



annual report

2022





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letter from the director

It is with great satisfaction that Conectas presents its 2022 activity report, which can be summarized in the following sentence: the organization actively participated in the democratic resistance in the face of intensified attacks on public institutions and the Brazilian electoral system. The tireless defense of democracy and the rights guaranteed by the Federal Constitution was the focus of the organization's efforts on various fronts. Conectas views combating anti-democratic actors as fundamental to advancing the human rights and socio-environmental agenda.

Since the beginning of the year, Conectas has been reporting on the intensification of political violence in Brazil to the international community, has appealed to the Supreme Federal Court (STF) to ensure public participation in the country, has approached the Superior Electoral Court (TSE) to secure peaceful, weapon-free elections and has been urging public authorities and digital platforms to combat disinformation.

Whether in the National Congress or the Judiciary, the organization has been present to prevent the withdrawal of rights, participating in historic legal actions and closely monitoring the progress of bills that represent setbacks in socio-environmental safeguarding and institutional violence.

In addition to its intense work in the field of human rights, Conectas underwent internal transformations, including a change in executive director and the creation of new directorships to bring more dynamism and efficiency to its work.

We hope you enjoy reading this report.

photo: Conectas Archive



Júlia Neiva, Marcos Fuchs, Gabriel Sampaio and Camila Asano

about conectas

WHO WE ARE

More than a non-governmental organization, we are part of a living, global movement that persists in the fight for equal rights. Connected to an extensive network of partners across Brazil and around the world, we are present and make our voices heard in various decision-making spaces that contribute to the advancement of human rights from the perspective of the Global South. We work to safeguard and expand the rights of all people, especially the most vulnerable groups. We propose solutions, prevent setbacks and denounce violations to bring about change.

MISSION

To carry out and expand human rights and combat inequalities to build a just, free and democratic society from the perspective of the Global South.

VISION

To tackle injustices and propose solutions that have a positive impact on people's lives, particularly the most vulnerable.

VALUES

Partnerships: we believe that "connection" and partnerships with a variety of institutions, movements and civil society organizations, independently and across different parties is fundamental. This is not only out of respect for the work of other organizations and a commitment to horizontal cooperation but is also as a strategy for achieving results.

Innovation: defined as the ability to rethink the institution and implement innovative ideas, projects and strategies to address both old and new challenges in the fight to safeguard human rights.

Persistence: we believe that the social transformation we desire will only be achieved through a combination of short, medium and long-term actions, planned and executed persistently with technical rigor and on the basis of evidence. We believe that our activities should be developed strategically and should be aimed at impacting in a concrete way on the prevention and reversal of human rights violations.

Antiracism: understood as a principle to be practiced daily, revealing and tackling all forms of racism in interpersonal relationships and serving as a guideline to permeate all of Conectas' work. The implementation of affirmative action measures is considered essential in promoting racial and ethnic equity

Culture of Care: we believe that the change we seek externally begins internally. Therefore, we promote a culture of care, both individual and collective, as a methodology for building resilience.

PROGRAM PRIORITIES

We will be agile and assertive in resisting setbacks in human rights while proactively seeking changes towards a more just, free, equal and democratic society. We will work tirelessly in rebuilding hope.

Strengthening the Democratic Space

- 1. Defense of Civil Society:** we report and block initiatives to criminalize and limit the activities of organizations, movements and defenders.
- 2. Religious Movements and the Rights Agenda:** we defend the secular state, freedom and religious plurality.
- 3. Defense of Racial Affirmative Actions:** we work towards the formulation of public policies that promote racial equality, address the specific needs of the Black Brazilian population and combat discrimination.
- 4. Migration and Asylum:** we advocate for public policies guided by the principles of the New Migration Law and the rights of migrants and refugees.

Fighting Institutional Violence

- 1. People Deprived of Liberty:** we work to end mass incarceration and to ensure that the state upholds the law by guaranteeing the dignity of people deprived of liberty.
- 2. Control of Security Forces:** we monitor violations and abuse of force by police officers, demanding operational protocols, reduction of police lethality and mechanisms for both external and internal control..
- 3. Drug Policy:** we propose an approach to the issue of drugs that focuses on public health instead of criminal policy and heavily militarized police action.
- 4. Arms Control:** we work towards the consolidation of public policies to control the possession and carrying of firearms, as well as the tracking of weapons and ammunition. Additionally, we act against the abusive use of less-lethal weapons.

Defense of Socioenvironmental Rights

- 1. Impact of the Extractive Industry:** we denounce the impacts of large enterprises that drastically and permanently affect the lives of traditional communities and the environment.
- 2. Climate Justice:** we strive to align political, economic and social processes with commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- 3. Combating Modern Slavery:** we work to strengthen public policies to combat slave-like working conditions.
- 4. Development Financing:** we monitor and promote the human rights policies practiced by development finance institutions.

strengthening the democratic space



photo: Nelson Almeida / AFP



2022 ELECTIONS: THE TIRELESS DEFENCE OF DEMOCRACY

The year 2022 was marked by the most critical elections in Brazil's history, when the very survival of democracy was at stake. In this context, Conectas focused its attention on the electoral process, working to defend democratic institutions, combat political violence and fight disinformation.

Conectas' actions in the defense of democracy, in collaboration with a broad range of civil society organizations, began long before the first round of elections in October. Attempts by far-right politicians and their supporters to undermine Brazilian democracy required a swift and decisive response. For instance, as early as July, there was an attempt to pass the PEC (Proposed Constitutional Amendment) for printed ballot papers.

As early as July, using the allegation of fraud, the Bolsonaro government and its allies in the National Congress pushed for the approval of Constitutional Amendment Proposal (PEC) 135/2019, better known as the PEC for Printed Ballots, authored by Bolsonaro supporter Deputy Bia Kicis. The central justification for the proposal was to allow an "audit" of the voting machines by requiring the vote to be printed, so voters would be able to check their votes at the time when they cast them.

Conectas expressed its opposition to the PEC, highlighting the efficiency and transparency of the Brazilian electronic voting system. "There is, therefore, only one path for those committed to defending the Democratic Rule of Law: to oppose the printed ballot proposal and to commit to respecting the 2022 election results. It is time to act decisively in defense of democracy," the organization stated in a public note.

“During the 2022 elections, we acted on various fronts to strengthen and preserve Brazilian democracy, in light of our understanding that this action was fundamental in defending the rights established by the Federal Constitution and other basic regulations of our Democratic State.”

