexandre Macedo Fraga**, killed by the police on 19 January 2008. The police officer who fired the shot came before a jury in 2018 and was sentenced to 12 years in prison, but

remains free because the justice system has neglected to enforce his arrest.

In the cases of Ênio and Ricardo, brothers killed in different years, their father requested political and legal assistance to organize national support for the family, which has suffered reprisals and threats from military police officers. Despite special protection measures being taken because of



Alexandre Macedo

reports from social movements, the young men's father remains vulnerable, with his life and safety once again at risk – despite being under the responsibility of the State.

As further evidence of the gravity of State violence against the black community, we present here cases in which the victims are children.

On 21 October 2010, also in the Olaria community in the neighbourhood of

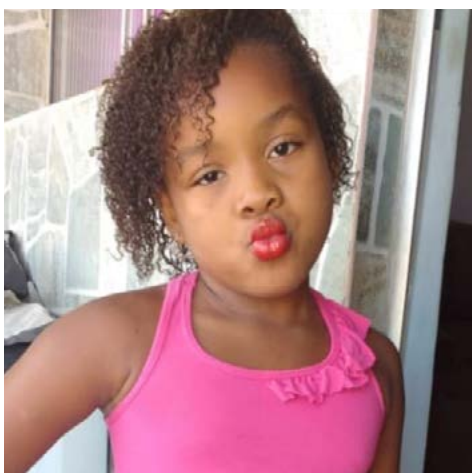


Joel Castro

Nordeste de Amaralina, **Joel Conceição Castro**, known as “Boy Joel” was shot dead in his home during a police operation. The military police detachment tried to leave without providing him any assistance, but was prevented for doing so by the population, who forced them to take the child to a health centre. Joel was 11 years old and was a poster boy for State Government publicity – which was also responsible for his early death. Thirteen

years on, no jury has been called and police officers Alexinaldo Santana and Eraldo Menezes remain at large.

Mirella do Carmo Barreto, aged six years, was killed on 17 March 2017, in her own home, during a police operation in the community of Goméia in the São



Mirella do Carmo

Caetano neighbourhood. Mirella was on the top floor with her mother, helping her hang out the washing, when a shot was fired in her direction. The officer responsible for the shot that took Mirella's life, Aldo Santana do Nascimento, is facing criminal proceedings before the 2nd Jury Court.

Micael Silva Menezes was killed during a police operation in Nordeste de Amaralina.

Micael and a friend were flying kites in the streets of the neighbourhood when the Military Police initiated an operation firing shots. According to witnesses, there was no confrontation, only shots fired by the police. Micael died on 14 June 2020, aged 11 years.

Micael's case is being processed by the Bahia Public Prosecutor's Office for investigation and to file charges. To formalize charges and initiate criminal proceedings, the case is under the supervision of the Jury Division. However, according to the latest update at the end of 2023, the Public Prosecutor's Office noted that the case file only contained the military enquiry, no civil enquiry had been carried out - in other words, an essential procedure to determine authorship and material fact had not been carried out, demonstrating the great difficulty of producing evidence to support a possible indictment. Three years after the event, the justice system has been shown to be negligent in its investigation of this violent event, despite it involving the death of a child.



Micael Silva

The final case is that of **Geovanna Nogueira**. On 24 January 2018, Geovanna was shot in the head by a military police officer who entered the Paz

e Vida community in the Jardim Santo Inácio neighbourhood. According to witnesses, he was firing shots for no justifiable reason. Geovanna got up from the table and was going to the front door to greet her grandfather, who had just arrived. It was at this exact moment that the police car drove past and fired shots.

In addition to the arduous and excruciating waiting time that preceded the trial, which took place on 21 August 2023 (the result of which was the acquittal of the accused officer), the defence's arguments were also presented violently. To the disgust of those present at the trial, they claimed that the testimonies of Geovanna's relatives were false, formulated to provide a culprit for the girl's death.

The defence used the expression "fictitious testimonies" to refer to the versions provided by Geovanna's mother and grandmother, who were at home when the incident occurred. In one of the most painful moments of the trial, an attempt was made to discredit the girl's mother, by asking why Geovanna had received help from police, instead of from her own mother. *"What mother wouldn't help her own daughter?"* asked the defence lawyer.



Geovanna Nogueira

The defence stance was another violation of the family, questioning the attitude of a mother who, immersed in the pain of seeing her daughter shot in the face, was unable to find the strength to help her, having, in her own words, *"bent her knees to the ground in prayer"*.

These mothers' indignation, disgust and objections can only find refuge in spirituality, in their belief in a better world than the physical one around them - a world of violence, disrespect, pain and suffering. What other resources do they have, apart from the pursuit of the sacred? From the outset, these mothers

have emphasised that their belief in God gives them the strength to survive the violent death of a child¹.

Throughout all his arguments, the defence lawyer kept on insinuating that Geovanna's relatives were lying about the events that led to her death. At times, he even imitated her mother and grandmother's voices, using a jocular tone. At one point, her mother Angela was so incensed, she left the plenary.

When she gives birth, a mother takes on the role of protecting, caring for and ensuring her child's physical, emotional and social well-being. For her, the loss of a child represents a failure in this maternal role and she feels robbed of the role of protecting and being necessary to something or someone. With the murder of her child comes guilt, because she believes she has failed in her duty of care. So the desire for justice becomes vital. When the murderer is punished, it is as if a huge part of this feeling disappears, since the mothers can confirm and say that the guilty have been punished. Condemnation is therefore another way of reducing the inevitable guilt they feel for what happened².

In this judgement there was a great deal of room for the reproduction of the violence, endorsed and permitted by the Justice System: in addition to disrespecting the grieving family, reinforcing gender and age stereotypes, the ethical nature of the criminal process was discarded, and there was, above all, a reinforcement of the absence of the State in dealing with this family.

1 ALARCÃO, Ana Carolina; CARVALHO, Maria Dalva; PELLOSO, Sandra Marisa. A morte de um filho em circunstância violenta: compreendendo a vivência da mãe. *Rev Latino-am Enfermagem*, 2008, maio-junho; 16(3). Available at: <https://www.scielo.br/j/rlae/a/JYbmHvhHc3jkDgm6bdjCjgp/?format=pdf&lang=pt>. Accessed on: 02 November 2023.

2 ALARCÃO, Ana Carolina; CARVALHO, Maria Dalva; PELLOSO, Sandra Marisa. A morte de um filho em circunstância violenta: compreendendo a vivência da mãe. *Rev Latino-am Enfermagem*, 2008, maio-junho; 16(3). Available at: <https://www.scielo.br/j/rlae/a/JYbmHvhHc3jkDgm6bdjCjgp/?format=pdf&lang=pt>. Accessed on: 02 November 2023.

