
Amnesty International

MONTHLY ACTION

ACTIVISM TEAM, Amnesty International UK
HRAC, 17-25 New Inn Yard, London EC2A 3EA



June 2014

Brazil World Cup 2014 & Human Rights: One Goal – No Violence

As the Brazil World Cup approaches on 13th June 2014, millions of people worldwide will be preparing to join in with the celebrations. But as the celebrations are starting Amnesty is expressing serious concerns over the right to Freedom of Expression and increased police brutality in the context of protest in the country.

Since June 2013 Brazil we have seen large scale demonstrations taking place in the country, showing great discontent with the poor quality of public services in the context of the World Cup and Olympics 2016 being hosted there. What started as demonstrations protesting against very specific issues such as increased travel fares ahead of the World Cup have now broadened out to wider issues including poor health care, education and the impact the events will have on thousands of people living in the urban areas.

As hundreds of thousands of people taking part in protests and peaceful demonstrations across major cities such as Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo, it has been made very clear that Brazilian police have not been properly trained to deal with demonstrations and protest at this scale. As a result the police have often responded with using excessive and unnecessary force including the increased use of less lethal weapons such as tear gas, pepper spray, stun grenades and rubber bullets.

Two individuals that have been affected by the police brutality in Brazil and increased police presence in ahead of the World Cup is 26 year old Douglas Rafael Pereira da Silva and 27 year old Edilson Silva dos Santos who were both caught up in violence and shot to death by the police. No one has yet been held to account for their killings.

Background to Edilson Silva dos Santos and Douglas Rafael Pereira da Silva's case

On 22nd April 27-year-old Edilson Silva dos Santos was shot in the head and died during a protest in the Pavão-Pavãozinho community in Copacabana. Edilson and other residents from the community were unarmed in the protest while the military police officers policing the demonstration were armed with firearms. It had still not been established who fired the shot and no one has been held to account for his death.

The protest was a spontaneous reaction by residents to the death of Douglas Rafael Pereira da Silva, 26, who was found dead in the backyard of a children's day-care centre earlier that day. Initial investigations indicate that he died around 1am on 22nd April during a police operation in the community. Local residents alleged that he was killed by the police.

Later in the day on 22nd April, the military police from the local Pacification Police unit (UPP) surrounded the day-care centre where Douglas Rafael Pereira da Silva's body was found, and there are strong indications that the crime scene might have been changed. The medical forensic assessment concluded that he died after being shot by a firearm which resulted in the perforation of his lung.

Since Douglas' death, his mother, Maria de Fátima, has made public calls for justice. She told Amnesty International on 28th April she was threatened by a man driving a car and carrying a firearm. She stated that he told her "if you don't shut up, I will do that".

Amnesty International has received reports of the use of unnecessary and excessive force and other abuses by police officers from the UPP against residents of this area.

WHAT YOU NEED TO DO:

ACTION 1 - Letter

Please read the background info & write a letter to the Governor of Rio using the key points below:

- Urging the authorities to ensure a prompt, thorough, independent and impartial investigation into allegations that police were responsible for the killings of Douglas Rafael Pereira da Silva and Edilson Silva dos Santos, and ensure that any officers responsible for abusive use of force are brought to justice in criminal proceedings
- Urging them to ensure the safety of Maria de Fátima, and other family or community members who are mobilized seeking justice for the two killings, protecting them from any kind of intimidation or threats
- Urging them to order prompt, independent and impartial investigations of all allegations of unnecessary or excessive use of force or other abuses by military police officers in the local UPP in Pavão-Pavãozinho

Governor of Rio de Janeiro

Luiz Fernando Pezão
Palácio Guanabara
R. Pinheiro Machado,
s/n - Laranjeiras CEP 22238-900,
Rio de Janeiro, RJ
Fax: 0055 21 23343559
Salutation: Dear Governor

PLEASE SEND COPIES OF YOUR APPEAL TO

His Excellency Roberto Jaguaribe
Embassy of Brazil
14-16 Cockspur Street
London SW1Y 5BL
F: 020 7399 9100
E: info.london@itamaraty.gov.br
Website: www.brazil.org.uk

ACTION 2 – Solidarity photo action

As part of the Brazil World Cup campaign we would like to celebrate the fantastic work of AI Brazil (launched in 2012) and to stand in solidarity with the individuals and communities that they work with. Staff & Volunteers in Amnesty Brazil are carrying out research and responding to human rights abuses directly from the ground ahead and during the World Cup and beyond. **You can see short video clip about AI Brazil;**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GZZE--plr-g>

What we would like you to do:

Take a photo of each group member as well as member of public holding one of the placards below. We will share your solidarity photos with the Amnesty Brazil and they will share them with individuals and communities that they work with. Please email the photos to activism@amnesty.org.uk

MATERIALS:

Placards

‘One goal – No violence’ placard - Product code BWC001

‘Love Football- Love Human Rights’ placard - Product code BWC002

Please note the above placards can be ordered from June 4 from our mailing house by contacting them on 01788 545553 quoting the relevant product codes.

Poster

‘One goal – No violence’ poster

Available to download in A4 & A3 sizes from www.amnesty.org.uk/groups



Please make sure that people are happy with their photo to be taken and used in Amnesty’s publications.

