

Human Rights Council – 47th Session

Monday 12th July 2021

Interactive Dialogue - Item 9

Speaker: Anielle Franco

Madam President,

Black Lives Matter.

This statement is submitted by IMADR, MRG, together with the Marielle Franco Institute and Race and Equality. We thank the High Commissioner for taking up the situation in Brazil in her report, including the case of my sister Marielle Franco.¹

In recent months, two major incidents have happened in Brazil. On May 6th, the excessive use of police force led to brutal killings of 25 young black men in Jacarezinho, a favela in Rio de Janeiro. It was one of the worst massacres in the city. A month later, on June 8th, Kathleen Romeu, a 24 years-old black pregnant woman was shot dead during an illegal police operation in Complexo de Lins Vasconcelos, also a favela in Rio de Janeiro. Despite the Supreme Federal Court's injunction to restrict police operations in the city's favelas during the COVID-19 pandemic, more than 800 people have been killed by the police since June 2020.²

These are just some of the cases that indicate that killings of the black population is a systemic issue, promoted by the Brazilian authorities and covered up by the police forces. Instead of investigating the massacres and discriminatory violence against the AfroBrazilian population, the Brazilian government and Police try to legitimize these police operations and attack Brazilian human rights organizations, such as the Marielle Franco Institute.

We urge the State of Brazil to put in place an independent and impartial complaints mechanism inside the police forces that contributes to guarantee accountability and respect for human rights standards, and to ensure that all cases of disproportionate use of force are investigated. We believe that there is no way to have a strong democracy when police forces implementing racist security operations receive more funding than health and education altogether. This is the case for the public budget distribution in the State of Rio de Janeiro in 2020. For this reason, we call on the Government of Brazil to immediately redistribute and dedicate the necessary funding to address inequalities and racial injustice in the law enforcement. These are minimum steps to end what the Inter-American Commission has described as a process of “social cleansing” or even “extermination” of black people in Brazil, “with the consent of the state”.³

For all human rights violations and victims of systemic racism, we urge the UN Human Rights Council to work with States in line with the High Commissioner's recommendations to establish mechanisms and strengthen those that already exist, to support families and communities in accessing truth and justice, reparations and guarantees of non-repetition.

¹ A/HRC/47/53, paragraph 48

² <https://g1.globo.com/rj/rio-de-janeiro/noticia/2021/04/05/favelas-do-rj-tem-quase-800-mortos-em-aco-es-policiais-desde-que-stf-mandou-restringir-operacoes.ghtml>

³ IACHR, Situation of human rights in Brazil, February 12, 2021, par 29. Available at: <http://www.oas.org/en/iachr/reports/pdfs/Brasil2021-en.pdf>