*Raissa Belintani, coordinator of the Conectas program
Strengthening the Democratic Space*



photo: Evaristo SA / AFP

photo: Clauber Cleber Caetano/PR



ATTACKS ON THE ELECTORAL SYSTEM IN A MEETING WITH AMBASSADORS

Conectas joined 85 other civil society organizations in the Pacto Pela Democracia network to condemn the speech made by then-President Jair Bolsonaro to diplomats based in Brazil in mid-July. In his address, he attacked the Brazilian electoral system and the ministers of the Supreme Federal Court (STF).

At the time, the organizations also called on Arthur Lira, President of the

Chamber of Deputies and Augusto Aras, Attorney General of the Republic to take action: "The silence of both (Aras and Lira) is extremely worrying and demonstrates complacency and disdain regarding Brazilian democracy. It contradicts the mandate of the institutions they represent and is an affront."

Motivated by the presidential behavior during the meeting with diplomats and ambassadors, Conectas, in partnership with the Arns Commission and Article 19, requested to be admitted as *amicus curiae* in a petition filed by the Federal Public Prosecutor's Office (MPF) to the Superior Electoral Court (TSE) against Jair Bolsonaro.

BRAZILIAN DELEGATION CALLS FOR RECOGNITION OF ELECTION RESULTS

In July, a delegation of 18 Brazilian civil society organisations was received by counterparts in the United States, including representatives of the U.S. Congressional Committee investigating the 6 January 6 2021 storming of the Capitol. The group's objective was to request immediate recognition of the presidential election results as soon as they were announced by

the Brazilian electoral authority, in order to prevent attempts at democratic disruption.

In September, part of the delegation also visited Europe. The Brazilian group also requested that the international community reject baseless attacks on the Brazilian electoral system and immediately recognise the election results, in meetings with members of the European Commission and the European Parliament and during the 51st Session of the UN Human Rights Council.

photo: Maria Magdalena Arréllaga



ELECTIONS WITHOUT POLITICAL VIOLENCE

Two civil society statements, released in July, drew attention to the escalation of political violence in Brazil and the risks to democracy. The first, headed up by the Mixed Parliamentary Front in Defense of Democracy and Human Rights issued a warning about the increase in political violence in Brazil. The second statement, from the Pacto pela Democracia, asserted that democracy and the 2022 elections were at risk due to political violence.

More than 110 civil society organizations, including Conectas, signed the documents emphasizing the urgency of ending displays of hatred and intolerance by public figures.

In September, Conectas and nine

other civil society entities took the issue of political violence to the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva, Switzerland.

The denunciation was made during the 51st session of the council and was signed by Conectas, Justiça Global, ABGLT, WBO, ABONG, CEERT, Article 19, Ação Educativa, the Arns Commission and Terra de Direitos.

The entities asked the UN to reinforce the importance of respecting democratic institutions in Brazil, especially the electoral system and to urge digital platforms to combat fake news. They also requested that the United Nations call on Brazilian authorities to ensure a safe environment for the elections, including controlling firearms and protecting minority candidates.

Watch the denunciation



photo: Caio Guatelli / AFP

THE RISKS TO DEMOCRACY OF DISINFORMATION

In June, Conectas and Article 19 reported to the UN Human Rights Council on the impacts of disinformation promoted by public authorities, such as former President Jair Bolsonaro and its effects on elections and upholding democracy in the country. The alert to the international community stated that the waves of misleading information in Brazil were detrimental to democracy and that "casting doubt on the electoral system is an attack on its functioning and on the demo-

cratic state, as well as dangerously encouraging actions against its institutions."

The speech was part of the "Panel on Countering the Negative Impact of Disinformation on the Enjoyment and Realization of Human Rights," during the 50th Session of the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva, Switzerland. According to a survey by the journalistic platform "Aos Fatos," which was used as a source for the speech, Jair Bolsonaro made 5,588 false or misleading statements during his 1,270 days as president.

[Click here to watch the denunciation presented to the UN](#)



photo: Edilson Rodrigues/Agência Senado

COLLECTORS, SHOOTERS AND HUNTERS (CACs) BANNED FROM CARRYING WEAPONS DURING THE ELECTION PERIOD

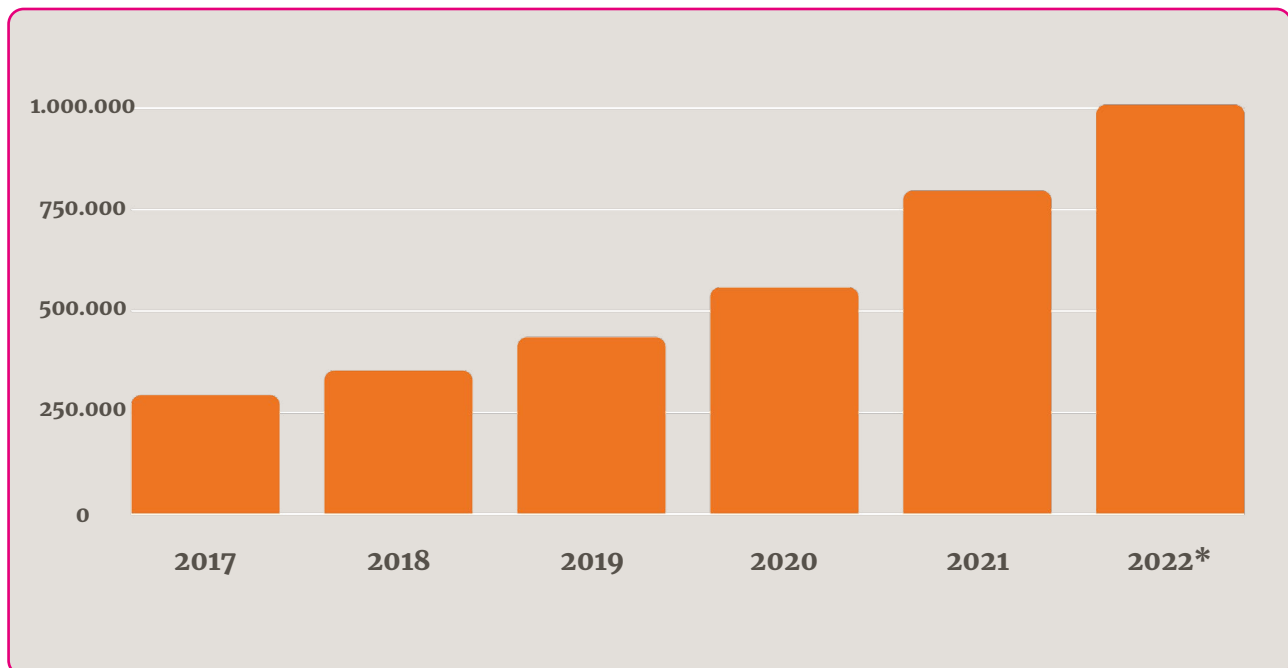
On the eve of the election, the Superior Electoral Court (TSE) unanimously approved a resolution to ban CACs (collectors, shooters and hunters) from carrying weapons and ammunition on election day and during the 24 hours before and after the voting, throughout the entire Brazilian territory. The decision was made following the judgment of an electoral consultation presented by seven political parties. In August, the ministers had already decided that carrying weapons would not be allowed at polling stations and within a 100-meter perimeter of them, except in the case of

