



## INNOVATIONS FOR SUCCESSFUL SOCIETIES

AN INITIATIVE OF  
THE WOODROW WILSON SCHOOL OF PUBLIC AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS  
AND THE BOBST CENTER FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE

---

Series: Governance Traps (Accountable Policing)

Interview no.: T1

---

Interviewee: Luiz Eduardo Soares

Interviewer: Richard Bennet

Date of Interview: 7 September, 2010

Location: Municipal Valuation of Life and Prevention of Violence at Nova  
Iguacu  
Rio de Janeiro  
Brazil

---

Innovations for Successful Societies, Bobst Center for Peace and Justice  
Princeton University, 83 Prospect Avenue, Princeton, New Jersey, 08544, USA  
[www.princeton.edu/successfulsocieties](http://www.princeton.edu/successfulsocieties)

BENNET: The date is Sept. 7, 2010. This is Rick Bennet; I'm in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, with Dr. Luiz Eduardo Soares. Dr. Soares has served in many capacities, including as the national secretary of public security in 2003, and he was also the coordinator of security, justice and citizenship for the state of Rio de Janeiro in 1999 and 2000. You've written 20-some books and are an esteemed professor. Thank you so much for sitting down and talking with us today.

I'd like to start perhaps by discussing your background a little bit and maybe some of the considerations that went into your history as you started to work for the state and for the national government, and to focus really on the relationship between the state of Rio and the favelas and some of the considerations that were involved specifically with your background personally.

SOARES: *I started studying literature. Then, since we were under dictatorship, there was a kind of ethical imperative for us to be part of the resistance against state power. So that, that led me to the social science since I convinced myself, I persuaded myself that I needed to know a little bit more about my country, about history, about history of the world to decide which would be the best way, the best means, the best methods to rebuild the nation, to rebuild politics in Brazil, etc. That sounds a little bit ambitious and unimportant, but since you are nothing, you don't have any value at all as a citizen under dictatorship, there is this kind of compensation, you feel yourself fully responsible for the nation, a kind of complimentary personal feeling, kind of omnipotence that balances the absence of value.*

*But anyhow this rationalistic way of thinking, this decision to study was fundamental to stay alive, because many of my colleagues and friends died. They decided to fight with the use of violence against the dictatorship, and of course the powers were completely unbalanced and they were smashed quickly and violently by the state power. So for ethical reasons, for political reasons, for different reasons, even just by applying common sense, I decided to take a different path. I decided democracy was not only an instrument or a stage, a step, but the goal itself, of course. It is not a substance, it is not a complete and closed state of things, but it is a process. But anyhow, the basic values that I praise are there, and that opened up a way for my life. Not only for being alive, keeping myself alive, but for avoiding this terrible mistake that led so many good people to personal tragedies.*

*Anyhow this led me to social science. I studied anthropology—social anthropology as a graduate student—after literature as an undergraduate. After that, I studied political science. When I was a master's-degree graduate student, we didn't have a doctorate in anthropology or political science in Brazil. So our master's took five, six years and two years of research. It wasn't fair, because I went to the US as a student before getting my Ph.D. title and I was much older than my colleagues there. But I was already a professional, and I had work that was similar to their Ph.D. thesis or dissertation.*

*Anyhow, first of all it was a personal necessity for ethical and political reasons. But then it became a job, a way of paying the bills, having children and raising children, and becoming a professional. So since you are in, it's very hard to get out, I postponed the idea of becoming a writer for many, many years and dedicated myself to research, teaching. And I have been a teacher, a professor for around 35 years, more or less, in the universities.*

---

*Perhaps the question would be, how come I became a state agent, someone linked to government? I never thought of that possibility until it was very late to refuse. Making a long story short, I'd say that violence was a major thing for me, since I began to think about society. I mentioned it implicitly in my previous responses. I referred myself to the ethical importance of deciding the path, the method. I was a pacifist and I thought violence of course was always present but should be thought as the opposite of civilization or the values we praise—democracy, pluralism, liberty, even fundamental rights, human rights, etc.*

*So the violence was always present. My Ph.D. thesis was on (Thomas) Hobbes and his thoughts as roots, or the elaboration of basic concepts, which would work as roots for the building of liberal thought. That was a way of organizing myself as an intellectual and a citizen, thinking about politics in a more systematic way, and diving in this way to feel myself more comfortable, more secure on taking positions.*

*But afterwards I got in touch with violence as an empirical object of research, which was more or less an obvious issue since I always lived in Rio de Janeiro, almost always. In Rio in the '80s, in the beginning of the '80s, it was already a major, major challenge, a major issue. By then, the beginning of the '80s, we were getting out of dictatorship. It was a long process of negotiation, as you probably know, to the promulgation of the constitution in 1988. But in '82, we had the first almost-free elections since the beginning of the '60s. That was my first opportunity of taking part in open, democratic—well, quasi-democratic—processes.*

*I was a member of the Communist Party throughout our dictatorship. That means since my adolescence. In our Communist Party, we had a social democratic faction or section or group. We were linked to what we called neo-communists. Gradually we developed to social democratic positions and that became very clear in the beginning of the '80s when we could exert our participation, our citizenship openly, more openly.*

*Well, in Rio de Janeiro violence was a big issue, and it posed several different questions for us on the left. There were those who thought it was not an issue actually; it was just a result or the consequence or the symptom of deeper social economic causes, deeper social and economic structures. So the way to solve or to reduce problems would be to change social economic structures—reducing inequality, etc. There were also those who thought that we shouldn't even talk about that because that was a conservative issue, a conservative theme. Also there were those who thought police were necessarily—as (Vladimir) Lenin stated in his State and Revolution, his famous book—an instrument of domination and oppression, with serfs mobilized by the dominant classes to exploit the workers. So there was nothing to do. There was nothing to do in terms of transforming the police and making them democratic institutions.*

*Then there were those who, for psychological reasons, couldn't stand even talking about that, because they were tortured, they suffered repression by more or less those professionals who were now in charge under democracy, but still representing the past and the culture of dictatorship. Actually, police were not the main instrument of torture and murders; army units were in charge of those kinds of terrible deeds. But police were also involved during the dictatorship.*

*So for psychological reasons, from theoretical visions, from this narrow Marxism point of view, from different orientations, there was a kind of consensus under which silence, negligence were the main characteristic of our positions on the*

---

*left. It was kind of funny—it would be funny, if it weren't tragic—because on the right people were very satisfied with the police structure. The institutions were working very well for a different purpose, but they worked for the protection of the state, etc. But they worked. So the conservatives didn't want to talk much about that, and didn't even mention the changes and the possibilities of changes as far as police and security institutions went.*

*On the left, the people didn't want to talk about that issue as well for those reasons I mentioned. So there was this very, very paradoxical marriage or convergence, or confluence, of those different lines. The result of that was consensual silence, a consensual apathy, an inertia. Nobody did anything about that. Of course, policemen were thankful, because the majority of them probably were not satisfied. I can't be sure, but I imagine they were—as workers, as citizens—they were not satisfied with the situation. But the leaders—those who were in charge, those who were in superior positions—they were pretty much satisfied, as any cooperative leaders would be, because they didn't want to be challenged. They didn't want to get away from their positions. So nobody did anything, and cooperatives were capable of organizing a powerful lobby, and throughout the democratic process of promulgating a constitution they were very effective. Those different lines were very effective in not changing our inherent institutional structures as far as security goes.*

*I was studying, I was doing research, and from the beginning it was pretty much obvious that we had a major challenge facing us, changing those organizational structures, those institutions. They couldn't work under democracy or for a democratic purpose. They couldn't serve the citizenship. They couldn't even apply and respond to constitutional goals. They couldn't accomplish whatever our democratic constitution was affirming or telling or requiring. So we had to change these institutions. We had to change our police model.*