MONTHLY ACTION

Background Information

Brazil World Cup 2014 & Human Rights: One Goal – No Violence

Since the Confederations Cup in 2013 protests and demonstrations have increased to a never seen before scale in Brazil. There have been people in their hundreds and thousands who have participated in peaceful demonstrations and protests across Brazil over the way in which money has been spent towards the preparations for the World Cup 2014.

What started as small scale protests that focused on specific issues, such as the increase in transport fares, the privatization of Rio de Janeiro's Maracanã Stadium and evictions in urban areas, became massive public demonstrations across the country. In Rio de Janeiro alone it is reported that over 300,000 people went out onto the streets. What the protests clearly showed was a high level of social discontent with the poor quality of public services, including transport, education and health, among others. Some protests are now also focusing on stopping the World Cup altogether using slogans such as "There will be no World Cup". This clearly suggests that protests will continue ahead and during the World Cup.

The Brazilian police's reaction to these protests has been using unnecessary and excessive force against protesters, which has resulted in serious injuries and the unlawful arrests of many people.

Not only have the police used excessive force but they have also increased the use of "less-lethal" weapons against the protesters. This includes the use of tear gas, pepper spray, stun grenades and rubber bullets. There have also been many civilians who have been unlawfully arrested and jailed for their participation in a peaceful protest.

One of these individuals is Rafael Braga Vieira a young homeless man in Rio de Janeiro who was the first person to be convicted after being detained during a protest on 20 June. He has been sentenced to five years' imprisonment for carrying cleaning products that the police alleged were for use in making explosives. The forensic report stated that the material could not be used for explosives, but he was convicted anyway. So far, nobody else has been convicted, but others are still facing criminal charges are awaiting trial.

From the way that Brazilian police have managed the protests it has become clear that they are not prepared to handle protests at this scale. Research published this year by the Brazilian think-tank Fundação Getúlio Vargas shows that over 60% of police officers acknowledged that they haven't received adequate training to manage mass demonstrations.

Time line of recent protests in Brazil:

- **On 22 February 2014** in São Paulo, police surrounded peaceful protesters using a technique known as "Hamburger Kessel" or "kettling", taking dozens of them to police stations. It is unknown, at this point, how many of those are being further investigated and might face criminal charges and go to trial.
- **On 25 January 2014** in São Paulo, several protesters were sheltering in a hotel lounge when the police entered the place, launched tear gas and fired plastic / rubber bullets at them. Police also hit some of them there with hand-held batons. Vinicius Duarte, a 27 years old student was brutally assaulted by two police officers, had several bones broken and lost four teeth.
- **On 4 December 2013** in Rio de Janeiro, a young black homeless man, was the first person convicted after being detained during a protest on 20 June. He was sentenced to five years' imprisonment for carrying cleaning products that the police alleged were for use in making explosives. The forensic report stated that the material could not be used for explosives, but he was convicted anyway. So far, nobody else has been convicted, but others are still facing criminal charges are awaiting trial.

- **On 15 October 2013** in Rio de Janeiro, police used unnecessary force against teachers protesting peacefully, and detained around 200 people.
- **On 21 June 2013** in Belem (Pará state) a 51-year-old municipal street cleaner, died after police allegedly sprayed tear gas inside a place where she and other people were sheltering during a protest the day before.
- **On 20 June 2013** in Rio de Janeiro, at least four people were injured by the use of firearms (that is, lethal weapons) during a protest.
- **On 17 and 20 June 2013** in Rio de Janeiro, police used tear gas against protesters in closed spaces, including hospitals, subway stations and restaurants.
- **On 13 June 2013** in São Paulo, a photographer who was hit with a rubber/plastic bullet lost his eye, while working covering protests.

Fundraising

With summer just around the corner and World Cup fever gripping the country, why not have a go at a football themed fundraiser. All you need is a goalkeeper, some goalposts, a collection tin and some amnesty badges to have a go at this fundraising idea.

Setup a goal somewhere public, a town square, busy local park, at a summer fete etc... Charge a pound for people to have a go taking a penalty past the goalkeeper and, if they score, they win a badge. It's a simple idea but could help to attract passers-by who can then be invited to take the letter writing and solidarity photo actions.

Further Reading

- A campaign briefing focusing on human rights in Brazil will be issued ahead of the world cup. Copies will be available to download at www.amnesty.org from June 4.
- Amnesty UK Press Release marking 1 month to go until the World Cup 2014
<http://www.amnesty.org.uk/press-releases/right-protest-under-threat-brazil-pushes-terrorism-law-ahead-world-cup>

Video clips

Direct work with communities in Brazil - *We are from Maré and we have rights* (campaign launch) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FWBMk00IL_k

Personal stories - Brazilians who were helped somehow by Amnesty International during the dictatorship in the country

Ivan Seixas <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SghJaCQdzCs>

Marijane Lisboa <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vpen5pcvL1g>

Fernando Gabeira <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jYDXrppKBeQ>

If you have any queries about this action and for updates please contact:
activism@amnesty.org.uk / 0207 033 1675

Local group's monthly mailing can be downloaded from: www.amnesty.org.uk/groups