on-duty security agents.

The aim of the measure was to safeguard the voting process from any type of threat and to prevent armed confrontations stemming from political violence, beyond the polling stations. According to the TSE, the new measure is intended to protect the voting process from any and all threats, whether concrete or potential.

Ten civil society organizations, including Conectas, expressed their concerns about the case, highlighting their worries regarding CACs. According to these entities, the increase in registrations within this category has not been accompanied by the development of control and oversight mechanisms to manage their potential impact on public order and safety.

Number of weapons in the hands of CACs in Brazil



*up to July | Army data obtained via the Access to Information Act by the Igarapé and Sou da Paz Institutes, released by G1



THE ROLE OF DIGITAL PLATFORMS IN THE BRAZILIAN ELECTIONS

Brazilian civil society mobilized to ensure the integrity of the 2022 elections and combat disinformation on digital platforms. An important initiative was the Anti-Disinformation Coordination Room which brought together 115 organizations, including Conectas and in July published an analysis report on

the role of digital platforms in protecting electoral integrity.

In September, the group produced a new analytical document that included proposals for more effective measures and the adjustment of company guidelines against harmful content impacting the Brazilian electoral process. This latest report focused on examining two topics: Electoral Integrity and an Ad Library.

UNION FOR THE DEMOCRATIC RULE OF LAW

Conectas joined various initiatives in defense of the Democratic State in 2022. These movements were comprised of a diverse array of actors with ideological, social and cultural differences who agreed on the same goal: to ensure the elections were conducted peacefully and that the results of the election were respected.

On the eve of the 2022 presidential election in October, Pacto pela Democracia released the manifesto "Exercise Your Vote, Respect the Election and Choose Democracy" with a message of preparation for the elections. In the document, the network of organizations empha-

sized the importance of the democratic spirit to ensure free, fair and peaceful elections throughout the country.

In addition to the document, Conectas joined other organizations in a civic vigil for the integrity of the electoral process. The entities maintained contact with national and international election observation missions on election Sunday and monitored the vote counting and tallying process. The vigil aimed to integrate initiatives to ensure full and safe access to polling stations during both rounds of the elections, the normalcy of the voting process, vote counting and tallying, full recognition of the election results and respect for popular sovereignty.



photo: Nelson Almeida/AFP

CONCERN OVER BILLS THAT CRIMINALIZE SOCIAL MOVEMENTS UNDER THE PRETEXT OF COMBATING TERRORISM

In 2022, a series of bills aimed at altering and expanding the scope of anti-terrorism actions in Brazil raised concerns among civil society. Among them were Bills 732/2022, 733/2022, 1595/2019 and 272/2016.

During a visit to Brazil in March, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and association, Clément Voule, expressed concern about these legislative proposals. According to his observations, these

proposals "have advanced in the legislative process and are based on broad definitions of terrorism, making the legislation an easy instrument to criminalize activism."

In March, also within the scope of the United Nations, Conectas and Article 19 denounced the trend of expanding the notion of anti-terrorism at the UN Human Rights Council. They requested that the Council question the Brazilian government about these projects and the fulfilment of the international obligations and commitments undertaken by the country. The organizations also urged members of the National Congress not to allow processing of these proposals to move forward.



[Click here to watch the denunciation made at the UN](#)

How does Brazilian law define terrorism?

Brazil's Anti-Terrorism Law was enacted in 2016. According to this legislation, terrorism is defined as the act of causing social or widespread terror with the aim of disrupting the political, social or economic order of the country. This includes attacks on public buildings, explosions in crowded places, kidnappings and attacks on authorities.

Anyone who participates in or finances actions considered to be terrorism can be prosecuted under the Anti-Terrorism Law. The sentence can range from 12 to 30 years in prison, depending on the severity of the crime. Activists and organizations criticize the current legislation, arguing that it can be used to criminalize popular demonstrations and social movements. They also contend that the law can be used selectively to persecute minorities and dissident political groups.



ESPIONAGE UNDER SURVEILLANCE

The use of illegal espionage tools by the federal government, especially against social movements and organized civil society, has been the target of complaints made by Conectas and its partners in recent years. In response to these actions, for example, a precautionary measure by the Federal Court of Accounts (TCU) in 2021, upheld in January 2022, prohibited the Ministry of Justice and Public Security from acquiring the Harpia espionage system, which can monitor and profile citizens without any prior justification. At the time, the TCU ministers decided that, even if the contract with the company had been finalized, the federal government should avoid "signing any service orders or making any payments until the Court deliberates on the merits of the specific matter at hand." However, in May, the TCU overturned the precautionary measure and authorized the resumption of the contract between the federal administration and the digital surveillance company.

This was not the only case of investment in espionage tools by the federal government. In February, four civil society entities, including Conectas, filed

a complaint with the Federal Public Prosecutor's Office (MPF) requesting the opening of a civil inquiry to investigate the use of the "Integrated Public Security Operations and Monitoring Platform," known as CórteX, by federal and public security agencies.

"We have identified that CórteX has the potential to impinge on freedom of expression and assembly, violate privacy and infringe upon other fundamental rights of the Brazilian population." Said Raissa Belintani, coordinator of the Conectas program Strengthening the Democratic Space. "The situation is especially serious under this government which frequently attacks democratic values."