*Besides that, simultaneously, as intellectuals, citizens, etc., we would have to define our view on the police, because—since we were going to live under democracy and since we wanted to keep and stabilize democracy and deepen democracy and make it more and more fair, more and more effective—we couldn't forget and keep silent on such an important institution as the police. What kind of police did we want? What kind of coercive institution should a democracy develop? What could be our utopia or our project, our goal as far as those institutions went? Those were important questions. We wouldn't go into it as far as security goes without changing the police and police behavior.*

*The second point was we would have to abandon a unilateral position that we held for such a long time, which could be defined as denunciation, as a denouncing position. We couldn't just denounce, we couldn't be only unilaterally negative. We would have to say something positive. We would have to point ways out. We would have to give alternatives, to say and to accomplish something in refuting processes, mechanisms, behaviors, structural organizations, etc. Civil society was not ready for that. Social movements were not ready for that. For a different ideological narrowness, for theoretical mistakes, or even for psychological reasons, as I mentioned, the fact is that civil leadership was not able or open enough to consider this challenge as something that should be solved by us—not only by “them,” the other ones, the governors, the politicians, etc. That was something that had to do with ourselves as citizens, as professionals and as experts, researchers.*

*So throughout the '80s, besides doing research, I began with colleagues to study those institutions more deeply and to analyze different international situations,*

---

*trying to learn from different national experiences. Mostly taking those countries that were transforming themselves into democracies, studying democratic transitions and the place, the challenges that have to do with security particularly.*

*That was not something that could be seen or defined as very popular as far as the universities go. It was really something not well seen, not well valued. It was a kind of dirty object—an obscene object, or at least an easier, simpler, more primitive one. It didn't have the dignity those founders gave it—I'm talking about the objects, the issues, etc. If you take Hobbes, (Niccoló) Machiavelli, (Charles de Secondat, baron de) Montesquieu, (John) Locke, etc.—for all those, depending on our point of view, who helped to create our area of modern thought on society—for all of them, the construction of peace and the maintenance of social order was something crucial to understand the role of the state and the limits of liberty and social participation, to understand citizenship and its possibilities, prospectives and limits.*

*From different angles, different positions, all those major philosophers, social philosophers and authors dealt with security as a supreme, major theme, a basic, basic theme. How does social order develop and install itself, create itself? How can we help to keep it, to change it, etc.? Everything they were saying, thinking, had to do with rights, fundamental rights, liberty, citizenship, but also state powers and their limits. Then suddenly we found ourselves more or less alone. We had, of course, our tribe, our small group, but we were more or less lost academically, in the sense that we wouldn't be the ones chosen to get funds, we weren't on the top list of any invitation to major seminars.*

*Of course, we, almost all of us, were also dealing with something else. This something else was our connection to academic life. We were part of the community because we were discussing culture, or religion, literature, the construction of democracy from a more legal point of view. We were discussing different perspectives for modernity, the collapse of socialism, and the new paths for social theory. We were discussing psychoanalysis—anything that had to do with major themes from this powerful consensus that was established.*

*But in parallel, we were doing our researches and thinking and discussing with our colleagues on those items. I was always linked—even before leaving, becoming [Indecipherable] in the beginning of the '80s, '81, '82—I was always linked to NGOs (non-governmental organizations) because that was a way of keeping in touch with grassroots movements. As an anthropologist and as a citizen I always thought that was very important.*

*Being at ISER (Instituto de Estudos da Religião), a secure institute for the study of religion—which actually was created under a different title because we were under a dictatorship and it was very convenient to stress that main concern, that main object. We were concerned in studying religion—that was not false. But that was not the whole truth. We were also linked to different objects and questions, one of them violence, at first trying to understand what was going on, trying to figure out how could we interpret and analyze those social dynamics and also analyzing power and state institutions, basically police, prison, etc.*

*That I developed mostly at ISER, being also a professor at IUPERJ (University Research Institute of Rio de Janeiro)—we have two important graduate centers in the social sciences, Museu Nacional dedicated to anthropology, where I got my master's degree, and IUPERJ, dedicated to sociology and political science. Those were the first ones and the most important ones until very recently.*



---

*I had my Ph.D. at IUPERJ; then I became a professor there for more or less 15 years until I had to leave Brazil after some problems I had. But I didn't do much on security as a professor at IUPERJ; I mostly did my research and my work on those issues being a researcher at ISER. That was interesting, because I was invited by Col. Magno Nazareth Cerqueira, who was a wonderful figure who was killed by a policeman, being himself a colonel of police in 1999—someone who was according to medical records, the police themselves, was undergoing mental-health problems.*

*But anyway, Cerqueira was an African Brazilian, an Afro-Brazilian. For the first time the leader, the commander of the police, was the first black man in charge of the police, and he was appointed by Gov. (Leonel) Brizola. It is interesting to understand that—because I guess you wouldn't comprehend the developments that in fact came subsequently if we miss this point. Brizola was on the left. He was a populist leader who stayed in exile for almost 20 years and came back and won the election against all the resistance of the declining dictatorship. So it was to us a major victory. He was very personally engaged in human rights. His main promise was we are going to stop these killings, extrajudicial killings, tortures and disrespect towards the poor in the favelas. Police won't any more use the, how could I translate that; the expression in Portuguese is pé na porta, foot at the door.*

BENNET: At the door, yes, I've heard that expression.

SOARES: *I'm going to suspend, to avoid, to keep the police far from the favelas just to avoid, with respect to behavior, mostly pé na porta actions—this kind of invasion without any judicial document or licensing. And those kinds of things characterized the relationship between policemen, the professional policemen and the inhabitants of a favela, or the relationship among police and the community of the favela. That was the figure, the icon, the symbol, the synthesis of the difficult relationship, the violent, brutal relationship. You cannot support invasion of domicile, invasion of the home. That was a way of denying citizenship and the respect to any kind of rule with justice, etc.*

*So Brizola said, "I will impose an end to that kind of practice." The thing is—since he didn't know what to do instead, since he didn't have a vision for police institutions under democracy or in a democracy, since nobody had that, since that was not an issue for the party he was in, he founded in [Indecipherable], since it was not even a major issue for professors, researchers or militants, either—he stopped there, in this negative position. And he was fair and effective in his negative position. He actually avoided the continuation of police killings, police torture and police bad behavior. He didn't stop completely, of course, he imposed a reduction since he took over, a reduction in those practices. But he stopped it there in this "Don't do it anymore" position. He didn't complete it with something else instead. He didn't have policies for public security. He didn't have anything else to replace the old behavior pattern. So that kind of attitude created a vacuum, which helped to develop drug trafficking, etc.*

*Everybody would tell the story more or less the same way, some stressing the positive contribution of Brizola, some stressing the negative contribution. So I guess both are true. His intentions were the best ones, and what he did had to be done. The things is that it was not enough and there was something very important lacking. This vacuum—this lacking part—had to do with myself and my generation of researchers and my group of colleagues. We didn't see that we were part of that. We weren't capable of criticizing and suggesting alternatives, not at all. We were part of that and we were very glad with Brizola's attitude,*

---

*because that was the most important to do at that moment. But the fact is that after many years, four or five years, by the end of his first governorship—he was governor twice, but with a space because governors couldn't be reelected by then—throughout those years, we came to understand that there was something missing, something lacking. It had to do with specific policies, positive policies and with police reform itself.*

*We needed to understand better the complexity of security, not only social, cultural, economic causes, but also specific criminal dynamics. We had to understand that besides the important and urgent big changes in social and economic structures, we needed simultaneously specific policies oriented toward the reduction of crime, mostly violent crimes and, more important, homicides. We needed to change the police to do that and to develop preventive actions, preventive policies, violence-prevention policies. Of course, that understanding developed gradually through our studies, discussion, dialogues with colleagues abroad, through our trips to see the experiences, different experiences.*

*So I come back to the invitation to become consultant of Colonel Cerqueira—and we have to be very careful here, I'm talking about Carlos Magno Nazareth Cerqueira, black colonel of the military police twice, leader, commander of the military police of Rio de Janeiro. I am not talking of another Cerqueira (General Nilton Cerqueira), who was a general of the army, right-wing guy, who liked to say that he killed, himself personally, some of the left-wing leaders during the dictatorship.*

BENNET: Important distinction.