1

**“Ô Neide, cadê menino?”:
Remontando dados da
violência e letalidade
policial no Brasil e na Bahia**

1. “Ô Neide, cadê menino?”: Remontando dados da violência e letalidade policial no Brasil e na Bahia

*Uniting my verses
I've created a universe
Where I know that words
Heal more than medicine.
Black African diaspora is my DNA,
Which is why I have to say,
I'm used to walking
With people,
From people,
Who stand up and don't wait,
Because if God is Brazilian
The devil is from Salvador.
And he's white too!
The city of San Salvador
In the Bay of All Saints
The land of all enchantments
Just tragedy on every corner.
More than 50 murders in Cajazeiras last year
If they were all white
It would cause astonishment.
Many of them died fighting
Many of them were called Leandro
Many of them died trying to get home and see their family
And their lives were interrupted by police weapons*

*They kill more people in this country than in Syria.
But sadly no one will ever know this
Because those who order the trigger pulled
Run the radio, the papers and TV
Where the death of someone black is just a commodity to be sold.
At the same time, I'm trying to understand why we're all in the same boat
yet I see those want to throw themselves in the sea
Bitter
Embittered
Without love
Not wanting to be loved
Wanting to be loved
Fascinated
The head of the slave catcher
I hope you don't drown
Meantime, I'm steering my boat and staying focused
Because if your enemy's story prevails, I will never forget our dead
Buried by the slave ship
Slave
Not life
Life, life, life, lifelifeli...
Did you see Davi?
Did you see Davi Fiúza? A young black man, 16 years old, last seen in São Cristovão inside a
police vehicle?*

(Cairo Costa, activist from the Young Activists of Cajazeira - JACA)

Brazil is a country characterized by profound social inequality. Assimilation, the maintenance and reproduction of social, racial and gender hierarchies, has deepened over the centuries, with violence as its main instrument. In recent years, one of its most serious expressions, arising from the intersection between violence and inequality, is the violent death of black and impoverished people.

It is worth noting that the Northeast Region reflects the high numbers at this intersection. According to recent data from Brazil's [Violence Monitor](#)³, (in Portuguese), in the third quarter of 2023, two of the four states with the highest number of violent deaths were located in this region, with Bahia ranking first and Pernambuco third. Further, although a reduction in rates of violence has been observed in some Brazilian states, two of the states with an increase in violent death rates are in the Northeast: Alagoas and Maranhão.

However, despite this scenario, which has worsened year by year, those in the trenches, who highlight the anti-black genocide, especially noting the extermination (given the scandalous figures for the homicides of young black people), find it difficult to discuss this issue, since there is a tendency to focus on data from the South and Southeast, regions where data production benefits from greater incentives, transparency and speed.

The issue of territory, or area, is a foundational element in this problem. Multiple violence has affected subordinate groups in the history of the Brazilian North and Northeast. Systematic massacres have taken place against peoples, languages, subjectivities and lives. The subordination of African peoples is a traumatic scar on the culture and has racialized repercussions in the discrimination of workers, who are still killed by police forces driven to maintain an unequal and unjust society⁴. Further, a significant portion of the Brazilian elite have promoted policies of pain and violence, which mark, and continue to

3 VELASCO, C.; GRANDIM, F.; CAESAR, G.; REIS, T. Assassinatos caem 3,4% no primeiro semestre de 2023 no Brasil. G1, Monitor da Violência, Notícia, 17 ago.2023.

4 Rodrigues, F. de J., Candotti, F. M., Biondi, K., & Paiva, L. F. S. (2022). Apresentação do Dossier: Políticas, Mercados e Violência no Norte e Nordeste do Brasil. Revista TOMO, (40), 9. <https://doi.org/10.21669/tomo.vi40.17034>

mark, subordinate groups.

When we consider intentional violent deaths, we note those arising from and caused by police operations. In 2022, the Brazilian police caused more than six thousand deaths. Regarding this data, however, we note inconsistencies in its collection by state and municipal departments, since, in addition to establishing different methodologies for data collection and systematization, there is a tendency not to publish these numbers.

Firearms are the main means of violence and risk analyses in two large studies - the Map of Violence (*Mapa da Violência*) and the Adolescent Homicide Rate (*Índice de Homicídios na Adolescência*) (UERJ), demonstrate that, in Brazil, the deadly face of violence has its own race/colour and the bullet has a certain address: it systematically affects black male adolescents and young black men living in city peripheries.

According to the UNICEF, violence against children and adolescents is expressed in four specific ways: disciplinary violence and exposure to domestic violence during early childhood; violence at school; the violent deaths of adolescents; and sexual violence in childhood and adolescence ([UNICEF, 2017](#))⁵.

[Around the world, every seven minutes, a child or adolescent aged between 10 and 19 years dies as a consequence of violence](#)⁶. Data from the [Atlas of Violence](#) (in Portuguese) demonstrates the increasing violence in Brazil. In 2016, the country reached a historic milestone for homicides - according to information from the Ministry of Health, there were 30.3 homicides for every

5 A Familiar Face: Violence in the lives of children and adolescents, UNICEF, New York, 2017.

6 A Familiar Face: Violence in the lives of children and adolescents, UNICEF, New York, 2017.

100 thousand inhabitants⁷.

The study “Armed violence and racism: the role of firearms in racial inequality” (2021) published by the [Instituto Sou da Paz](#)⁸, demonstrates how certain groups are more likely to be victims than others, depending on social class, gender, race and territory. In 2019, black men represented 75% of the victims of firearms assaults in Brazil, compared to 19% for non-black men, while black women accounted for 4% of these victims, in contrast to 2% of non-black women. Adolescents and young people (15 – 19 years) accounted for 61% of black victims, while the same group represented 51% of deaths in the non-black population.

High homicide rates in the first decade of the 2000s resulted from an increasing number of cases involving black people, while the white population saw a reduction, thus demonstrating a trend for a growth in selective mortality. This same trend is seen in the [evolution of homicides by firearms](#),⁹ where the numbers of white victims fell, while the number of black ones rose.

The state of Brazil is one that formulates, corroborates and applies a discourse and policies in which black people are individuals to be feared and therefore repressed. Society, filled with fear because of this debate and with an ideological background, corroborates and incentivizes violence, torture, imprisonment and genocide. If, on the

7 ATLAS DA VIOLÊNCIA 2018. São Paulo: Fórum Brasileiro de Segurança Pública; Rio de Janeiro: IPEA, jun. 2018. ISSN 2764-0361

8 INSTITUTO SOU DA PAZ. Violência Armada e Racismo: o papel da arma de fogo na desigualdade racial, 2021. Available at: <https://soudapaz.org/noticias/criancas-e-adolescentes-negras-de-ate-14-anos-morrem-36-vezes-mais-por-armas-de-fogo-do-que-criancas-brancas-revela-estudo-do-instituto-sou-da-paz>. Accessed on: 10 October 2023.

9 WAISELFISZ, J.J. Mapa da Violência 2016: homicídios por arma de fogo no Brasil. Rio de Janeiro: FLACSO, 2015.

one hand, a religious philosophy was used for the over-exploitation of black bodies in the institution of colonialism, on the other, it is the stereotype formulated post-abolition that continues to perpetuate a logic of the exclusion and, consequently, the extermination of the black population. This power over black bodies is exercised in several spheres. Either in the total absence of citizenship policies and rights, in a lack of basic sanitation, comprehensive health, decent jobs; or by the symbolic representation of the black person in society as violent, lascivious and aggressive, stoking fear and distrust, culminating in symbolic deaths through acculturation, assimilation and epistemicide, and in physical deaths, which occur through violence, torture, imprisonment and death (Borges, 2018, p.39)¹⁰.