In June, Conectas, Data Privacy, Transparency International, Article 19 and the Brazilian Forum on Public Security filed a complaint at the Federal Public Prosecutor's Office (MPF) requesting investigations into a federal government project for storing and sharing data from police investigations obtained through Project Excel, as well as demanding that the government destroy the databases in its possession. The NGOs' complaint led the MPF to propose a public civil action to investigate the case in December.

REPUDIATION OF BOLSONARO'S REMARKS ABOUT A GROUP OF VENEZUELAN GIRLS

Twenty-one civil society organizations, including Conectas, expressed support for the Venezuelan community and denounced former President Jair Bolsonaro's remarks about a group of Venezuelan girls from the São Sebastião community in the Federal District, insinuating that they "were getting ready to engage in prostitution" in October. The entities stated that the then-president "spread misinformation about the Venezuelan community in the Federal District."

During the presidential campaign, the

media divulged the president's statement which is promoting misinformation, as local civil society organizations confirmed that there is no evidence of sexual exploitation networks in the region and no proof was presented regarding the serious insinuations made. Journalists also found out that on the day of Bolsonaro's visit to the community, a social project involving beauty activities was taking place at the location.

At the time of the reported incident in 2020, there was no public expression of concern or communication regarding investigations into the serious allegations made by Jair Bolsonaro, including in any of the records published on the president's social media accounts.



photo: Sergio Lima / AFP



photo: Marizilda Cruppe/Conectas

MIGRANT AND REFUGEE RIGHTS

In March 2022, following visits to Boa Vista and Pacaraima in November 2021, accompanied by Conectas, the National Human Rights Council published a report with recommendations for agencies responsible for migrant reception in the region, particularly Venezuelans. The recommendations emphasize the need for public authorities to implement effective measures to protect the rights of Venezuelans crossing the border, considering their specific needs, akin to the way displaced Indi-

genous peoples are treated.

In another effort to defend migrants and refugees, Conectas and other organizations questioned the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MRE) about the suspension of scheduling humanitarian visa appointments for Afghans seeking entry into Brazil. The organizations reported that obstacles in the humanitarian visa application process imposed by the Brazilian government are making it impossible for individuals fleeing Taliban-controlled Afghanistan to obtain the necessary documents.



ADDRESSING RELIGIOUS RACISM

In September, Conectas, alongside Criola, Iniciativa Direito à Memória e Justiça Racial, Instituto de Defesa da População Negra (IDPN), Ocupação Cultural Jeholu and Justiça Global, developed a thematic report on religious racism, including recommendations for Brazil. This report was sent to the Permanent Forum of Afro-descendants for the Declaration on Promoting and Fully Respecting the Human Rights of Afro-descendant People.

In October, the same organizations, now including the Coletivo de Entidades Negras (CEN), submitted a report containing relevant information for the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination's

(CERD) evaluation of Brazil. The aim is to influence the recommendations that the Committee may make to the Brazilian government, urging greater commitment to ensuring and safeguarding marginalized groups' right to freedom of religion and belief, on a backdrop of ongoing stigmatization and discrimination against African-origin religions.

In the same month, Conectas participated in an interactive dialogue with the Permanent Forum of Afro-descendants in Geneva, discussing the Durban Declaration at the 51st session of the UN Human Rights Council. During the event, Conectas and Ocupação Cultural Jeholu emphasized that Brazil needs to actively promote religious freedom for practitioners of African-origin religions.

[Watch the full UN speech](#)



The debate on religious racism

Criola, Conectas and Portal Catarinas, with the support of Synergia, held the "Dialogues on Religious Racism" debate series throughout 2022 to discuss the impacts of religious racism on the Black population, practitioners of African-derived religions and Indigenous peoples. A series of live streams featured participation by significant organizations and stakeholders within Brazilian and Latin American civil society that work on combating religious racism, including religious leaders. An important conclusion of the project was that debating and addressing religious racism is fundamental to the realization of democracy and the effective safeguarding of the rights of the Black population in Brazil.

[The discussions are available via this link](#)



photo: Lucio Tavora / AFP

defending socioenvironmental rights



photo: Michel Dantas / AFP



ACTION DEMANDS COMMITMENT TO CLIMATE TARGETS

Recognizing the judiciary's role in addressing the climate crisis, Conectas filed a public civil action on climate with the Federal Court of the Federal District in June. This action demands that BNDES (Brazilian Development Bank) and BNDESPar, its subsidiary that is responsible for managing the bank's equity stakes in various Brazilian companies, publish a plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and invest according to the targets of the Paris Agreement and the PNMC (National Policy on Climate Change). This is the first action of its kind against a development bank in the world, making it part of the global climate litigation movement.

In court, the organization showed that BNDESPar, which is entirely publicly owned, has no rules or protocols to assess the negative impact of its investments on the climate crisis. This is in violation of Brazil's commitments under the 2015 Paris Agreement and the PNMC, among other provisions.

The action presented to the Federal Court argues that climate change

impacts the assurance of various fundamental rights, among them the rights to life, health, adequate food, water, culture, and, of course, a balanced environment for current and future generations. This is why the issue has become central to bodies of the International Human Rights System, such as the United Nations. The case is currently awaiting judgment.

“The aim of the action is to foster a debate on the necessity for public companies to include the climate crisis as a central variable in their investment plans while simultaneously acting with transparency and according to social and environmental responsibility criteria.”

— Júlia Neiva, coordinator of the Conectas program,
Defending Socioenvironmental Rights



photo: Michel Dantas/ AFP

THE CLAIMS THAT CONECTAS PRESENTED AT COURT ARE AS FOLLOWS:

- ▶ To publicly disclose the adoption of climate criteria in investment and divestment decisions and monitor the progress of the companies in BNDES-Par's portfolio in terms of emission reductions.
- ▶ To present a Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction Plan that ensures

alignment with Brazil's targets under the Paris Agreement and the regulations of the National Policy on Climate Change (PNMC).

- ▶ To set up a Climate Situation Room to transparently evaluate the implementation of the Emission Reduction Plan, ensuring social participation, including representatives from civil society, traditional peoples and communities and other relevant institutional actors.

Read the executive summary of the action

Understanding the terms

Climate litigation: Climate litigation refers to cases that require judicial or administrative bodies to make decisions that directly or explicitly address issues, facts or legal norms fundamentally related to the causes or impacts of climate change.