SOARES: *Very important. But it was a very important invitation for me. It was a turning point in my personal trajectory. I was not a consultant officially or formally. I did some work; I did some topics, specific contributions. As an example, I was invited to visit New York in the late '80s, to understand what was going on, to see the experience of changing Harlem and to follow the application of this new paradigm called community policing. We know that by then police in the United States were undergoing severe, dramatic changes—different kinds of change, in different directions, but those were rich moments, fertile moments. My visit was unforgettable, because I got in touch with excellent professionals and I kept in touch with them for many years. I went back to follow up those experiences and I learned a lot. Besides the fact that of course I was studying, I was exchanging experiences and opinions and following the daily work of police in Rio de Janeiro, thanks to Carlos Magno Nazareth Cerqueira's trust and thanks to his generosity. I could be beside him when he was going to crises. I could follow police work from this different standpoint. I went to the other side of the moon, so to speak, and I came to understand how impossible it was to command those forces and those institutions, how they were out of hand, how they were ungovernable.*

*I heard that from him, from his personal testimony, and I could follow real situations that showed these kinds of limits. So it was not only to require, to impose, or to demand from the governor or from the commander, or from the secretary—we didn't have a security secretariat then; we had two different secretariats, one for civil police and another one for military police. It was not just a case of asking them to impose another way, another paradigm, another model of action. Because they couldn't do it, even if they wanted to. The institutions were ungovernable, not because personal professionals didn't want to obey someone, but just because there were not institutional mechanisms to impose order, to keep track of the actions, to make it possible for an assessment, planning, diagnostics, identification of mistakes, corrections, the monitoring of the*

---

*process in such a way that the errors would become factors of apprenticeship and future accomplishment, factors for evolution and development.*

*We didn't have data, qualified data, in the absence of which diagnosis wouldn't be possible. Without those, of course, we can't have planning. Without planning, we can't do more than react pragmatically to local dispersed demands and problems. Since we don't have goals, planning, diagnosis, data, of course we cannot assess whatever we are doing. So we can't identify mistakes; so we are going to become slaves, be condemned to repeat them. We become slaves of the mistakes, the eternal return of the same that would reproduce itself beyond any consciousness or good intentions or personal subjective attitudes or personal even decisions.*

*So you make clear that if we needed to develop police for democracy and if police were important factors in the building of safety and security—even if not being all, they are of course important factors—if that was the case, and we became sure that that was the case, we needed a different model. We needed to change the structures, the mechanisms. Otherwise, even the best governor, the best commander, the best secretariat couldn't make a difference, a real difference.*

*So just to synthesize, we had to redefine the way we were dealing with the problem, understanding its complexity, its connection with social structures—but, on the other hand, understanding its specificities, its singularities and the necessity of dealing with those problems with specific policies which would impose on us the changing of police. Not only, of course. I'm always thinking of changing of society, of social structures. Simultaneously education, housing, infrastructure, transportation, culture, the families and the development of positive, effective bonds, etc. Everything was important; there are always several levels, different dimensions, each one with its specific importance in each situation, in each constellation so to speak, in each galaxy of combinations. But anyhow, those specific policies were important; in the changing of the history of police, fundamental.*

*In the beginning of the '90s I had the opportunity of speaking from the institute's standpoint, speaking to my community, to my colleagues and to public opinion on the necessity of reform, of redefining the way we must see these things. The poverty of Marxism and Leninism to deal with those problems, how the extreme right and Marxist leftists were closer than they could think they would be—closer than they would like to think themselves of being—and how good intentions were making it impossible to create a democratic consensus on those fashions. We needed to build a democratic consensus to support political interventions that would accomplish change. How to define that consensus?*

*First of all, we would need to make ourselves conscious of the divergent points. The first consensus is a common understanding of its opposite: What are the points on which we are in disagreement? If we were capable of defining disagreement and the items where we should stop disagreement, we would become able to discuss them and construct compromises so that we could apply government changes. But we weren't able even to identify disagreement. We didn't share a language, a vocabulary.*

*If I stated something, someone else would say something else. Not against my point—precisely against my point would be fine and positive—but someone else would say something else about another level, another dimension, as if it were a contestation, an opposition to whatever I was saying. So if I said we need to*



---

*change the police, and that would imply A, B and C, someone else would say we need to be tough on crime; we need laws for criminals. Well, I'm against that, but let's discuss that. First of all, let's think about police as an institution or as a group of institutions, and let's discuss those points because they are important. Then we are going to discuss those other points, which are also important. I'm against your point of view but let's organize our discussion. But then someone else would come—"Please, policemen need to earn more, their salaries are absurd. They are making little money, and for this reason they are corrupt. They are not going to regard themselves as professional."*

*OK, I'm not against that—that's very, very important; let's discuss also that. But that's not the point right now. Could you please respect our discussion? I can leave my theme apart, I'll discuss yours, but then could you come and visit the previous theme with me, so we can organize our disagreement? But that was impossible. We were living in Babel, we were living in a Babel situation as I wrote so many times. And of course for politicians, it is an excellent thing for elections and a terrible thing for governance. Being governed and dealing with security are always hard, but being in opposition or an election as an agent of the opposition, that is great, because you can use that opportunistically to point fingers, to express the indignation of citizenship.*

*Of course, it is always done this way. Why it's so hard if you are in government to do anything that could actually make a difference: Because these kinds of policies, mostly the structural reform, the institutional reform policies, are not anything that could be accomplished in a couple of years. You need much more time; you need a kind of maturity, another rhythm to make your process mature enough to produce results. You need even to face resistance and dysfunctionality. There is a first consequence of deep initiatives that will take time. There is always a first step, which is very negative, mostly because you disorganize whatever you have. You promote situations that are unpredictable, and you tend to strengthen the resistance, the opportunistic resistance against your moves, your problem.*

*So you have to be very stable. You have to count upon popular support or political support to go through this difficult moment with confidence. You have to keep on moving, being consistent, so that the process will become sustainable, self-sustainable. This requires factors that are lacking in our political system and political usual behavior. We have this biannual political cycle, election cycle. It is biannual in the sense that as an important agent, political agent, you have to get involved in elections, even if not for yourself. Your mandates here are always for four years, but since you have different elections for different positions every two years, you have to get involved anyhow.*

*So the first two years are generally promising ones in terms of some varying moves towards change or reform. Then, in the second year, you have resistance and you have this kind of accommodation when the governor or the political leader in charge of the reform tends to go back, trying to reorganize alliances, coalitions, to avoid failure in the next election. So there are those very interesting forward-and-backward movements, because of this lack of permanent support—political support and popular support.*

*So it is very difficult, because there is not enough clarity in public opinion about that because of our Babel mindset or framework, and also because politicians are not sure that those things are really important and necessary. "How could we do that? I mean, wouldn't it be possible to go ahead just with this situation? If things waited so long, couldn't they wait a little bit longer, so that I become*

---

*governor, and then mayor, governor, senator and president? And then we are going to talk in depth about those issues.” So it is always easier to try to avoid further problems than deal with the situation with your actual current tools and compromising and not confronting those structures and even the leaders that are maintaining the status quo in terms of security.*

*According to research I did with [Indecipherable] last year with the support of a U.N. (United Nations) agency and the Ministry of Justice, listening to questionnaires to 64,130 people, we got this impressive result—not people in general, policemen and professionals of security. We have 770,000—more or less—professionals in the field of public security, mostly of course policemen, but not only policemen. But anyhow, 70% of policemen and those professionals are against our current police policy—understand it is dysfunctional, irrational. It makes the institutions ungovernable. It doesn't help to develop their capacity, their talents, their virtues as professionals. On the contrary, the model is an obstacle to their development as professionals. They want to change. Of course, if you ask “Change for what?” there is a basic consensus, we have to avoid this division of the work cycle. The investigation with one institution and the patrolling with another institution—we have to be together, not necessarily with a huge unification creating this monster leviathan.*