It is a fact, proven daily, that black youth are the preferential target of the deadly actions of the repressive agencies of Brazil, since there have been no significant changes to the country's model of public security, despite its blatant inefficiency and evident racist bias. According to 2022 data from the [Violence Yearbook](#)¹¹ (in Portuguese), 76% of those killed by officers of the State were young people aged between 12 and 29 years¹².

In addition to providing evidence of the continued and scandalous panorama of the extermination of black youth experienced in Brazil as a whole, this document also exposed the situation in Bahia, which, according to the most

10 BORGES, Juliana. O que é: encarceramento em massa? Editora Letramento: Justificando. Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais, 2018.

11 FÓRUM BRASILEIRO DE SEGURANÇA PÚBLICA. 17º Anuário Brasileiro de Segurança Pública. São Paulo: Fórum Brasileiro de Segurança Pública, 2023. Available at: <https://forumseguranca.org.br/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/anuario-2023.pdf>. Accessed on: 01 October 2023.

12 FÓRUM BRASILEIRO DE SEGURANÇA PÚBLICA. 17º Anuário Brasileiro de Segurança Pública. São Paulo: Fórum Brasileiro de Segurança Pública, 2023. Available at: <https://forumseguranca.org.br/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/anuario-2023.pdf>. Accessed on: 01 October 2023.

recent data, has overtaken Rio de Janeiro, [and was responsible for 22.77% of all deadly police force in the country](#). According to data from the Instituto Fogo Cruzado, on average, 39 people are shot per month during police actions or operations and, in July 2023 alone, 178 shootings and 151 deaths were mapped in the state.

It also is possible to observe in the yearbook that almost half of the most violent cities (23) in the country are located in the Northeast. Bahia tops the list for the most violent municipalities (of more than 100 thousand inhabitants) in the country, with 12¹³ of the 50 most violent, including the four most violent in Brazil: Jequié, Santo Antônio de Jesus, Simões Filho and Camaçari. Pernambuco ranks second for the region, with five of the 50 most violent municipalities, with Cabo de Santo Agostinho ranking fifth, followed by Vitória de Santo Antão (27th), São Lourenço da Mata (30th), Garanhuns (39th) and Jaboatão dos Guararapes (42th). The list continues with Ceará, Rio Grande do Norte and Paraíba (two cities in each state), Sergipe, Piauí and Maranhão, each with one municipality. In the regional analysis, the North ranks second with 10 cities, followed by the Southeast with six (all in the state of Rio de Janeiro) the South (5) and Central-West (1).

According to official data from the State Government of Bahia, obtained by the [Correio*](#) newspaper through the Access to Information Law¹⁴, during the first half of 2023, four people per day died in police operations in the state.

13 The other municipalities that appear on the list are (9th); Juazeiro (10th); Teixeira de Freitas (11th); Salvador (12th); Ilhéus (14th); Itaituba (15th); Luis Eduardo Magalhães (19th); Eunápolis (20th); and Alagoinhas (26th).

14 SANTANA, Fernanda. Quatro pessoas morrem, por dia, em operações policiais na Bahia. *Correio*, 2023. Available at: <https://www.correio24horas.com.br/minha-bahia/quatro-pessoas-morrem-por-dia-em-operacoes-policiais-na-bahia-1123>. Accessed on: 10 November 2023.

Between January 2021 and June 2023, there were 3,560 deaths in these operations – most of the victims were young black men. Of the total number of deaths, 753 occurred in the first six months of 2023 alone – 213 in Salvador.

In this recent data from the Department of Public Security, it is possible to determine the time of these incidents. Deaths in police operations in Bahia are concentrated between midday and midnight. There were 2,011 deaths in this interval of time – most (197) recorded at 5pm. When Luedji Luna sings, *"It's over, fifteen years old / Never reached sixteen / It was only 6 o'clock in the evening / It's over, where's the boy?"* she is being, undoubtedly, accurate.

But the time that most deaths are recorded in State interventions was 6am: 231 people died at this time. There is, therefore, a tendency for the police to carry out operations at the times that workers are arriving at or leaving their homes, considerably increasing the possibility of people being hit. Bodies shot down in broad daylight.

2

**“Who’s going to mop up the drops of sweat and blood?”:
Police violence and deadly
force involving children**

2. “Who’s going to mop up the drops of sweat and blood?”: Police violence and deadly force involving children

A thousand anxieties, a terrifying silence, all of these feelings when you see your son covered in blood, you have to be strong to get through it, not to believe it, to think it's some fantasy or illusion, the penny only dropped when they sealed the coffin, then the silence became screams, of a mother who had fought and dreamt so hard, a dream that was interrupted by an oppressor, who paid for their bullets with the mother's money, she is standing, alive, but her soul is dead, broken, shattered, and don't come to me with this restoration, the heart isn't a box that can be mended with cardboard and glue.

(Antonio Sousa, 28 years old, grantee of the “My Mother Doesn’t Sleep Until I Come Home” Project, Subúrbio District, Salvador)

The scene becomes even more devastating when we look at the growing number of child victims, often within their own homes. Data from the Instituto Fogo Cruzado indicate that, by November 2023, 14 children had been shot that year alone, at least four of whom died; and this data is nothing new, over the years, a number of children in Salvador have had their lives cut short.

Micael Silva Menezes, aged only



A morte do garoto Micael Silva Menezes, de 11 anos, baleado no Vale das Pedrinhas no último domingo (14), levou familiares e moradores às ruas da comunidade. O ato, que começou na tarde desta segunda-feira (15), no final de linha do Vale das Pedrinhas.

11 years, was killed on 14 June 2020, during a police operation in Nordeste de Amaralina, while he and a friend were flying a kite. According to reports, the Military Police initiated an operation firing shots at random, since there was no confrontation in the community. One of these shots hit the boy. This crime has not been solved.

Geovanna Nogueira, also 11 years old, was shot in the head when she opened her front door to greet her grandfather, in the Paz e Vida communi-

Menina de 11 anos é morta durante operação policial em Salvador: 'Saiu na porta para abrir portão', diz avô

Caso ocorreu no bairro de Jardim Santo Inácio, em Salvador. Após morte, familiares fizeram protesto.

Por G1 BA
24/01/2018 11h43 - Atualizado há 6 anos



Menina de 11 anos morre em troca de tiros entre traficantes e PMs no Jardim Santo Inácio

Uma menina de 11 anos, identificada como Giovana Nogueira, morreu após ter sido baleada durante uma operação policial no bairro de Jardim Santo Inácio, em Salvador, na manhã desta quarta-feira (24).

ty in the Jardim Santo Inácio neighbourhood. Reports state that, during a reconnaissance and subsequent action, one of the two policemen, who were not in uniform and were in an unmarked car, fired the shot that hit Geovanna in the face. She was a guitarist and was about to join NEOJIBÁ¹⁵.