Paris Agreement: This is a binding international treaty with the goal of limiting the increase in the planet's average temperature to 1.5°C by 2100 through the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions compared to pre-industrial levels. It was adopted by 196 countries and came into effect in 2016. In Brazil, it was incorporated through Decree No. 9,073/2017

PNMC: the National Policy on Climate Change, established by Law No. 12,187/2009, is one of the most important national regulatory frameworks on the subject. The text was updated in 2019 to include and bring into effect the commitments made by Brazil under the Paris Agreement.

GEE: Greenhouse gases, which contribute to global warming, include carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) and nitrous oxide (N₂O).

THE GREEN AGENDA: THE STF'S SOCIOENVIRONMENTAL ACTIONS DOCKET

Climate and environmental safeguarding litigation also took center stage in the Brazilian Supreme Federal Court (STF). In an unprecedented act in the Court's history there were seven actions related to the protection of the environment and climate change scheduled for judgment in March. This movement was driven by Brazilian civil society, which invoked what became known as the Green Docket in the STF. Among the seven actions, Conectas participated as amicus curiae in two cases, ADPF 760 and ADO 59. The seven actions are as follows. **See below a summary of the seven actions of the Green Docket:**

ADPF 651

calls for the unconstitutionality of the decree that excluded civil society from the board of directors of the National Environment Fund

ADI 6808

challenges the provisional measure that allows automatic environmental licenses for companies considered to be of medium risk and prevents licensing bodies from requesting additional information beyond what is provided to Redesim (National Network for the Simplification of Registration and Legalization of Companies and Businesses).

ADPF 760

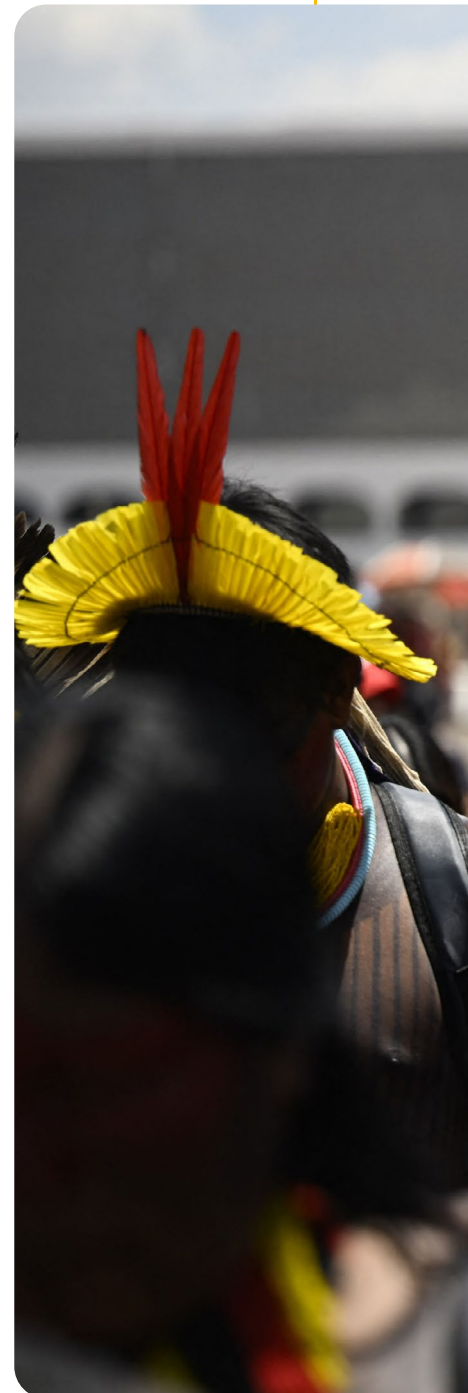
calls for the resumption of the Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Deforestation in the Amazon.

ADI 6148

questions the Conama resolution that sets air quality standards without establishing deadlines for implementation.

ADO 54

accuses the federal government of failing to combat deforestation



ADPF 735

questions the presidential decree that, within the scope of Operation Green Brazil, removes the autonomy of IBAMA (Brazilian Institute of Environment and Renewable Natural Resources) in monitoring environmental crimes and transfers it to the Armed Forces.

ADO 59

calls for the reactivation of the Amazon Fund, the disbursement of financial resources for already approved projects and the evaluation of projects in the consultation phase.

Watch the oral statement made by Gabriel Sampaio from Conectas on ADPF 760 and ADO 54.

photo: Mateus Bonomi/ AGIF for AFP



SUPREME FEDERAL COURT GUARANTEES CLIMATE FUND RESOURCES

In July 2022, the Supreme Federal Court (STF) ruled on another highly significant case for climate litigation, ADPF 708. In this action, the Court explicitly recognized that the Brazilian state has constitutional duties related to climate change. Brought by political parties and with Conectas participating as amicus curiae, the action challenged the withholding of Climate Fund resources. By a majority, the STF prohibited the withholding of funds and ordered the federal government to take the necessary steps to activate the Fund's operations, resulting in the allocation of the resources. The ruling was also celebrated for recognizing the Paris Agreement as a human rights treaty.