*We could go to different lines. We could choose an American model, with municipal police departments with each one being responsible for the whole cycle. Or we could divide the territory in regions because regions are very different among themselves, economically, socially, culturally. So we have more police departments, smaller police departments, very differently organized police departments, oriented toward the rationalization and organization of their work with the diagnosis, planning, assessment, capacity and tools, mechanisms, with high education, with technology, with good training and good payment, etc.*

*We need to go towards a reshaping of the model, be it a municipal one or differently organized territorial-based organizations, or even organized by kinds of crime, as you also have in part in Brazil. The federal police are responsible for federal crimes, like the F.B.I. (U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigations). We could work in different levels of gravity and divide our institutions by that. Anyhow, it doesn't matter actually—I mean, of course it matters, but the most important thing is avoiding our present model, which is a scandal for us. Not only the model but the processes that are being introduced, the conceptions that still are in place in the culture, the professional culture that is still hegemonic. We need to modernize and to link professional culture to legality and to the praise of law and to the idea of law enforcement and to the respect of the constitution, fundamental rights, human rights. This is extremely important—not only to avoid mistakes,*

*I am going to complete this story by telling you that things are much more dramatic. Police are crime, police are violence in Brazil—the police are the main source of crime and violence in security. So we are not talking about police that are not enough prepared to deal with democracy, not enough prepared to deal with crime itself. Police that have problems like corruption and extrajudicial killings—I'm talking about police as crime, as violence, as corruption. Of course I'm not talking about all the professionals that are there. We have thousands of excellent and honest professionals, but the numbers linked to crime directly as protagonists in crime are so high that we cannot any more deal with the problem as exceptions, localized problems and questions. It is much, much more important than that.*

---

*Envision this—it will give you an example. We have around 6,000 homicides yearly, more than 1,000 being committed by policemen. Actually less than 6,000—5,000 and something. So a bit more than 1,000 being committed by police means that we're talking about 20% of the homicides. Nowadays in Rio, the bigger challenge for democracy, for legality, for security is not traffickers anymore; they are in decline. They don't represent anymore that major risk. The major problem, the major challenge is what we call the militias—which are mafias composed of bad policemen, who are not only replacing traffickers in dealing with drugs but, much more than that, are imposing themselves on the favelas, on communities, poor communities, shantytowns, etc. Imposing their own laws, which are arbitrary and which involve extrajudicial killings in public, public humiliation, public torture. Whoever resists those laws and the payment of tax and anything that is done there, putting the process in place—any resistance will be punished severely and publicly as a lesson to the other ones.*

*So they are much more cruel, much more violent, much better organized since they are 40-year-old men with professional training. They are mature. They know how to calculate. They are not adolescents with bare feet and machine guns who will die before 18 or 19 years old that are always on drugs. They are organized professionals, and they have plans. For instance, the plan of occupying places in the National Assembly and the House of Representatives in the local assembly, which they've done. So they are what we call technically organized crime, mafia of the worst kind, and their source is the police. They are policemen. They still are. They are known, and they are feared by those honest policemen. Just a few of them have courage enough to face them and to confront and to investigate and to arrest—which has happened, but in small numbers if you consider the scale of the problem.*

*So this is a little bit of a synthesis of the difficulties and possibilities, necessities and priorities. Discussing those issues took me to government in 1999, since I had begun to write on what to do as positive alternatives for some years, proposing publicly alternatives, etc. The governor, who was elected by a huge leftist and centrist coalition—I don't know how to define that coalition, it was a very huge coalition of different parties, but with the presence in the coalition of PT (Partido do Trabalhadores, Workers' Party) and all those more important parties on the left then Anthony Gartinho, he was elected by that huge coalition. He invited me to become under-secretary in charge of projects, programs, the elaboration and formulation of policies, etc. The secretary would be in charge of the implementation, the application of it.*

*Of course, it came as—not of course, it could be otherwise, but the invitation came as a surprise. I had written a small book for the election—what to do in Rio de Janeiro—a very practical book, saying that the respect of human rights and the effectiveness of the police were not in opposition in the country; they were deeply connected. Those two conditions were deeply connected and they couldn't be otherwise; you couldn't have police effectiveness without the respect of the constitution, respect of the law, respect of human rights. And you couldn't enforce the respect of fundamental rights, liberty and human rights without a democratic and effective police. This is obvious to anyone that comes from a democracy. But it was not clear at all in Brazil. It was not clear mostly for those on the left. So it was a kind of a scandal but since people respected me and my trajectory—and since the arguments were very clear—it began to become acceptable, at least for certain groups. It was in 1998, 1999. I'd say that these ideas are much stronger now. Minister (Ronaldo) Teixeira, former Minister Teixeira, is now running for governor [Indecipherable]. I worked with him when he was a mayor in [Indecipherable]. His problem as minister of justice until very*

---

*recently was based upon this principle. This was repeated over and over, which is again very, very meaningful for us in Brazil. We nowadays can state without causing a scandal that defending human rights is the same, or is just a dimension of the defense of good and effective policing.*

*So, into government. Of course, it was very hard because, as you can imagine, the idea of a politician is not necessarily getting things done, but composing the support in such a way that the next election would be won. So since he didn't trust me as a manager, as a leader in practice, since the governor didn't know me well enough to give me the full responsibility, and since he thought society would like to have someone who could represent tough-on-crime policies and decided someone else could represent change and soft-on-crime policies, he thought the best marriage, the best combination, would be a general of the army for secretary and myself, an anthropologist linked to human rights movements, as under-secretary. That would be a wonderful combination. It didn't work. The conflict was open.*

*I was not there just to act as a tool for a political move. I was not there to make it possible for a general to impose his own tough-on-crime policies. The governor had told me, had promised me, personally in private, that the general represented tough-on-crime policies by the fact of being a general but he was very eager to obey the governor and follow our path, our program—which he didn't do. On a daily basis, the general was a general with his professional culture, with his own views. The book, the problem, the projects were for him just symbolic tools to disguise, or to make people happy, and to work as a facilitator in the clinical sense, if I may say so. It didn't work. I began to live daily conflict. Our steps, which were planned, were being confronted by the secretary's decisions, and I had to give the governor the decision of keeping me or the general. It was not possible, this shared experience. The governor decided to keep me and replace the general, because he was very explicit, the general, in disrespecting our promises, our program, etc. So the governor didn't have much to do if he wanted to keep his promise and his trust, at least with those who supported him politically at that time.*

*Someone else came, a colonel of the military police, who was there more or less to replace the general, even in his instrumental role to send a sign that tough-on-crime positions were there—but with the orientation that our program should be respected and really implemented. Which began to happen. Things, I would say, went further. Not swiftly—not at all. With terrible reactions, with violence from those linked to police corruption and police brutality threatened. People were killed in Rio de Janeiro on the weekends, mostly tourists, to destabilize the government and myself. We received a message from those terrorists—they were actually acting as terrorists. They were linked to the police. We were investigating, going closer and closer, and we knew that they were linked to those who were feeling they were going to lose power because of our changes.*

*Many times, people didn't understand how obviously necessary were changes that didn't have to do with necessarily arresting corrupted policemen, changes that had to do with rationalization with organization. How could those organizing organizational moves provoke such violent reactions? But I learned very quickly that the best friend of corruption and brutality is anarchy—is institutional disorganization. It is the absence of control tools and governance tools. It is the absence of organic, systematic organization.*

*When they felt the anarchy would be replaced by a basic form of organization they understood and they predicted the development that would come from that*



---

*first step. Just to mention one of our problems: delegacia legal which is nothing more than the informatization of data, the creation of an interconnected system, the end of bureaucratic mediations so that we could get to the point and transform police stations in communities for investigation, as they should be, by law and not on a basis for bureaucracy and for violence. What we had was archipelagos of islands, which were the police stations, abandoned and isolated local units.*

*Our problem was oriented to our situation of system so that we could govern and could define priorities, methods, success, and know what was the goal of each one, instead of papers. Just to give you an idea, each local unit had 64 books of traffic notes; they didn't have computers at all. After the change we reduced that to four books for local units. We shut the prisons that existed within each station. We still have a couple. We still have some, but the majority not anymore fortunately. At that time, almost all of them had their own arrests in place, their own small prison. So, of course, if a citizen comes he or she will be received as a threat because this person could be coming to open doors and to control the station in favor of those who were arrested. So there was not exactly a unity to receive citizens who needed help during investigations and other kinds of services.*

BENNET: What was the manifestation of some of the reaction to these attempts at change?