Five years later, in August 2023, the accused policeman went before a jury where, in a

15 The State Centres for Child and Youth Orchestras in Bahia (Núcleos Estaduais de Orquestras Juvenis e Infantis da Bahia: NEOJIBA) are an innovative example of a pioneering public policy that works in Culture, Education and Social Development. The programme was created in 2007 by pianist, educator, conductor and cultural manager Ricardo Castro, and is linked to the Department of Justice and Human Rights (Secretaria de Justiça e Direitos Humanos - não funciona). The initiative is managed by the Institute for Social Development through Music (Instituto de Desenvolvimento Social pela Música: IDSM), founded in 2008 to promote, encourage and support social development and interaction through collective musical practice.

veritable spectacle of re-victimization and unethical defence behaviour, the family was exposed and discredited, while the defendant was acquitted.

Joel Conceição Castro, killed on 21 November 2010, in the community of Olaria, in Nordeste de Amaralina, was shot in his home during a police operation. A capoeira player, something he inherited from his father, a capoeira master, Joel's dreams were interrupted when he was 11 years old. According to reports from the community, the detachment, which, 13 years later, has

still not been judged, tried to leave without providing Joel any assistance, but was prevented from doing so by the population, who forced them to take the child to a health centre, in vain.



trenches, is worth noting. As in the overwhelming majority of killings that involve other age groups, these crimes took place in city peripheries, composed of a majority black and impoverished population, who, on a daily basis, coexist with a police force that acts against its own people, applying the apparatus and techniques of war, justified by a supposed war on drugs.

Nordeste de Amaralina, Jardim Santo Inácio and São Caetano, peripheral neighbourhoods in Salvador, characterized by the inequality that permeates the city, are the constant targets of police operations marked by belligerent and abusive behaviour.

In 2021, a study called "Even when you deny me, I am part of you: Race,

territoriality and (re)existence in Salvador”¹⁶, published by the “Black Initiative for a New Drugs Policy”¹⁷ confirmed, among other issues, something that has been noted for a long time: in data from Bahia’s Public Security Department (*Secretaria de Segurança Pública: SSP-BA*) there is a high number of incidents of the seizure and use/carry of drugs in the neighbourhood of Pituba – an area with a large number of white people and high purchasing power – but no news of violent or deadly police operations in the area.

According to the same study, if we consider indicators such as policing; deaths in police operations; State violence, abuse and excesses; lynching and massacres, Boca do Rio and Nordeste de Amaralina – the neighbourhood in which two of the above-mentioned children were killed – are two of the ten most violent neighbourhoods in Salvador. Both are located near Pituba.

In recent data from the State Government of Bahia, obtained by the [Correio*](#) newspaper through the Access to Information Law¹⁸, the five neighbourhoods in Salvador that had the highest concentration of deaths resulting from police operations¹⁹ were: Valéria, with 62 deaths; São Cristóvão, with 42 deaths; Fazenda Grande do Retiro, with 41 deaths; Lobato, with 35 deaths and Águas

16 The Black Initiative for a New Drugs Policy is a civil society organization, which, since 2015, has worked to build an agenda for racial and economic justice, promoting human rights advocacy and proposing reforms to the current drugs policy.

17 CARINHANHA, A. M. S. C.; SANTANA, L.; MARQUES, V.; RAMOS, G. Mesmo que me negue sou parte de você: Racialidade, territorialidade e (re)existência em Salvador/BA. 2021.

18 SANTANA, Fernanda. Quatro pessoas morrem, por dia, em operações policiais na Bahia. *Correio*, 2023. Available at: <https://www.correio24horas.com.br/minha-bahia/quatro-pessoas-morrem-por-dia-em-operacoes-policiais-na-bahia-1123>. Accessed on: 10 November 2023.

19 Between January 2021 and June 2023

Claras, with 32. It is worth noting that the data made available by the Department only considers cases in which, theoretically, there was some resistance – thus erasing data related to the violent deaths of children.

Regarding the existence of drug-related activities in the territory as a whole, a deliberate choice is therefore made about whether, or not, to act aggressively, depending on the neighbourhood in which incursions occur. Given this, a choice is also made about who can, or cannot, become the “collateral damage” of State police forces.

Achille Mbembe calls this state choice about who should live and who should die, based on racism and the dehumanization of bodies, necropolitics²⁰. According to this theory, it is precisely through the denial of the other's humanity that it becomes possible to use violence, including deadly force, in a way that is not episodic, but rather daily, as we see in the peripheral areas of Salvador.

When we consider the deadly force used by the state, through its repressive agencies, we cannot exempt the judiciary, since it reaffirms exactly who it serves when it exercises its powers in line with a justice system based on racist foundations and designed to control and repress those who have historically been marginalised and stereotyped.

As we see in the cases of children killed in police operations described throughout this text, violence does not end with the victim's body. It extends to the entire family, humiliated in their pursuit of justice, dealing with investigative proceedings that are either not opened or badly run, so that few investigations actually lead to prosecutions. And even when proceedings are initiated and

20 MBEMBE, Achille. *Necropolítica: biopoder, soberania, estado de exceção, política da morte*. Tradução de Renata Santini. São Paulo: N-1 edições, 2018.

do culminate in the indictment of the defendants and a subsequent jury, they drag on for years, with little respect for the memory of victims, causing family members to suffer, since they are forced to live with a daily sense of the lack of justice. Moreover, they receive no institutional support from the state, either in socio-economic or psychosocial terms.

This violence is further aggravated by intimidation by public security officers, since the State does not adopt adequate procedures to withdraw officers from the places where these murders are committed²¹. In general, the accused officers continue to work in the same areas, and are not withdrawn from ostensive policing during investigative and legal proceedings. The State also fails to fulfil the recommendations of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights 47/53, which recommends the establishment of independent and robust supervisory and accountability procedures, with proportional punishments and guarantees of non-repetition.

The murder of any child or young person, regardless of race or circumstances, is deplorable and comparative benchmarks need to be established in order to objectively assess bias in the work of the judiciary²².

As noted above, no judgement has yet been made of those accused in the criminal proceedings resulting from the death of **Joel Conceição Castro**, an 11-year-old black child, killed during a Bahia Military Police operation in Nordeste de Amaralina, a peripheral neighbourhood in Salvador. In the case

21 At the same time, the State does not provide mental healthcare or follow-up for the abusive use of narcotic substances by these officers.

22 The Durban Declaration recommends that the State undertake investigations to examine possible links between criminal proceedings, police violence and criminal sanctions. In Brazil, however, in addition to failing to follow international recommendations, the State has failed to investigate and heed countless complaints of impunity and procedural violence from civil society organizations.

of **Micael Silva Menezes**, an indictment for possible prosecution has not even been filed.