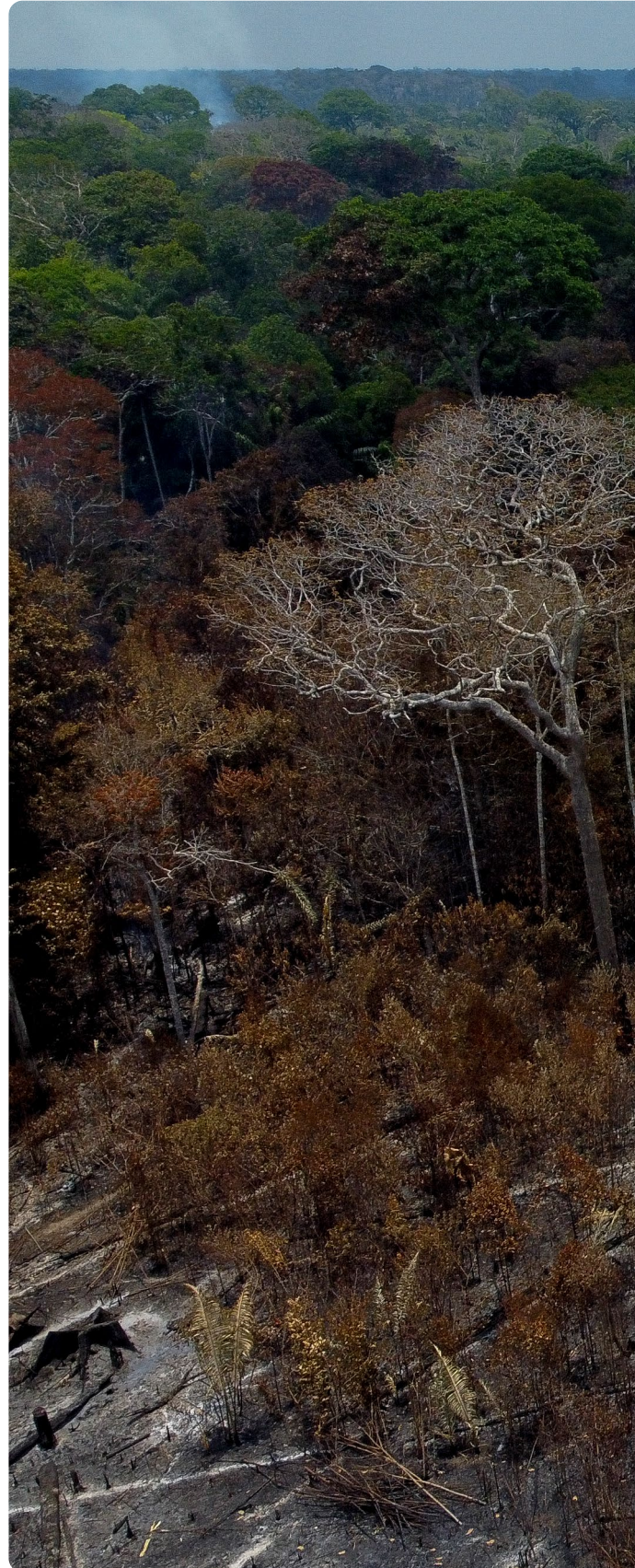


photo: Michael Dantas/AFP



OECD: GAPS IN SOCIO-ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE IN BRAZIL

In January, the OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) officially invited Brazil, along with five other countries, to begin an accession process to become a member state of the organization. Some sectors of society believe that joining the entity would bring economic advantages to the country, such as increased access to foreign trade and international investments, but there is no consensus on this.

Throughout the year, Conectas and other civil society organizations continued their advocacy work to ensure that the OECD holds Brazil to high standards for the safeguarding of the environment, climate and Indigenous peoples, as well as other human rights and environmental defenders, labor rights and the very defense of the rule of law and democracy as fundamental prerequisites for the country to join the organization. This is because Brazil, especially in recent years, has adopted management practices that are incompatible with the OECD's own standards and recommendations for socio-environmental safeguarding.

Reports prepared by researchers from Conectas, FIDH (International Federation for Human Rights) and OECD Watch, organizations closely monitoring the process, demonstrate how the country has been falling short in areas such as combating climate change and deforestation; environmental safeguarding, including the protection of Indigenous peoples and defenders; labor rights and social protection.

In June, the OECD released a robust roadmap of requirements for Brazil to fulfill in order to join the organization. This document lists a series of procedures, actions and conditions in various areas, including the environment, labor, social protection, Indigenous peoples and human rights defenders. If actually implemented, civil society organizations believe it could lead to positive changes in Brazil's environmental and human rights policies. As part of this pressure movement, Conectas and 43 other entities sent a letter to the OECD urging the organization to demand that Brazil carry out significant policy reforms in these areas and demonstrate progress as a precondition for joining the OECD.

Read the reports that analyze gaps in governance in Brazil:

Threats to Indigenous Peoples' Rights in Brazil – Governance Gaps



Labor Rights and Social Protection in Brazil – Governance Gaps



Deforestation and Climate Change in Brazil – Governance Gaps



photo: Stephane De Sakutin / AFP

COMBATING SLAVE LABOR ON THE AGENDA

On the eve of the first round of elections in September, seven presidential candidates signed the commitment letter against slave labor. The document urges candidates to prioritize combating this crime if elected. The candidates who signed the letter by the deadline are **Ciro Gomes (PDT)**, **José Maria Eymael (DC)**, **Léo Péricles (UP)**, **Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (PT)**, **Simone Tebet (MDB)**, **Soraya Thronicke (União Brasil)** and **Vera Lúcia (PSTU)**.

The letter requested candidates to commit to various points, including: prioritizing combating contemporary slave labor in their mandates, implementing actions outlined in the 2nd National Plan for the Eradication of Slave Labor and allocating sufficient resources and political support to ensure effective monitoring of the working conditions to which workers are subjected.

In the same month, civil society organizations, including Conectas, published the document "Dismantling and Setbacks in the System to Com-

bat Slave Labor in Brazil." The document highlighted cases of dismantling and setbacks in the system to combat slave labor in Brazil.

Watch the debate held at the launch of the document

Conectas worked to ensure public budget allocation for combating slave-like labor. As human rights organizations reported, the Bolsonaro government made significant cuts to the inspection budget in this area, hampering efforts to address this social issue. The authorized budget for "Labor Obligations Inspection and Occupational Safety and Health Inspection" was reduced by more than 50% between 2019 and 2022, dropping from R\$ 68.2 million to R\$ 30.4 million, according to data from the Ministry of Labor and Social Security. And in the last ten years, the number of labor inspectors decreased from 2,935 inspectors in 2010 to only 2,050 in 2020. In addition to denouncing these cuts, Conectas engaged with parliamentarians to propose individual and committee amendments that secured funding for the inspection and combat of slave labor.



How Brazilian law defines slave-like labor

Article 149 of the Penal Code defines slave-like labor as a condition in which humans are subjected to forced labor, working days that are so intense they could cause physical harm, degrading conditions and restriction of movement due to debt incurred with the employer or their representative. The penalty is increased when the crime is committed against a child or adolescent or related to prejudice based on race, color, ethnicity, religion or origin.

photo: Christian Braga / Greenpeace



ILLEGAL DEFORESTATION IN THE AMAZON

In March, five Brazilian civil society organizations—APIB (Articulation of Indigenous Peoples of Brazil), Conectas, ISA (Socioenvironmental Institute), Climate Observatory Laboratory and WWF-Brazil submitted a report to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights detailing non-compliance with commitments to reduce deforestation in the Amazon. The report discussed the impact of proposed legislation aimed at regularizing land grabbing in the Amazon, as a contributing factor to increased deforestation. The work also included specific recommendations for building consistent public policy to reduce deforestation rates.

