

Human Rights Council – 46th Session

Thursday 18th March 2021

General Debate - item 9

Speaker: Anielle Franco

Madam President,

Black Lives Matter.

This statement is jointly submitted by IMADR and MRG, together with the Race and Equality and the Marielle Franco Institute. We welcome the High Commissioner's oral update on systemic racism in law enforcement.

I am Anielle Franco, the director of the Marielle Franco Institute, an organization that arises from a brutal murder of a black woman, human rights defender, and councilwoman, Marielle Franco, my sister, which occurred in March 2018 in Rio de Janeiro. Marielle was murdered by a retired police officer, who to this day has not gone to trial. Moreover, after 3 years, we still do not know who ordered her murder. Many crimes of political violence and crimes against black, LGBTQIA+ and peripheral women remain unsolved in Brazil. Marielle is not an isolated case.

Police violence against the black Brazilian population has happened even during Covid-19 pandemic, despite the decision of the highest court of justice in Brazil, the Supreme Court, that no police operations should take place in the favelas of Rio de Janeiro for the duration of the pandemic. In 2020, about 1230 people were killed by the police, most of them young black men. In addition, 12 black children died from firearms.

This situation is the result of a failure from the Brazilian authorities to tackle the scourge of systemic racism in law-enforcement and in the larger society, that has been intensified since the election of Bolsonaro. It is urgent that the Brazilian State gives answers to the families of victims of violence and murders committed by the police, meaningfully cooperate with the UN human rights system, creates mechanisms to combat political violence and immediately reviews this policy producing death, that is in force in our country and especially in our state, Rio de Janeiro.