Afterword – Preliminary Results of the Project Public Security in Brazil: an Outlook[1]

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This work was finished in 2014, with the book *Violência e Segurança Pública em 2023*: *cenários exploratórios* e *planejamento prospectivo*[5] published the following year, describing the methodology used and its results. Many relevant events have happened since, including:

- economic recessions in Brazil in 2015, 2016 and 2020; impeachment of the president of the Republic in 2016;

- implementation of a expenditure ceiling for the federal government (Constitutional Amendment No. 95/2016);

- pandemic of covid-19 with a strong impact in 2020 and 2021;

- approval of a law on the Unified System of Public Security (Sistema Único de Segurança Pública – Susp) (Law No. 13,675/2018);

- growth of militias;

- clashes between factions outside Rio de Janeiro;

- growth in the homicide rate, until 2017, and then fall;[6]

- easing of gun control policy;

- more countries decriminalizing the use of marijuana and reproduction of the drug supply reduction policy in Brazil;

- tightening of penal legislation (for example, Law No. 13,964/2019);

- growth of deaths by police intervention and a drop in the murders of on-duty and off-duty police officers;[7]

- growth in the number of police candidacies for political offices;[8]

- growth in support for institutional disruption in the country;

- technological innovations in security public (such as body cameras for Military Police);

- political polarization in the country; and

- social networks consolidating themselves as an arena of political dispute and a means of disseminating fakes news.

This indicates the need for a new study. This, however, will not be done here. We will take advantage of this afterword to present the final results of the work published in the book *Violência e Segurança Pública em 2023*: *cenários exploratórios e planejamento prospectivo*, whose content will hereby be summarized, with changes.

Based on the analysis of the four constructed scenarios, the elements that make up the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (Swot) matrix were initially identified. A set of opportunities, threats, strengths and weaknesses was extracted from the four scenarios and, then, as a result of the intersection of these external and internal forces, strategic objectives were proposed. These results can be seen in the annex.

The intersection of strengths and weaknesses with threats and opportunities resulted in twelve strategic objectives, presented below.

1) Develop a national public security plan with a clear definition of the attributions of the Union, states and municipalities, strengthening the paradigm of violence prevention.

2) Develop a national homicide prevention program focused on municipalities with the highest rates of violent crime, ensuring a continuous and sufficient flow of resources.

3) Improve drug policy, including actions to reduce demand.

4) Improve communication with society, with the aim of disseminating results, providing qualified information about the Ministry of Justice's (MJ) operating paradigms (prevention and qualified repression) and promoting society's participation.

5) Qualify states and municipalities for partnerships and management in the area of public security.

6) Integrate actions with other ministries and with other federated entities (programs that cover the social area, especially in relation to young people in situations of socioeconomic vulnerability).

7) Institutionalize more effective and continuous sources of funding and improve transfer instruments (fund to fund, term of commitment etc.).

8) Strengthen investments in intelligence and expertise, using new technologies, to improve problem-solving capacity.

9) Consolidate information systems, with the production and monitoring of indicators, as a way to guide the elaboration of policies, improve management, and produce diagnoses.

10) Improve the prevention, control and enforcement of firearms and ammunition.

11) Encourage the application of penal alternatives to imprisonment.

12) Restructure the prison system.

The proposed results reinforce how foresight strengthens the strategic planning process and how this work of construction of exploratory scenarios and other inputs can be appropriated within the planning of the MJ. The use of the scenario construction methodology as a tool to support planning has increased the participation of specialists external to the organization, mostly researchers from Brazilian universities, who, through brainstorming sessions, had the opportunity to debate and build visions

of the future, in partnership with public servants in the area of security and planning. This process of collective construction of knowledge has several advantages, such as the elimination of blind spots; the appropriation of new knowledge and new perspectives regarding a single phenomenon; and the generation of organizational learning through the appropriation of the generated knowledge; in addition to the exchange of knowledge between researchers and policy practitioners. It also creates images of the future that contribute, directly or indirectly, to the improvement of the decision-making process and facilitates the prioritization of investments, as it highlights the variables and the driving actors, which means those with the greatest capacity to influence and modify the entire system. Based on the key uncertainties for the system, decision makers can better focus their actions. An initial investment in these variables can reduce execution time and costs to achieve strategic objectives, due to the force of contamination they have on the entire system.