[View the full document sent to the UN](#)

BOLSONARO REPORTED TO THE UN FOR THREATENING THE GLOBAL CLIMATE

Five UN special rapporteurs received a denunciation in November against the Bolsonaro government for environmental destruction and human rights violations. According to the denunciation, the uncontrolled increase in deforestation in the Amazon and Cerrado, coupled with violence against Indigenous peoples and traditional communities, intensifies climate change, threatens biodiversity and jeopardizes food security, health and access to water in Brazil and many other countries.

The document was submitted to the UN special rapporteurs responsible for monitoring issues related to the environment, Indigenous rights, climate change, food, drinking water and sanitation, development, housing, as well as to the coordinator of the working group on human rights and business. The denunciation was signed by Conectas, the Socioenvironmental Institute (ISA), Climate Observatory and WWF-Brazil.

[Click here to see the full document](#)

RISKS OF ALLOWING MINING ON INDIGENOUS LANDS

In March, six civil society organizations denounced the risks to Brazil's Indigenous peoples of bill 191/2020, at the UN Human Rights Council. At that time, the bill was being fast-tracked in the Chamber of Deputies. The proposal allows mining, including small-scale mining operations, electricity generation and the exploration and production of oil and natural gas on Indigenous lands, which are protected by the Federal Constitution and international treaties. Submitted in March, the denunciation was signed by Conectas, ISA, APIB, Instituto Maíra, Associação Kowit and the Climate Observatory. The NGOs also called on the UN council and the international community to demand immediate protection for the peoples living in the forests, especially in the Amazon.

[See the full denunciation](#)



photo: Marizilda Cruppe / Greenpeace

JUSTICE FOR DOM AND BRUNO

In June, in Geneva (Switzerland), Conectas and the Arns Commission denounced the delay in the investigations into the disappearance and deaths of Indigenous expert Bruno Pereira and journalist Dom Phillips which occurred that same month in the Vale do Javari (AM). The statement was made during the 50th Session of the UN Human Rights Council. The organizations called on the Brazilian government to intensify the investigations into the murders, especially focusing on those who may have ordered the crime. The collective also urged the international community to monitor the investigation and demand justice from the Brazilian government. They emphasized the urgent need to safeguard the Indigenous communities of the Vale do Javari, in the western region of the state of Amazonas, as well as to strengthen mechanisms to protect the environment and those who defend it.



[Watch the speech made at the UN](#)

photo: Luciola Villela / AFP



photo: Victor Moriyama / Amazônia em Chamas



ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE ON THE INTERNATIONAL STAGE

Fifty years after Stockholm (Sweden) hosted the first UN conference that placed the environment at the center of diplomatic discussions, the Swedish capital once again became the stage for environmental and climate discussions during the first week of June, at the Stockholm+50 conference, which celebrated the five decades since the first conference. The celebration reviewed the impact of the 1972 conference, during which, for example, the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) was established. Contributing to the debate, Indigenous activist Txai Suruí, one of the conference participants, shared her message, reflecting the views of many Indigenous peoples: it is possible to live in harmony with nature and this does not equate to poverty.

Meanwhile, in Egypt, the world closely followed another round of climate negotiations under the UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change). COP26 was marked by significant involvement from Brazil and for the third year running it featured a pavilion dedicated to voicing the demands and contributions of Brazilian civil society, the Brazil Climate Action Hub. Conectas, now an observer organization at the UNFCCC negotiations, participated in events at the pavilion focusing on loss and damage, a just energy transition and climate litigation involving corporate actors

Check out Txai Suruí's interview with Conectas: Indigenous peoples are on the front lines against deforestation

MEASURES FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE FOREST AND AMAZONIAN PEOPLES

In September, the United Nations Human Rights Council received two reports from Brazilian leaders regarding environmental and human rights crimes that took place in the Amazon. In one of the denunciations, socio-environmental activist Neidinha Suruí spoke on behalf of the Arara Indigenous Land of Cachoeira Seca and the Uru-Eu-Wau-Wau, areas inhabited by recently contacted Indigenous peoples. In the other, Indigenous activist Txai Suruí drew the council's attention to the escalating human rights violations against the peoples of the Amazon and the severe socio-environmental crimes being committed. She also highlighted the role of corporations in this scenario. The statements were made with the support of Conectas.

For more information on the activists' statements at the UN



photo: Paul Ellis / AFP

JUST, INCLUSIVE AND PEOPLE-CENTERED ENERGY TRANSITION

The path to decarbonizing the economies of Brazil and the Global South involves necessary structural changes in energy production. While it is important to advance an energy transition agenda by decommissioning carbon-intensive energy projects (such as thermoelectric plants and the oil industry), it is equally important that this transi-

tion take human rights and socio-environmental considerations into account.

Conectas was active in this scenario throughout 2022. In August, it brought together various stakeholders working on this issue in a meeting in Fortaleza (CE), providing support to organizations and social movements in Ceará that are at the forefront of denouncing and proposing actions related to the expansion of energy transition projects in the region. Also, in the Northeast



region, the organization works with the Quilombola Community of Serra dos Rafaéis, in the Chapada do Araripe area, located between the states of Ceará, Piauí and Pernambuco. This community has been suffering from the impacts of the implementation of wind farms in the region, one of which is financed by BNDES and the BRICS Bank.

Finally, in November, we held the seminar “Energy Transition, Socio-Environmental Rights and Financial Insti-

tutions” in São Paulo in partnership with the Regional Coalition for Transparency and Participation. The event aimed to bring together community leaders and civil society organizations from the Global South involved in the matter of energy transition, seeking synergies and collective actions to put pressure on financial institutions and international companies and hold them accountable for the socio-environmental impacts caused by energy transition projects.

photo: Jeferson Batista / Conectas



fighting institutional violence



photo: Miguel Schincariol / AFP



LACK OF TRANSPARENCY IN THERAPEUTIC COMMUNITIES

A groundbreaking survey titled "Public Funding of Brazilian Therapeutic Communities between 2017 and 2020," released in April by Conectas and Cebrap (Brazilian Center for Analysis and Planning), revealed a trend of increasing investment in therapeutic communities by the Federal Government in recent years. Between 2017 and 2020, therapeutic communities (CTs) received a total of R\$560 million from public funds. This amount, which includes contributions from federal, state and municipal levels, is expected to increase in the coming years.