On the other hand, on 2 August 2022, also in Salvador, we have the case of the deplorable killing of 15-year-old adolescent, Cristal Rodrigues Pacheco, a young white woman, killed in Campo Grande, a high-income, traditional neighbourhood, one her way to school at the private Mercês College²³. The accused, Gilmara Daiam de Sousa Brito and Andreia Santos Carvalho, were arrested and taken to pre-trial detention before Cristal was buried. According to statements made at the time by family members and the accused themselves, the perpetrators were drug users in the process of withdrawal and Andreia, who confessed to having fired the shot, claimed to have done so by accident.

The fact is that one year after the event, on 23 August 2023, Gilmara, one of the accused and now convicted, went before a jury and received a 24-year custodial sentence for her involvement in the murder²⁴. The second defendant, allegedly responsible for the shooting, has not yet been tried.

The same Bahian judiciary that, in the Cristal case, ensured processing, judgement and sentencing in record time, has made Joel's family wait for justice for almost 13 years. We note the importance of social outcry as a driver of this record-breaking judicial response.

There is understandable suffering in Cristal's case, which moves, records,

23 Caso Cristal: tudo sobre a morte da adolescente em assalto no Campo Grande. Correio 24 Horas, 2022. Available at: <https://www.correio24horas.com.br/salvador/caso-cristal-tudo-sobre-a-morte-da-adolescente-em-assalto-no-campo-grande-0822>. Accessed on: 01 October 2023.

24 Mulher é condenada a 24 anos de prisão por envolvimento no latrocínio da estudante Cristal Pacheco. G1, 2023. Available at: <https://g1.globo.com/ba/bahia/noticia/2023/08/23/mulher-e-condenada-a-24-anos-de-prisao-por-envolvimento-no-latrocinio-da-estudante-cristal-pacheco.ghtml>. Accessed on 01 October 2023.

occupies the streets in protest and pressurizes for a forceful response, which is not seen when black children such as Joel are involved. The racialization that means that cases involving black children continue not to be solved serves to ensure that Gilmar, a black woman, living on the streets and suffering substance dependence, is condemned in record time and with all the rigour that 24 years in prison represents.

Access to the position of victim – whatever the theoretical position adopted – always requires some level of empathy, solidarity and otherness in ways which, when we refer to black people, are blocked by racism. The racialized representation of people within Brazilian society has created a hierarchy of human feelings and constructed social ballast so that narratives [...] continue to be reiterated in a history based on a perverse itinerary of violence and discrimination. The impossibility of recognizing the black trajectory as a political trajectory, the invisibility of the racial aspect of suffering in the prison system or the reiteration of stigmatizing racial repertoires in relation to black people in the public security and criminal justice system reveal that whiteness continues to be indifferent to black pain and suffering. (Flauzina; Freitas, 2017, p. 66)²⁵.

When we look at Joel, we are talking about violence that took place in the zone of not being, while the case of Cristal involves violence that inhabits the zone of being. As Thula Pires points out, these are not greater or lesser forms of violence, but when dealing with the sphere of being “access to the sphere of legality is the rule” and “when violence takes place, it is in some way characterized by the full recognition of humanity”²⁶ through the investigation, trial

25 FLAUZINA, Ana; FREITAS, Felipe da Silva. Do paradoxal privilégio de ser vítima: terror de Estado e a negação do sofrimento negro no Brasil. *Revista Brasileira de Ciências Criminais*, V. L, P. 15-32, 2017.

26 FLAUZINA, Ana; PIRES, Thula. Uma conversa de pretas sobre violência sexual. In: ARAUJO,

and condemnation of those responsible. Flauzina and Freitas (2017) remind us that the historical process of ignoring black people's humanity has had the direct consequence of creating an image that associates black people with the reproduction of violence, without providing them with the right to complain of the suffering that arises from it.

The State is absent and continues to employ a public security policy disengaged from the debate and, specifically, from implementing other policies that could reduce inequalities and, consequently, violence. It is common knowledge that the Government of Bahia responded to the fact that the state ranked first for deadly force by purchasing more vehicles and calling up reserve police officers²⁷.

On the other hand, in the case of black children, when the foretold tragedy takes place, these bodies are seen as "collateral damage." Collateral damage is a designation used to indicate the existence of an unintended or unexpected result of a specific action – in this case specifically an armed operation led by public security officers. By seeing the deaths of black children as mere "collateral damage", the State is adopting a discourse that removes responsibility from its officers, while also refraining from improving police services.

It is also important to note then when the victims are a little older – from the age of ten on – narratives are devised to ensure that, as well as the physical

Silmeia; PIMENTEL, Silvia. Raça e Gênero: discriminações, interseccionalidades e resistências, p. 65.82.

27 Governo da Bahia entrega novas viaturas para a Polícia Militar e anuncia convocação de policiais da reserva. Available at: <https://www.bahia.ba.gov.br/2023/08/noticias/seguranca/governo-da-bahia-entrega-novas-viaturas-para-a-policia-militar-e-anuncia-convocacao-de-policiais-da-reserva/> . Accessed on: 01 October 2023.

death, the moral deaths of these children also takes place, by associating them with criminal practices, so that they “deserve” their tragic fate: this phenomenon is called revictimization. The tarnishing of the victims’ image and trajectory is just one more strategy used by the perpetrators, affecting the morale of both the person who lost their life and their family, who are forced to live with neglect and impunity while they mobilize to defend and re-establish the image of their doubly offended child.

In the case of **Micael Silva Menezes**, for example, at the time of his death the media published news and broadcast information saying he was involved in drug trafficking in the Nordeste de Amaralina region. The family needed to mobilize to contest the version in the local media. As well as only being a child, Micael was neurodivergent, under the care of the Mental Healthcare System, since he had attention deficit disorder and was being tested for autism at the time.

Further, there has been a marked increase in stigma against children who die in military operations against drug trafficking, immediately associating them with criminal activities, without any evidence or investigation. (Peres et al, 2015, p.22)²⁸.