As for the suggestions for improving the policy, the results, in the first place, reinforce the urgency of advancing in the public security policy, in view of the risks of the situation worsening even more, whether towards a state of "endemic violence", or for a police state. In this sense, wrong decisions can contribute to an undesirable future.

The option for a more repressive, punitive and incarcerative policy with tougher criminal legislation, criminalization of social groups (such as repression of the work of *flanelinhas* and *camelôs*, for example) and greater use of prison, can reduce our freedom and increase exclusion without reducing crime rates. This perspective has already been tried numerous times in the recent history of the country, without any good results being achieved. On the contrary, repression aimed at the most vulnerable population groups creates a generalized feeling of injustice, which ends up tearing social ties and separating the police from the communities, making the necessary work of co-production of public security unfeasible. Mass incarceration, in turn, facilitates the recruitment of young people into the organized crime business, in addition to allowing them to learn criminal technologies, the result of which returns to the streets.

Second, it is noted that even the most optimistic scenarios indicate that certain trends will hardly be reversed until 2023, such as: i) high social inequality; ii) easy access to firearms; iii) the growth of crime in the interior of the country; iv) low trust in the police; v) governance problems in public security; vi) the high number of police killings; vii) the growth of the activities of criminal organizations; viii) the domination of territories by criminal organizations; ix) the involvement of public agents with organized crime; x) the increase in the circulation of illicit drugs; xi) the high rates of victimization for violent crimes; xii) penal hardening; xiii) the increase in the prison population; xiv) the lack of policy for ex-convicts; xv) the deficit of vacancies in the prison system; and xvi) the high feeling of insecurity. Changing these trends, when possible, depends on a coordinated action by the main actors, which needs to be created and can be led by the MJ.

Third, it is necessary to advance in governance, and in this context, four points stand out. The first is related to public security policy, which needs to better coordinate, integrate and focus prevention and repression measures. This may involve structuring the Unified System of Public Security. In this sense, it would be up to the Union to coordinate this policy, stimulating innovation and reform of police and penal policies, allocating more resources, consolidating a national information system and drawing up innovative national strategies to tackle problems relating to illegal markets (stolen products, drugs, weapons etc.). The states would lead the integration of the police, with unified

training courses, establishment of integrated teams, equal pay etc. In the future, if the police structure happens to be deconstitutionalized, the unification of the police forces or the adoption of complete police cycle could be experimented with in states that so wish. Municipalities would assume the management of local actions for social prevention of violence, with a municipal prevention plan that could include the performance of Social Assistance Reference Centers (Centro de Referência da Assistência Social – Cras), violence prevention programs in schools, urban interventions, coordination with organizations non-governmental organizations (NGOs), guardianship councils and community leaders, and prioritization of the most violent areas, with a focus on youth.

The second point involves the establishment of pacts between bodies of the three Powers to coordinate actions, currently carried out in isolation in the criminal justice system, such as the control of the police, conducted by internal affairs offices and ombudsmen, but which lacks a better performance of the Public Ministry. A pact could also be built in relation to penal execution to address prison overcrowding and the lack of policies for ex-prisoners.

The third point represents the need for better structuring of the bodies that implement the public security policy, such as the National Public Security Secretariat (Secretaria Nacional de Segurança Pública – Senasp) and the police ombudsmen. In this sense, it is necessary to act on the weak point mentioned in the article (see annex), insufficiency of human resources, of specialized qualification and lack of management by competences.

Still in the field of governance, it is important to highlight the need to improve the ways of involving society in the management of politics, either by strengthening the councils, or by building a ten-year public security plan with the participation of society, as is done in the area of education.

Fourth, it is necessary to advance in planning, with the elaboration of a national plan for public security and a program for the prevention of homicides, as reinforced by the strategic objectives. A plan would make it easier for actors to coordinate themselves to achieve goals, help to define priorities and avoid duplication of actions and, with a monitoring system, would allow for course correction and follow-up by society. The homicide prevention program, as being developed by the MJ, would focus on the most serious Brazilian security problem.

Finally, the results pointed to other actions, listed below.

1) Invest in reducing social vulnerabilities, especially in the most violent areas.

2) Redirect drug policy towards demand reduction, given that so far the focus on containing supply has not been able to reduce consumption and has deleterious effects on public security, such as corruption, police violence, conflicts within and between gangs, execution of users with debts, high number of arrests of small traffickers.