SOARES: *People were killed, and we got messages. I would say six or seven people were killed and we got messages saying that these things would continue, will even become bigger. We and our families—myself and the governor—would become their main targets. I even received—through the intelligence people, police who were working with us—I got a map indicating the daily transit of my children, when they used to leave home, went to school, where they used to go after school, what were the alternatives of transportation, very detailed. Things like that, they were getting ready for anything. We didn't know. We had to be always with security of the whole family.*

*Just to give you an example, CBN (Central Brasileira de Notícias, Brazilian Central News) —which is our main news radio, which is linked to a global system of radio and TV—on the air I was with the governor in the car and we listened to a journalist reading the latest news. "Luiz Eduardo Soares, under-secretary, suffered an attempted murder with his girl, his daughter, and we don't know exactly his health state, but he could have been killed. We don't know yet, but it is confirmed already because the car exploded, etc., etc." And we were together. We called CBN and asked them to immediately say I was OK. You can imagine the reactions among family and friends. But this was planted on purpose, to create this atmosphere.*

*There were many, many situations. But I'd say that those six or seven murders plus dozens of messages and threats were the symptoms we had. But of course—it's not of course, actually; just when we look backwards, it seems natural—but by the end of the year, 1999, Gov. Garotinho became the best assessed governor in the country according to the polls. He got around 80% of approval. That was a triumph that meant failure or led to failures, because of the ambition. It is a Shakespearean chapter, story. He was so happy, he invited myself and the other coordinators, he created a system of coordination following a suggestion by myself and a colleague of mine who was the secretary of planning, a system of five coordination units in the government, because I was always defending the idea that we needed to integrate different sectors, that policies should be multisectorial to target effectively multidimensional problems.*



---

*This would imply reforming the organization of government itself. So we began to work—this is why I became coordinator of security and justice, citizenship, and what we called civil defense.*

*Those secretariats were under my guidance, my responsibility. Which, in practice, didn't occur. That was the formal rule, the formal orientation, but in practice the secretaries always resisted any guidance, any superior orientation. I underwent difficult times. I had to negotiate each step. It was very, very hard, because there was this previous culture of organization and each agent defended himself or herself, his or her own space, and own power and micropower. So we could expect that. But anyhow, we were five or six—five, I guess—coordinators.*

*We were invited to a breakfast late the previous night, and very early we were at the palace—7 o'clock, 6, 6:30—and the governor was enthusiastic, sharing with us this new result of the research on public opinion about governors, etc. He was the best-assessed governor. He told us, "Now you'll be in charge, you five; you will be in charge of government. I will dedicate myself to politics, because I am a candidate to the presidency." We're talking about the end of the first year—of him having to go through another three years. So just 25% of his work had been done. But he was so enthusiastic that he said, "Now I'm a natural candidate."*

*Well, the fact is, if he would become an intended candidate for presidency, he couldn't be on the left because there was someone there: Lula (Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva). Lula was the natural candidate for the leftist coalition. So he would have to look for another place for himself. He would have to reshape his identity. You can now predict what happened. He had to reorganize his own government, change secretaries, and reshape the coalition. The first head that he had appointed himself that he asked for was mine.*

*It came to be a conservative corrupted party that is always in power, even now. Those linked to PMDB (Partido do Movimento Democrático Brasileiro, Brazilian Democratic Movement Party). Of course, there are some honest guys there, but fewer and fewer. People from PMDB wanted to occupy important spaces and they wanted me out because they were linked to several old delegados and colonels. Delegados are leaders of the civil police that were against me and those who represented tradition and the conservative patterns of behavior—those who were feeling themselves at risk, not necessarily linked to crime and violent reactions, but some of them were connected to those practices. Many of them also needed this anarchy about which I spoke because they had private businesses offering private security, which is illegal, and I was after that. But they were afraid they were going to have to decide, as I was telling them, either business in private security or being officers in the police. It is illegal to keep both practices, most being owners of both enterprises.*

*So there were different levels of connections with illegality, but all of them were together in reaction against my presence in government. The governor had to redefine his own identity, also trying to be more and more in the tough-on-crime field—which was weird, because we had excellent results by the end of the first year in terms of public security. Actually, I couldn't say excellent results, I just could say something like that considering the comparison among the different tiers. We had to contextualize that. Of course the results were bad, but it was better than we could anticipate. We stabilized the numbers obtained in 1998, and we made important progress in several different areas, very important for us in domestic violence, homophobic crimes, crimes of racism, against the environment.*

*We changed completely the relationship with favelas. We began to implement what nowadays is called UPP (Unidade Pacificadora da Policia, Peace Police Unit), then we called [Indecipherable] pela Paz. But the problem was the same. We chose the same favelas to start the program, all the idea of police reform. We began to implement a model inspired by CompStat (New York's Computer Statistics accountability program), with the informatization of data and establishment of a strategy of sharing territories. The police would share responsibility over specific territories so that they could begin to work together in a system close to CompStat.*

*There were several different initiatives that were always presented as a system. That was the first time in Brazil that anyone—I would say on the left, linked to him on the right, but it doesn't matter—anyone would present a systematic program oriented to prevention policies, to institutional reform, the reduction of crime, the control of arms, of weapons, firearms. We began in Rio de Janeiro this incredibly important effort at controlling illegal arms, which became a national law afterwards—but we began it as a state policy; and community policing project, etc.*

*This idea of defining a policy of public security and a policy that would involve the creation of different mechanisms and reforming the police and applying social, preventive policies—we defined the relationship with the communities, and we defined the image of the police. We were organizing a system of police education, planning professional authorization of policemen. Everything in its place forming a system, even with all its weakness, its problems, its contradictions, its insufficiencies—in spite of all its problems, that was the first time we could talk about public policy on public security.*

*That became a reference. In March 2000, I was expelled from government. Our situation required a decision—something happened and we had to take a position. I proposed publicly that we had to face crime in the police—it was not just a problem of corruption, it was much more than that. That required a strong decision and we had to pay a price as society and we had to be transparent enough to speak about this, what I call the rotten branch of the police, ramo podre police. It sounded scandalous. It sounded like too much, it sounded like an exaggeration and many were offended, but they knew what I was talking about. They were pressing and creating situations of all kinds to make it impossible to go ahead, so I went for a confrontation. I guess we still need to go through that confrontation.*

*The governor decided not to do it. He said that the problem was not that important; we could deal with it just by expelling some individuals from the police and I was exaggerating things. So I was expelled, and had to leave, of course, because the situation was very, very, very tense. I knew plans they had all kinds. I had many friends also within the police. I went to New York, stayed there one year, then one year in Porto Alegre. Then came back just two years, when I was candidate for vice governor; we didn't get elected, and that's the story.*

*Then I went to the federal government and stayed there one year. I didn't stay. There were many, many important factors, but I would say the most important is that President Lula didn't want to call for himself the responsibility of changing the system of security. Why? Because it is too comfortable to keep things as they are. Nowadays, thanks to the awful constitutional chapter, the responsibility is in the state; it is under the state, each state. The governor is responsible. He is a more important actor as far as security goes. The police are state police. We*