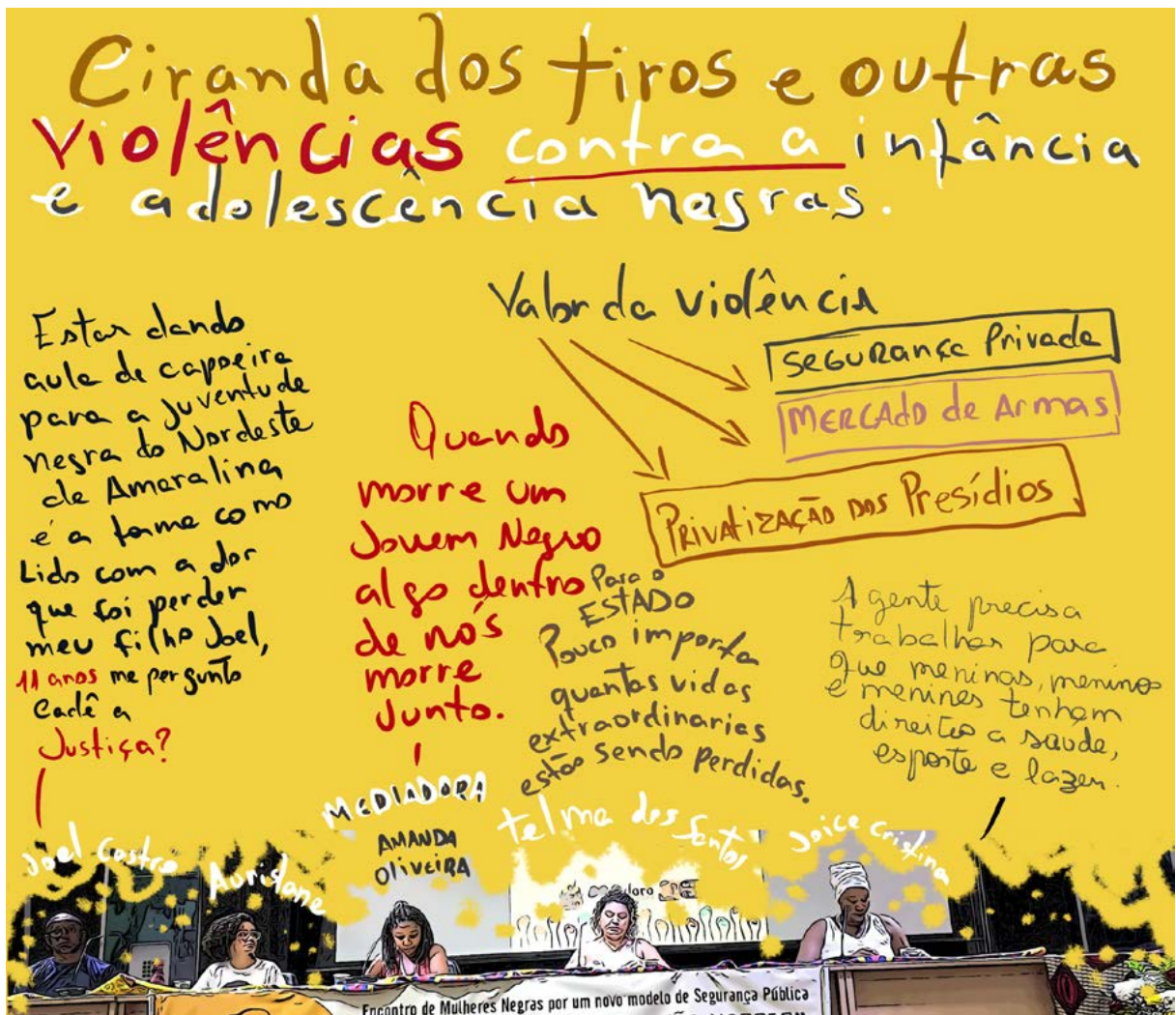
28 TOURINHO PERES, M. F.; RUOTTI, C.; CARVALHO, D.; LOPES REGINA, F. Vitimização fatal de crianças no espaço público em decorrência da violência interpessoal comunitária: um diagnóstico da magnitude e contextos de vulnerabilidade na América Latina. *Revista Brasileira de Segurança Pública*, [S. l.], v. 9, n. 2, p. 12–48, 2015. DOI: 10.31060/rbsp.2015.v9.n2.497. Available at: <https://revista.forumseguranca.org.br/index.php/rbsp/article/view/497>. Accessed on: 13 November 2023.

29 TOURINHO PERES, M. F.; RUOTTI, C.; CARVALHO, D.; LOPES REGINA, F. Vitimização fatal de crianças no espaço público em decorrência da violência interpessoal comunitária: um diagnóstico da magnitude e contextos de vulnerabilidade na América Latina. *Revista Brasileira de Segurança Pública*, [S. l.], v. 9, n. 2, p. 12–48, 2015. DOI: 10.31060/rbsp.2015.v9.n2.497. Disponível em: <https://revista.forumseguranca.org.br/index.php/rbsp/article/view/497>. Acesso em: 13 nov. 2023.

3

“Who’s going to erase the memories?”: Children indirectly affected by violent deaths in police operations

3. "Who's going to erase the memories?": Children indirectly affected by violent deaths in police operations



As Herrera Flores³⁰ (2008) says, Human Rights have become the theoretical and practical challenge of the 21st century. "Rights" are inherent to our condition as "human beings," theoretically we do not need any specific condition or characteristic to exercise them, because the reason that Human Rights exist as an international norm is to create/defend rights and apply them universally and without distinction (*idem*)³¹.

However, when we critically assess the existence and application of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, we can see that this legislation is only posited as something that "should happen", as an ideal to be achieved, given that a large portion of the global population does not enjoy the material conditions to be able to enjoy them.

Throughout history, the pretence of "universality" has elevated a certain category of "a sovereign subject of European origin, male, white, Christian, heteronormative, the owner of the means of production and without disabilities,"³² (Pires, 2017) to the status of human being, producing policies, legislation and

30 HERRERA Flores, Joaquín. La reinención de los derechos humanos. Andalucía: Atrapasueños, 2008. Versão em português: A reinvenção dos direitos humanos. Florianópolis: Fundação Boiteux, 2009. Available at: https://edisciplinas.usp.br/pluginfile.php/4253519/mod_resource/content/1/Joaquin%20Herrera%20Flores%20-%20A%20reinven%C3%A7%C3%A3o%20dos%20direitos%20humanos.pdf. Accessed on: 18 October 2023.

31 HERRERA Flores, Joaquín. La reinención de los derechos humanos. Andalucía: Atrapasueños, 2008. Versão em português: A reinvenção dos direitos humanos. Florianópolis: Fundação Boiteux, 2009. Available at: https://edisciplinas.usp.br/pluginfile.php/4253519/mod_resource/content/1/Joaquin%20Herrera%20Flores%20-%20A%20reinven%C3%A7%C3%A3o%20dos%20direitos%20humanos.pdf. Accessed on: 18 October 2023.

32 PIRES, Thula. Direitos Humanos traduzidos em português. In: Anais eletrônicos do Seminário Internacional Fazendo Gênero 11 & 13th Women's Worlds Congress; Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina. Florianópolis (SC), 2017, ISSN 2179-510X.

theories to benefit and perpetuate the privileges of this specific group.

To complement this, in the years-long struggles of organized civil society, there has been a movement to guarantee the protection of the human being under specific terms and conditions, taking the diversity of social status as a parameter for protection, which does not afford equal treatment and equal protection for all.

The preoccupation with protecting children as a specific group emerged out of the horrors to which they were subject during the First World War. There was international recognition of the multiple vulnerabilities faced during childhood, given that there are various ways to address this group's most basic rights.

In 1989, to commemorate 30 years of the fight for children's rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child was reconsidered and refined; this international legal instrument has one of the highest number of ratifications by UN member States. Worth highlighting among the main rights established by this new convention are: the right to life and protection from the death penalty; the right to nationality; the right to freedom of movement; the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; the right to an adequate standard of living; the right to access health services; the right to education; the right to protection from economic exploitation; the right to protection from involvement in drug trafficking, and from sexual exploitation and abuse.