3) Strengthen firearms control.

4) Foster the application of penal alternatives and the reform of the penitentiary system. Today, electronic monitoring has opened up the possibility of initiating a debate with society about convicts monitored outside prisons and detention centers, which opens up the real possibility of prison ruled out as the main penalty. However, it is necessary not to fall into a vigilantism that subjects those incarcerated for crimes of lesser offensive potential to the stigma of monitoring. In addition, it is necessary to create conditions, for example, with education, citizenship and professional training projects, so that inmates and sanctioned persons break with a trajectory associated with criminality.

5) Improve the financing of public security, which involves valuing professionals in the area, as well as guaranteeing resources for prevention actions.

6) Invest in investigative police, expertise and police intelligence to ensure, as is already done in many cases, the collection of evidence that guarantees the accountability of those involved and the interruption of the work of recurring offenders.

In conclusion, we hope that this work will contribute to the construction of a democratic, guaranteed and effective public security policy, without which we will keep the high rates of violent crimes and a low sense of security. We also hope that, given the contributions of this methodology and the results achieved, similar prospective studies would be performed, including on other topics related to public policies. Therefore, although the scenarios are not an end in themselves, these initiatives would contribute to the creation of a culture of long-term planning in the country and in the Brazilian State. They would consolidate the relevance of these prospective studies as a management tool, supporting both the decision-making process and planning, and thus contributing to the construction of the desired future.

ANNEX

TABLE A.1
Swot matrix

	Forces from the external environment
	Opportunities
1	Aging, with a reduction in the proportion of young men.
2	Improvements and inclusive social development, with greater access to citizenship.
3	Greater federal and municipal action and increased financial resources leveraged by crises and social demands.
4	Contribution of technological advances to public and private security.
5	Reforms in criminal legislation, criminal enforcement and the criminal justice system, aimed at increasing the application of criminal alternatives and social reintegration.
6	Consensus that public security has two parts: social prevention and qualified repression.
7	Demand from state and municipal governments and society for expanding the role of the federal government in public security.
8	Improvement of public security management, with investment in the production of diagnoses and indicators for monitoring.
9	Strengthening the role of criminal expertise and its structure and management.
10	Cooperation between private security companies and the police.
	Threats
1	Social inequality.
2	Increase in crime, expansion of the illicit drug market and strengthening of criminal organizations, including in the countryside.
3	Easy access and lack of control over the movement of firearms.
4	Lack of agreement on necessary institutional reforms.
5	Perception of public security policy and low trust in the police.
6	Crises in public security arising from the precariousness of security institutions and scarcity of financial resources.
7	Power of the media to guide the public security agenda.
8	Governance in public security institutions.
9	Lack of external control by the police.
10	Police state (criminalization of young people and the poor, lack of prioritization in social policies, distance between society and the police, lack of social reintegration policy, abandonment of criminal alternatives, police violence).
11	Overpopulation, loss of control of penal establishments for criminal organizations and ineffectiveness of social reintegration policies.
	Forces from the internal environment
	Strong points
1	Paradigm of prevention in the work of the MJ.
2	Capacity to induce public security policy, through technical support and training policy, strengthened through transfers to states and municipalities.
3	Position in the institutional network of public security.
4	Existence of the National Public Security Force.
5	Existence of a teaching, research and professional development department within Senasp.
6	Systems.
7	Channels with civil society.
8	Instruments for fighting organized crime.
9	Investment in the structuring of criminal expertise.
10	Promotion of penal alternatives to prison.

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(Continuation)

	Weak points
1	Poor planning and management.
2	Many assignments that cause loss of focus.
3	Lack of medium and long-term financing mechanisms for priority programs.
4	Ineffectiveness, inadequacy and inefficiency of partnership instruments.
5	Failure to fully utilize their capacities to articulate and induce policies.
6	Lack of integration with other units of the Federation and public security bodies.
7	Lack of articulation with agencies in the social area.
8	Ineffective internal and societal communication.
9	Insufficiency of human resources and specialized qualifications and lack of management by competences.
10	Insufficient gun control policy.
11	Inability to oversee the private security sector.

Authors' elaboration.

Obs.: Swot – strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats; MJ – Ministry of Justice; Senasp – Secretaria Nacional de Segurança Pública (National Public Security Secretariat).