---

*have a military and civil police in each state. The federal government doesn't have much to do with public safety or public security. It is much more comfortable this way, of course, because he can present himself as a helper, a father, someone who in a crisis will be present with his solidarity and some money. He will also take profit from crises, from any crisis. But it is the governors who have to take a political price for the difficulties.*

*We knew we had to change that. Our problem was very clear. I was one of the coordinators of this problem, which was correlated throughout the year 2001. We worked for the whole year, listening to researchers, listening to people from the whole country. We organized a very interesting program of police reform, prevention of violence, prevention policies, etc.—more or less projecting our experience in Rio and some good experiences that were developing in municipalities and some states after that. We tried to synthesize that in a major national program which would involve the supplemental structure of institutional change, the changing of this model, to control of extrajudicial killings, torture, police violence, the distribution of federal money—everything.*

*It was well-crafted. Proof of that is the fact that the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank were open to help us. They didn't do that before. There was an exception in Uruguay, because [Indecipherable] came from Uruguay so he supported the very specific—a local experimenting police community. But that was very rare, very special, because even the World Bank didn't want to get related to security, not at all.*

*But in Rio de Janeiro when I was here I convinced some representatives of the Inter-American Bank, and they gave us something like \$10 million or \$15 million to our delegacia legal because they understood the importance of that, even socially, even for the development of economic projects. So we had this very interesting connection, interesting common experience. I became national secretary. Since they understood the importance of the problem, they understood that was the first time, nationally, something more consistent was going to be tried. They decided to support us. We were talking about \$3 billion, \$4 billion, something that could make a start at least at that moment—energy to induce change.*

*And Lula was very sympathetic to those ideas. Of course, he approved everything. We had this important presentation for the nation in the House of Representatives in 2002 when he was not yet a candidate, he was a pre-candidate. But we had all named political leaders of the nation present there. Lula spoke, I spoke, and two other colleagues spoke about the problem. And the reception was very positive. So we started with this promise that things were beginning, finally, to change. But it happened quicker than we and the most important consultants thought.*

*In August, eight months after the start of government, I got the endorsement of all 27 governors in our plan. So, now the president should invite them for what we called the Celebration of Peace pact, Pacto pela Paz, which would be the most important political manifestation on public security based upon consensus. Of course, with his political strength—we are talking about 2003, August; he was at the top, as he is now again, plus the governors with their strength, political strength— they would give the Congress, the national House of Representatives, the plan and ask the representatives to endorse it as well and to change the constitution to make it possible for us to, as I would say, extend to public security the democratic transition and finally end this process or at least put it in another dimension, another level.*

*But then when Lula and the consultants, the closest partners, saw what they had—this endorsement of all the governors—they saw that it actually happened and now they would have to call the responsibility and become the major protagonist for security. Just by doing that—by inviting everyone, just by taking that initiative. He understood that the following day Mrs. Brown would be robbed and would say to the media, to a TV channel, “Well, the president promised everything was going to change in public security, and now I was robbed. So Mr. President, please, I don’t understand you.”*

*Of course, he understood that this would mean a political risk. He would have all the responsibility and the political risks. He decided, as his predecessors did, as Fernando Henrique (Cardoso) did, and Fernando Henrique was feeling guilty about that. He told me personally he acted wrongly on that. But anyway, things passed. But Lula decided not to do that, just to forget that.*

*I guess in the United States or in more mature democracies, it would be impossible for someone after promising to do that—throughout a whole campaign and throughout the first eight months—just to forget it because the media would call his attention and ask about that. The price of not doing that would be greater than taking the risk of being charged on security. But here memories are very subtle, very liquid, not solid enough. And people just—. It was part of the national agenda and the following day it was not any more. They were very smart, the president’s consultants and partners in the Ministry of Justice. I was national secretary, not a minister; I was at a separate level of authority. I left government. The minister of justice, since he holds authority over federal police, decided to replace public-security policies for federal-police actions—spectacular actions against which were never actually targeted by any police.*

*In Brazil, you know there is this criminalization of poverty and this very selective and biased police pattern of behavior. So it was very amusing for the general public to see those spectacular actions followed by the media, who were invited always to follow up, to be present at these actions. There were these spectacular actions against bankers and rich people who deserved this kind of action but not the visibility, which was unconstitutional because you were kind of condemning suspects before judgment. But anyhow, many times those incredible actions were not followed or supported by consistent investigation. Many of those actions were lost. People are now at liberty—in prison they didn’t face any major judgment or sentence. So, but that was a way of calling attention to people and making people forget what could have made a difference. So things are still where I left them more or less. We didn’t move forward significantly. We still have ahead of us the same major challenges that we were facing before I went to government 10 years ago.*

**BENNET:** Let me ask you—this is very interesting about your history. Given that wealth of experience and expertise, I would love to hear your thoughts on the GPAE (Grupamento de Policiamento em Areas Especiais) program, for example, or some of these pilot programs that have gone into the favelas in a more integrated fashion and now currently the UPP (Unidade Pacificadora da Policia) program—to get an idea of some of the mechanisms that are involved there both politically in trying to implement some of these reforms, then also on the implementation side, sort of the nuts and bolts, if you will, of what considerations need to be taken into account, specifically for Rio and its favelas.

**SOARES:** *I will respond, but let me just take a break.*

---

BENNET: Sure. [end of file one]

BENNET: Do you need me to repeat the question?

SOARES: *No, no. Well, UPP, GPAE, as well as [Indecipherable] pela Paz are actions or programs or projects which try to replace an old pattern of police behavior whose results were tragic, in all senses. I'm talking about this old style, the old methods of invasions. There was this old model of producing security, this old way of dealing with favelas and traffickers within those communities. The basic idea of this old model was, or still is, the invasion as if we were in a war—the invasion of enemy territory with all the implications of that.*

*So if you are in the territory of an enemy in a war, even if you tried to target only the warriors, of course you are excused for what you could call civilian casualties, which are many. Now imagine 200 or so, or 100, or 50 policemen, heavily armored, invading a favela as if they were in a war—which means shooting all over because they don't actually know where the warriors, so to speak, are—the traffickers. So they will just shoot. Since the favelas are in general mountains, since you are climbing, going up, if you are using powerful machine guns, you are going to create a situation of severe insecurity for everyone, for the inhabitants of the place. You can imagine the horror, the fear, the traumas of the children, the women, men who live there. If they are playing in the street, if they are just home. But many times the walls are not firm or dense enough to avoid the trespassing of a bullet. Many times the bullet will cross the walls because they are very weak and will kill someone inside the house, so people will have to stay on the floor even inside their houses. If someone is out of the house, any member of the family, the fear will be terrible. You don't know where your kid is, and the shooting is tremendous.*

*So many, many people were killed; many innocent people got killed and many of the suspects got killed. But many of them even after surrendering, because police in Rio decided by the mid '90s, which was a change in my government, just to remind, I should have said that, we went after the lowest numbers in the police killings in the last I'd say 20 years or so. The numbers are very high, 272, if I'm not wrong. But in the years before, the numbers were higher than 400. And the years forward the numbers were even higher than the previous numbers, from 500 to a level of 1,000.*

*We had, from 2003, through to 2009, 8,754 deaths caused by police. Of course, all of them were poor people and most of them black; almost all of them living in favelas. Many times I was saying the suspects will surrender, but police in Rio don't accept surrendering so they were just executed.*

*For this reason, traffickers had to invest so much in powerful weapons. They didn't have a choice—they had to fight until the very last man died. If you don't have a way out, you have to increase the intensity of violence. This is basic. If you don't want violence and killings, you have to open up a way out even if the way out is surrender. But this is just to give you one more detail on our chief police behavior.*

*But imagine the horror of police invasion. What could be the gains? Arresting some traffickers and getting some weapons out? Actually, in these kinds of situations, you kill suspects; very rarely are you going to arrest some suspects. Is it worth it to kill many people, innocent people, to arrest a couple of guys? Of course it is not; it is unconstitutional. So it is a terrible mistake. But even the consequences—can you imagine the consequences? The following day, the*