This historic international legislation for child protection is worth noting in order to track its parallels with what is happening in Brazil today, and specifically in Bahia. There is a "war on drugs" policy that daily victimizes children in Brazil, either directly or indirectly, that selects specific territories and populations for annihilation and that feeds the "us versus them" narrative.

The War on Drugs is the central narrative of mass incarceration. (...) The discourse of an epidemic and the accompanying fear about illicit substances provides the necessary combination for the militarization of peripheral areas under the veneer of tackling this social "problem". In this way, the system keeps the wheels turning for the criminalization, control and ostensive surveillance of these

areas, and the extermination that is justified and socially sustained by young people supposedly involved in petty trafficking (Borges, 2018, p. 18)³³.

As mentioned, the main justification for running police operations in specific areas is to combat drugs, which leaves numerous bodies in its path. Between July 2022 and September 2023, data from the Instituto Fogo Cruzado point to a total of 572 police killings in Bahia.

Despite multimillion investments in combatting drugs³⁴, this repressive and prohibitionist policy has been a demonstrable failure. In addition to not achieving its aim to eliminate the trade and use of psychoactive substances, over the years the result has been more severe rates of death and violence. And, unfortunately, those who should receive the State's full protection and care have become its victims.

In addition to children who are directly and mortally affected by these police operations, others are indirectly affected, because, to some extent, they have been marked by their violence.

We should first talk about the orphans of this deadly violence. Brazil's Child and Adolescent Rights Act states that every child has the right to family life. The family³⁵ is considered the ideal nucleus for the individual's full de-

33 BORGES, Juliana. O que é: encarceramento em massa? Editora Letramento: Justificando. Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais, 2018.

34 This year alone, the Government of Bahia has invested more than BRL 200 million in public security.

35 There is the 'natural' family, which is made up of parents (together or separately) and/or siblings. The extended family also falls under this concept, which is described as a 'natural' type of family, where any close relatives, such as grandparents, uncles, cousins, other children by the same parent, children of a parent's new partner, etc., who live with the child or adolescent are considered to be part of the original family.

velopment, an instrument for human fulfilment and well-being, particularly for children. However, as a consequence of the war on drugs, what we see are black families deprived of the possibility of a full and harmonious family life.

The destruction and estrangement of the family nucleus as a reflection of the violence perpetrated through legal justifications is yet another cog in the wheels of racism – seen before, in the enslavement of black bodies, and now with a public security policy based on the “war on drugs”.

Zaire and Ayo³⁶ did not have the opportunity to live with their fathers. Zaire was only three years old when his father was shot in a military police operation a few metres from his home. For over 10 years, he's only had memories passed down by his elders. Ayo lost his father in a police operation on the day he turned one month old. His father went out to buy a cake to commemorate his “month-birthday”, when he was shot in the back. Ayo only knows his father through photographs.

Just as children have become fatherless, parents have lost their children. As well as mental illness, the suffering caused by losing a child can cause physical illness, which is aggravated when grief is somatised by an intense struggle for accountability and justice. In the family members involved in the project, we see instances of high blood pressure, diabetes, infertility, rheumatism and cancer³⁷.

The death of a young person is interpreted as an interruption in the biological cycle and this triggers feelings of helplessness, frustration, sadness, pain, suffering and anguish. We know that death is

36 Names have been changed to protect their identity.

37 The onset of cancer has occurred in cis female family members, specifically in the breasts and womb. On one occasion, a family member and mother commented “the cancer appeared in the place where I gave birth and the place where I fed [my child]”.

an inevitable fact, but it is hard to accept when it happens so early. Dealing with death is hard, much more so when it is the death of a child, because the death of a young person is something not naturally considered by the family, since parents normally die earlier in the life cycle. If the death occurs suddenly and unexpectedly, the mother's feeling of irreparable loss may worsen, leading to non-acceptance, disorganization and helplessness. The feelings experienced by mothers who have lost their children to murder fuel the pursuit of justice and punishment of the guilty, the desire to understand what happened and the need to express their pain and talk about the tragedy, which constitutes a potential risk factor for the development of complicated grief (Alarcão; Carvalho; Pelloso, 2008, p.2)³⁸.

This primary effect of violent death is only one potential consequence. Over the last four years, the project: *Drugs: The Cost of Prohibition*³⁹, by the Centre for Security and Citizenship Studies (*Centro de Estudos de Segurança e Cidadania: CESeC*), has focused on measuring the financial and budget impacts of the war on drugs in the following areas: the criminal justice system, education, health and the economy in low-income neighbourhoods. Among other things, the study demonstrates that the learning of children exposed to police shootings near their schools is severely impaired, which may reduce their future income by BRL 24 thousand.

The study also shows how living with shootings causes illness: the proportion of adults with high blood pressure, prolonged insomnia, anxiety and

38 ALARCÃO, Ana Carolina; CARVALHO, Maria Dalva; PELLOSO, Sandra Marisa. A morte de um filho em circunstância violenta: compreendendo a vivência da mãe. *Rev Latino-am Enfermagem*, 2008, maio-junho; 16(3). Available at: <https://www.scielo.br/j/rlae/a/JYbmHvhHc3jkDgm6bdjCjgp/?format=pdf&lang=pt>. Accessed on: 02 November 2023.

39 SIRACUSA, Mariana; NAPOLIÃO, Paula; MACHADO, Raquel. A guerra às drogas e o adoecimento das favelas. *Mídia Ninja*, 2023. Available at: <https://midianinja.org/redejusticacriminal/a-guerra-as-drogas-e-o-adoecimento-das-favelas/>. Accessed on: 10 October 2023.

depression is higher in areas where frequently shootings take place, compared to others.

Approximately 51% of residents in communities where the most shootings occur suffer from one or more of these conditions, compared to 35.9% in a group of residents not affected by armed violence. Living in areas of constant violence from the armed wing of the State also increases the chance of developing high blood pressure by 42% and doubles the risk of suffering symptoms typical of anxiety and depression⁴⁰.

One recurring fact among families who are victims of deadly force during police operations is the onset of emotional and mental illness. Among the parents involved in the "My Mother Doesn't Sleep Until I Come Home" project are cases of anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, depression and panic disorder.

For the remaining children, however, a traumatic event such as the death of a brother or sister, father or mother, neighbour, relative or friend in a violent context has devastating consequences for their full development. One of the child relatives of a victim of deadly police violence on the "My Mother Doesn't Sleep Until I Come Home" project is Akin⁴¹. When he was three years old, Akin witnessed the murder of a family member and, since then, finds it difficult to be away (for any period of time) from his mother, sister, grandparents and other close relatives. Since the birth of his youngest sister, he has developed a relationship to protect and care for her.

40 SIRACUSA, Mariana; NAPOLIÃO, Paula; MACHADO, Raquel. A guerra às drogas e o adoecimento das favelas. Mídia Ninja, 2023. Available at: <<https://midianinja.org/redejusticacriminal/a-guerra-as-drogas-e-o-adoecimento-das-favelas/>>. Accessed on: 10 October 2023.

41 His name has been changed to protect his identity.

Reflecting on the reality of the favelas and what it's like to live in this environment, means reflecting on their effects on the individual psyche. We therefore need to consider the traumatizing potential of this environment. As we have already pointed out, living in the favelas presents a constant risk, it means being in daily contact with fear and insecurity. Fear of not getting home or to school, fear of not seeing one's parents come home, fear that entering a life of crime is the only option in life, being part of a context of children who live in communities dominated by drug trafficking (Vieira; Zornig, 2015)⁴².

Faced with this context of violence, which curtails and cuts short childhoods in the favelas and peripheries, we see the phenomenon of early maturation and responsibility, where children experience worry, fear and a keen sense of the need for survival early on. If premature development is a resource for dealing with this [violent] scenario, and having it may be more harmful and prejudicial to these children, without such early maturation it is likely that we would be faced with devastating disintegration (*idem*)⁴³.

Dandara⁴⁴, an adolescent relative of a victim of deadly police violence on the "My Mother Doesn't Sleep Until I Come Home" project, has a lot of siblings, who understood the need to take care of each other from an early age – since their parents' work obligations prevent them from giving them their full care and attention. Since the violent death of one of her brothers, Dandara has avoided

42 VIEIRA, Ana Carolina Dias; ZORNIG, Silvia Maria Abu-Jamra. Ambiente violento, infância perdida?. Rev. Latinoam. Psicopat. Fund., São Paulo, 18(1), 88-101, mar. 2015. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1590/1415-4714.2015v18n1p88.7>.

43 VIEIRA, Ana Carolina Dias; ZORNIG, Silvia Maria Abu-Jamra. Ambiente violento, infância perdida?. Rev. Latinoam. Psicopat. Fund., São Paulo, 18(1), 88-101, mar. 2015. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1590/1415-4714.2015v18n1p88.7>.

44 Her name has been changed to protect her identity.

leaving the house and helps her mother look after her younger siblings.

Like Dandara, Ismael⁴⁵ also lost a brother in a police operation, since when he has had difficulty socializing and re-establishing contact with people he is not related to, experiencing episodes of anxiety and panic attacks when he has to leave his mother – even for short periods – or when he hears noises that sound like shots.

Reactions of intense pain and suffering in the calcification of mothers' and relatives' memories of the death of a child/sibling reveal that families affected by violence receive neither adequate help, nor the support necessary to cope with such a tragedy, which can negatively affect their personal, family and social lives⁴⁶.

In addition to the latent violations of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Brazil has failed to create and implement reparatory public policies that fulfil the international recommendations of the Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the action plan ratified following the Third Durban Conference.

Although the UN has determined that States must establish reparatory measures, for example: setting up independent mechanisms and resources to support families and communities to access truth and justice, including by funding independent autopsies; ensuring that families can benefit from victim compensation programmes; and adopting measures to honour the lives of victims,

45 His name has been changed to protect his identity.

46 ALARCÃO, Ana Carolina; CARVALHO, Maria Dalva; PELLOSO, Sandra Marisa. A morte de um filho em circunstância violenta: compreendendo a vivência da mãe. *Rev Latino-am Enfermagem*, 2008, maio-junho; 16(3). Available at: <https://www.scielo.br/j/rlae/a/JYbmHvhHc3jkDgm6bdjCjgp/?format=pdf&lang=pt>. Accessed on: 02 November 2023.

what we find instead is a completely different scenario – one that creates and deepens socio-racial inequalities in the country, exemplified by the above data.

The prospect of demilitarized alternatives, from an educational and community perspective, appears to be an ever more distant one, when we see how the Brazilian and Bahian governments have endorsed a public security policy that treats the deadliest force in the country like a football team full of strikers.



4

“Who’s going to pay the bills?”: Recommendations for reparations and Good Living for the black population

4. “Who’s going to pay the bills?”: Recommendations for reparations and Good Living for the black population

*It's over, fifteen years old
Never reached sixteen
It was only 6 o'clock in the evening
It's over, where's the boy?
Who's going to pay the bills?
Who's going to count the bodies?
Who's going to pick up the pieces of their hearts?
Who's going to erase the memories?
Who's going to mop up the drops
Of sweat and blood...?*

(Cabô - Luedji Luna)

As Conceição Evaristo reminds us, “the ground is full of holes, any blunder and death is certain, bullets never miss their targets, in the dark a black body sways and dances”⁴⁷. The author describes a continuum of the annihilation of the black population that began with slavery and has continued over the centuries to subordinate and annihilate these lives – both symbolically and literally.

47 EVARISTO, Conceição. *“Certidão de Óbito”*. Poemas da recordação e outros movimentos, 2017.

There is a grave scenario of violence against black children and youth in Brazil, and Bahia has taken on a nefarious leading role in deaths caused by public security officers. In this context of the genocide of the black population, it is essential for the Brazilian State, in all its powers and spheres to take responsibility for and be held to account for the discriminatory practices either perpetrated by state officers or due to negligence of this section of the population.

There is an urgent need for Brazil to implement a series of public policies and activities in line with the recommendations of the Durban Action Plan in relation to race, gender and generation, and the State needs to establish a broad dialogue with black, particularly black women's, organizations and movements, in order to draw up an action plan to tackle the genocide of the black population.

We therefore present recommendations that have arisen from the "My Mother Doesn't Sleep Until I Come Home" project, to initiate a process of reparations for black communities and to move forwards, towards Good Living:

1. The federal government should promote analyses, studies and reflections in order to build a new public security model, which is integrated and intersects with social justice policies, and is not confined to the police;
2. Decriminalize the use and sale of psychoactive substances, for example, cannabis, cocaine and crack;
3. Encourage broad and ongoing public participation in the construction of public security policies;
4. Enforce the mandatory use of police body cameras around the country;
5. Ensure the abolition of militarized police operations without judicial warrants, with participation by external oversight bodies from the Public Prosecutor's Offices during any such operation;
6. Establish an external oversight mechanism for police action, with pu-

- blic participation and transparency;
7. Ensure compulsory toxicological tests for police officers in due diligence and operations throughout the country;
 8. Ensure external oversight of police activities, including participation from civil society in cases involving the suspected perpetration of crimes against life by public security officers;
 9. Give priority to processing (criminal and civil-indemnity) cases whose victims are children or adolescents;
 10. The National Justice Council (Conselho Nacional de Justiça: CNJ) must, in its periodic hearings or extraordinarily, ascertain the reasonableness of the time limits for criminal proceedings in which police officers are accused of crimes against life;
 11. Establish administrative compensation procedures for the families of victims of deadly police violence, when the victims are children or adolescents, regardless of the conclusion of criminal proceedings and regardless of the assessment of the individual responsibility of police officers, in order to avoid the re-victimization of family members;
 12. Provide psycho-social care to the families of victims of police violence, regardless of any assessment of the responsibility of the state and/or of police officers;
 13. Ensure transparency in the production of public security data with public participation regarding the structure of methodologies;
 14. Ensure payment of pensions and other benefits to children and adolescents whose parents have been the victims of police violence, regardless of whether there are other living family members and regardless of the individual responsibility of security officers.

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