---

*police will come down after the killing. They will come down. Many times policemen got killed as well, of course, but after this tragedy they will come down. What is going to happen the next day? Those who were killed, if they were linked to trafficking, will be replaced; they are parts in the machinery. And nothing happens.*

*I mean tragedies happen. Sorrow, sufferings, trauma, stigma, tragedies of all kinds. Inequalities will get deeper and deeper. [interruption] So what happened? The traumas and inequalities, the prejudice against police, against what they call *asfalto*, people that are not in *favelas*. The divide, the apartheid, the social apartheid will deepen, will become stronger, of course.*

*So nothing happens from the point of view of public security, but many tragedies and socially terrible consequences come from that kind of approach. Nevertheless it became a pattern.*

*It is something like, well, I have a friend, an American friend, who thought English was a kind of Esperanto, a global language, a transparent language—anyone naturally would understand. When he came to visit the first time, he would talk in English to people on the streets and people would be perplexed, not knowing what to do, how to respond, because they couldn't understand. So my friend, understanding that they were not getting a word, would repeat what he had said louder. Since the person still didn't understand, he would repeat it again louder—still louder and louder. As if in making the sounds more clear the meanings would flourish naturally, and the language would become transparent. It is more or less the same idea, the same method.*

*If something is not working, do it again—more strongly, with more intensity. "Well, it's still not working; let's do it again and repeat it." This has been done for years and years—with exceptions. One exception was 1999, and we replaced that for another kind of approach. Which approach? We would not invade. If there was the necessity of an arrest, we would wait until the suspect would come out, and we wouldn't invade and do anything without proper judicial authorization and proper preparation. Sometimes we would have to be there, but the idea was that, while being there was our goal, we wouldn't be there while we wouldn't be prepared to be there as in any fancy neighborhood.*

*To be in a favela with police would require the same kind of education, training and resources that are provided for policemen in fancy neighborhoods. While we couldn't provide that, we wouldn't invade; we would try to develop different strategies to enforce the law, knowing that it was better not to act and to wait until we could arrest in proper conditions some people and arms than provoking deaths. Life was sacred, a primary good, a primary right. The main priority was protecting life. So we wouldn't risk or put anyone under risk just for an arrest.*

*Of course, this is just a step, because the idea was being able to be present at the favelas—as we are and were present at any other neighborhood—and ideally with community policing methods that would be superior. Then we decided to experiment, a different approach, a different method, starting with some favelas and some communities that are smaller so that we could get experience and prove to everyone that this kind of approach would be much better.*

*Which approach? We would prepare a group of policemen to be constantly there as, I repeat, police are constantly in any fancy neighborhood, developing ideally if possible a community-policing pattern of work. Besides that, we should then provide public service, sometimes with education and health, etc. So you'd have*

---

*to develop an integrated approach—multisectorial, multidimensional, working with different areas of government. For this reason, the idea of [Indecipherable] pela paz—I don't know how to translate [Indecipherable] into English. It is an action taken by the whole community, by different agents simultaneously in solidarity, to give something, to work together. The idea was multidimensionality, multisectorial policies and respect for police, developing different relations with the community.*

*Of course, it worked very, very well for obvious reasons. People wanted eagerly to get rid of the traffickers with their tyrannical power, their violence. And they wanted to get rid of violent police, because they had the experience of seeing, on a daily basis, traffickers and policemen in their corrupt deals, dealing with each other as partners. They knew that traffickers existed and trafficking existed because there was this partnership with the corrupted segments of police. So if they can get rid of both—the violent, brutal police that will shoot at you, and that will be always dealing with traffickers, and get rid of the traffickers—they will feel free again and citizens fully again. That will be a very valued experience, a much valued experience for them, as we can easily understand.*

*If they get more than that, if they get state services, that will be wonderful. Nothing more than what they deserve. Nothing more than what is the duty of the state. Anyhow, for them it was a conquest. So it was a success for those who lived there, for the media, for public opinion. That helped us a lot to accumulate capital to invest in police reform. That was very important. Of course, there was—at first with GPAE and nowadays UPP—fear of return to the previous chapter in this story of terror. Because if government and police undo what they've done, traffickers will be back, charging the community for their complicity with state power, with state institutions, with police. Perhaps that could bring for them terrible consequences. So they were insecure, because of the possibility of discontinuity. This happens always and for good reason, because they know how politics goes.*

*So we had this good experience. But we didn't get full governmental support in 1999. The governor anticipated the political treasure in that program—he wanted to keep it for himself. So he asked me to interrupt it, because he wanted to qualify it and give to it all the power, the strength and the value it deserved. But of course I understood that there was something else there, and actually he wanted to rename the project. When he did it, he became the author—but the price he paid was keeping police out of the project. So it became a social-assistance program, with some virtues and many, many problems. But it lost the police dimension. So it became almost impossible to be implemented.*

*If you still have traffickers, if you still have the old situation of violence, you cannot implement any agency or social programs. So it was a zero politically. Actually, I never understood completely how the governor, who was so smart, interrupted that experience. Now perhaps, looking at what has happened now, perhaps he is thinking that he could have acted differently.*

*Well, I went out of government; I was expelled from government. All these things came together. This was also a way of weakening my authority, my power in government itself, just before I was expelled. Six months later, we had an explosion of homicides, bus burnings—convulsions of all kinds, confrontations in communities because the old-style police invasions came back. [Indecipherable] pela Paz was interrupted, ended. The communities that had got that kind of police kept it for a while, but afterwards—. You know, if you can't count on the governor and the power of someone who is there all the time overseeing and is*

---

*important, leading processes—if you don't get that kind of support, and if you are going against the major tendencies—the consequences are negative.*

*So in six months, the governor lost popularity, and all the image of being a leader of the transformation of security in Rio de Janeiro. He lost control of what was going on in the communities. The invasions were there, the corruption among traffickers and policemen again. Of course, these kinds of things happened when I was in charge, but they became perhaps less in intensity and in number—and much more cautious, in the sense that they would hide what they were doing. They wouldn't do it in front of the community, because they knew we were after them. We created our ouvidoria de policia (police ombudsman) with a person whom you should perhaps listen to, a great, great professional, a very important leader for us, Julita Lemgruber. She was our ouvidoria de policia, I invited her. She had been the director of the prison system under Brizola and she fought against torture and all that. A very courageous woman. She is a sociologist, also a fighter for alternative penalties, penalties alternative to deprivation of freedom, to incarceration. Julita Lemgruber was very strong and trusted by the communities.*

*So we were fighting corruption, fighting police brutality. For this reason, we got this incredible reduction, as I mentioned. But after six months, in 2000 since I had left office after the reversal of the whole process, the governor decided to bring back the experience of [Indecipherable] pela Paz with some other name, under the idea of changing names to change authorship, to avoid political connections. He invited my close friend who was my right arm when I was in office, colonel—nowadays, currently, he is a colonel—Antonio Carlos Costa. He had been my student in sociology in the beginning of the '90s. We were friends since then. We worked together, I learned a lot with him. He went with me to the federal government as well. We had this long partnership.*

*The governor invited him—he was a major by then—to implement a local experience of [Indecipherable] pela Paz with this other name invented by Antonio Carlos to accept the demand of the governor and the secretary. So he was in charge of this Rio de Paz. The idea of Rio de Paz is good police, effective and respectful, not corrupt, not brutal, ideally with a community-policing approach, policing oriented to solving problems, etc. The idea was the same: Instead of invasions, have a constant presence—a respectful, effective presence. Plus state public services besides police. That came more or less naturally because when things worked so well, I don't know if you already interviewed Antonio Carlos, he would tell you how difficult it was to implement because police never liked those experiments. They sent to him the worst policemen available, those who were expelled from other battalions, etc. He had to arrest in the first two months, I guess, 30 policemen, to show them that things were different.*

*Those actions, those arrests were very important to send a positive sign to the community, because he wouldn't accept corruption, he wouldn't accept brutality, just as he wouldn't accept traffickers walking armed. Of course he was accused by [Indecipherable] just for these guys, a very, very smart politician. He is always thinking about elections and public opinion. To let them do whatever was being done because he was in the position through the governor, he said that that was bullshit because actually drug trafficking was still in place. Not there but in Copacabana people would—but of course, in the whole world, democratic world. Even the best police in the world didn't get to control that. Of course there will be markets. You can discipline and control, but you can't avoid in practice completely if you are in a democracy. The problem is not there; our problem is not drugs.*

*If the problems were drugs, it would be first alcohol. We have 16 million alcoholics. It would be, in second place, smoking cigarettes, because we've got to reduce the consumption of cigarettes a lot. But anyhow it is still dangerous; it is still causing cancer. Cocaine—we have in Rio de Janeiro each year something like 40, not more than 50, people dead by abuse and consumption of cocaine. So our problems are the killings with weapons. If you can avoid that, if you can avoid violence and weapons and shootings, you have the problems the whole world has: the problem of drugs, which is not something that can be dealt with by police.*

*Of course, that was very hypocritical by [Indecipherable], and he was in a minority position criticizing because the experience was recognized as an important one and (Sergio) Cabral's leadership was praised. The ambience changed it completely, the results were very well—and social service came, I said more or less naturally, because everyone began to help, to want to help, NGOs, social movements, people from Copacabana, from the neighborhoods, Pavão-Pavãozinho and Cantagalo, those two favelas where the experiment was implemented. So it was a very nice experience. The problem with the experience was it didn't have scale; it was just a case study, a laboratory. It didn't become a policy applied to a whole state or at least to a greater number of favelas.*

*The second problem: The governor, the political power were not there, leading or present or helping support. So when this incredible guy, this incredible leader Cabral, left the position two years after that, the reduction was incredible. The idea was reducing homicides to zero, and for almost two years there were none at all. But when he had to leave, even with his successor being a very nice guy and well intended and competent, things got out of hand because this guy didn't have this leadership. He didn't have, in the dialogue with the community, the same legitimacy. So the whole experience was lost.*

*Police created a GPAE unit, a unit responsible for implementing new GPAEs in different places. But again, without political leadership's support and without a project to reform police, these kinds of things can't develop because there is this tsunami of the old style, of the old practice. There is a tsunami of criminality within police, of bad behavior, of corruption. Even this tsunami of bad tactics and strategies.*

*So the wrongdoings overlapped and eliminated the good experience. Now we are in the third chapter, UPP. The project is excellent. The idea is the same one, exactly the same one, and it is being very well dealt with, very well conducted now because the governor is there. He understood that he was going to lose the election if he didn't do that. So after three years of massacres in the favelas, with him defending the old-style police invasion as if it were something original, with the media saying the same, which is incredible because everyone knows it has three years of story—. But still the idea is, "Now for the first time being pioneers, being original, we are going to fight crime, be tough on crime, invading favelas and paying the price in lives and casualties, facing war, etc., etc." This is the old language, the old practice and the results are well-known. So it is just a repetition as I mentioned to you with other terms, with more intensity, but it returns; it returns it's the same.*

*But the governor understood that there was this new possibility. The proposal came from businessmen, linked globally. It didn't come from the government itself. Those businessmen listened to things we—this is a very large "we," those who are in civil society linked to this theme as researchers or professionals, who*



---

*are criticizing all the time this pattern of behavior who are claiming for the reintroduction of this other kind of approach. Finally, thanks to these businessmen who got to be listened by the governor, with the support of global businesses, they decided to make this the new symbol of the government. By doing that, there was this incredible reversal in public opinion and he was going to be elected the first round.*

*So now the implementation is well done, because you have in the police, more people understanding the importance of this; more than in my time and my time had more than in Cabral's time. You have this political support. You have an excellent secretary of social assistance, [Indecipherable], a very, very close friend of mine. And I'm very proud because I brought him to public service—he was just a professor and a Communist and I invited him, more than that I persuaded him in 2002 to be part of government and then he went to federal government, through [Indecipherable]. So he is a great, great figure and a professional.*

*Thanks to this understanding of the importance of the program, in some circles we need to do this. Thanks to the importance, the legal importance of the experiment itself, and thanks to [Indecipherable] and his group, I guess we now have the possibility of developing the project much more. There is still a great challenge, or two great challenges. The police: the governor forgot to include police reform in the agenda, which is an irony; he didn't want to deal with that. And critical momentum. After the election, will the governor be still present and will global support be so strong and with this rotten police, the deprecated institution, will it be possible to give scale, to give dimension of public policy to this good experiment—which is still an experiment, a laboratory. The scale is still the same as we had in 1999. The scale is exactly the same—eight, nine favelas. We are at the same point that we were.*

*Now, to make this public policy you have to change the police. It is impossible to give the policy stability, continue sustainability with the police deeply broken and a source of crime. So, political leadership after the election plus police reform—without those factors we cannot be optimists about the development of the system, or sustainability of this.*

**BENNET:** I know you're short on time, and I appreciate all the time you're giving me. Just as a final question I would be interested to know, given your expertise, how you would measure success of a program like the UPP as it is sort of midway through its implementation now or still early on rather in the implementation. What are you looking for when you look for measurements of success?

**SOARES:** *I guess there are some that are very clear. The single fact that you have the presence of a public service as important as public security—I mean, that you have police day and night. This in itself is a factor, is an empirical event. If you have the constant presence of police—working, in the sense that they are not there as they were before, just to take some money from traffickers, but they are doing their job. If they are doing their job constantly—implying you don't have traffickers, heavily armed, imposing their arbitrary law over the community then you have the return of the democratic state—then you have the restoration of legal order in a place which had been taken from the authority of law, of the constitutional state. This is a fact in itself that is extremely, extremely important.*

*Now you are not part of a community under a different power, with its own laws. You are not under the despotism of an armed group of terrorists so to speak. You are now a citizen with the problems of citizenship in Brazil, of inequality, all the*



---

*problems that are there under national constitutional democratic law. And there is representation of the state called the police—an important institution that is doing its duty in keeping order and peace and praising the law respectfully. This is an extremely important fact. It is not something that you can compare with a number or other data. The fact that we have legitimacy, we have democracy, constitutional law, etc. This is a big difference.*

*But more than that, you can count the crimes. You can listen to the community, and they will tell you if they trust you. As I told you, they are still very uncertain about the future, but if they trust you, they will tell you how happy they are—even if they still criticize the behavior of many of the policemen, because you still have the infiltration of the past, the infiltration of the old professional culture all the time, since you are still acting against the tide within an old, irrational, disorganized police and trained to be brutal, etc. Trained to act, to fall in to biases or filters of class, color of skin, etc. So it is a major fact.*

*It is worthy in itself, and it tells a lot. But besides that, you can begin to count crimes—how many?—and the assessment by the community itself of police behavior. You begin to see the formation of demands that didn't exist. Then you can assess the provision of services, state services. Then you have what you give in a natural, common, usual situation in a democracy. You can measure the provision of services, the feelings and responses from the community. You can even measure criminality, and you are going to see that murders, homicides, killings by police and traffickers just disappear in most of those places. But still, we are talking about eight, nine communities in a universe of 1,100. It is almost nothing. It is just a demonstration that we need a different approach, that a different approach is possible, is positive, is doable, is viable. But to be actually viable as a major-scale policy, as a public policy, you do have to count on a different institution, a different police.*

BENNET: Thank you so much. Is there any other topic that I haven't covered that you think would be relevant?

SOARES: *I guess more or less. Of course, things will come up to my mind afterwards, and you yourself will notice that many things are lacking. But it is never complete.*

BENNET: Thank you so much for your time.

SOARES: *My pleasure.*