From a budgetary perspective, the approval of Complementary Law 187/2021, sanctioned by then-President Jair Bolsonaro, granted CTs the right to seek tax immunity, a form of indirect public funding.

According to the study, these entities offer treatment based on isolation, abstinence and spirituality. The research also reveals a lack of standardization in oversight and transparency regarding the type of services contracted, breakdown of costs, supplies, expected outcomes and, most importantly, the impact and effectiveness of these services as a treatment policy, which should guide public administration.

In addition to receiving funds from the Executive branch at various levels, so-called parliamentary amendments are also used to strengthen relationships between the Legislative branch and therapeutic communities. The National Secretariat for Care and Drug Prevention formulated a guide to facilitate the allocation of these resources specifically for therapeutic communities (CTs). According to the research, the amount paid through parliamentary amendments between 2017 and 2020 was over R\$30 million. However, there is no transparency in the disbursement of these funds and the actual amounts may be even higher.



Since 2016, funding for therapeutic communities (CTs) has increased, while funding for health and the psychosocial care network has decreased. This represents a shift in the direction of Brazil's drug policy, although there is no scientific evidence to support the effectiveness of this treatment." "In practice, institutions that deprive individuals of their freedom are being funded at the expense of healthcare and harm reduction policies."

– Carolina Diniz, coordinator of the Conectas program, Fighting Institutional Violence

For the full study access this link



Conectas Brings Issues Surrounding Therapeutic Communities to the UN

Conectas brought the flaws and issues that have been identified in therapeutic communities to the United Nations in a denunciation submitted in March during the 49th session of the Human Rights Council, held in Geneva, Switzerland.

The organization emphasized that there is no clarity about the type of work carried out by these entities, nor is there any proof of the effectiveness of their treatment methods or transparent mechanisms for control and evaluation. The statement also pointed out that while investments in healthcare equipment and the psychosocial care network have been reduced, the allocation of funds to therapeutic communities, which do not belong to the health or social assistance systems, has increased.

According to the organization, there have been a number of reports of forced labor, torture and mistreatment taking place in therapeutic communities across Brazil, including warnings issued by the SPT (the UN Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment).



Watch the denunciation presented at the UN



ACTIONS TO PREVENT THE DISMANTLING OF THE SYSTEM TO COMBAT TORTURE

Throughout 2022, Conectas continued to address the issue of torture, one of the most important human rights violations in the country. In March, in partnership with the NGO Justiça Global, Conectas denounced the dismantling of the system to combat torture in Brazil at the UN Human Rights Council. The organizations highlighted systematic attacks by the Brazilian government on the National System for the Prevention of Torture.

Examples were presented regarding the points of concern brought to the UN,

such as actions taken by Jair Bolsonaro's government, for example a 2019 presidential decree that dismissed and abolished the positions of all experts in the National Mechanism for the Prevention and Combat of Torture (MNPCT).

In addition to the international denunciation, Conectas and other human rights organizations were involved in the Argument of Noncompliance with a Fundamental Precept (ADPF) 607, filed by the Prosecutor General's Office in 2019. The action requested that the Supreme Federal Court (STF) suspend the effects of the decree, a measure that was unanimously granted in March, thereby preventing a setback in this area.

Why is the MNPCT important?

The MNPCT, which is composed of 11 experts in the prevention and combat of torture and other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment, was established under Law 12.847/2013, which instituted the National System for the Prevention and Combat of Torture. The body conducts inspections of detention facilities, including, among others, penal institutions, psychiatric hospitals, custodial facilities, socio-educational institutions for adolescents in conflict with the law and military disciplinary detention centers. The members prepare detailed reports on the inspections and make recommendations to the appropriate authorities.



IACHR DISCUSSES ABUSES BY THE BRAZILIAN MILITARY JUSTICE SYSTEM

The violation of constitutional mandates and the anti-democratic actions of the military justice system in Brazil were denounced during a hearing held by the IACHR (Inter-American Commission on Human Rights), an autonomous body of the Organization of American States. The hearing, which took place in March, was requested by the following organizations: Conectas, IBAHRI (International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute), IDDD (Institute for the Defense of the Right to Defense), Justiça Global and Terra de Direitos.

The organizations emphasized that one of the basic characteristics of constitutional democracies is the subordination of the military to civilian authority. However, the expanded jurisdiction of the military justice system in Brazil inverts this democratic logic by allowing the military justice system to judge civilians, "as well as military personnel involved in cases of human rights violations." They stated.

As a follow-up to the hearing, the organizations requested that the IACHR hold a working meeting with the Ministers of the Supreme Federal Court (STF) to emphasize the importance of aligning domestic legislation with international standards on the issue. The President of the Commission highlighted the possibility of producing a dossier on all the matters reported by representatives of Brazilian civil society and included an express request for the working meeting in the hearing's records. Six cases before the STF address the role and jurisdiction of the military justice system.

photo: Mauro Pimentel / AFP





Study analyzes bottlenecks in the military justice system

Conectas and FGV Diversidade released a technical note on the military justice system in October. As the study shows, the military justice system has faced issues since its inception. The roots of this institution are in Portuguese law and it was established with the arrival of the royal family in Brazil in 1808. The rules were imported from the Portuguese system and did not take into consideration the reality of the colony. Over time, this system evolved and was reinforced during the military dictatorship. "At that time, it was established through AI-2 and other acts that the military justice system would have jurisdiction over the offenses provided for in the National Security Law, as well as an expanded mandate to try civilians." It says in the note.

[See here the technical note: "Accountability and Military Justice: national and international parameters"](#)

ADPF OF THE FAVELAS: PLAN TO REDUCE POLICE LETHALITY UNDER DISCUSSION

Human rights organizations, favela movements and the Brazilian Socialist Party (PSB) requested in May that the Supreme Federal Court (STF) reject the plan to reduce police lethality submitted to the Court by the Rio de Janeiro government in March of that year. The plan is one of the requests by the authors of ADPF 365, known as the ADPF of the Favelas.

In the assessment of social entities, the document presented by the state government did not meet the basic requirements to prevent deaths caused by police action, because for the most part it presented goals without showing ways of achieving

them. "The STF needs to establish a limit on police lethality now and this response should begin with the immediate rejection of the Plan for the Reduction of Police Lethality presented by the State of Rio de Janeiro." It says in the petition submitted by the authors and amici curiae, among them Conectas.

In December, the STF requested that the Rio de Janeiro government provide clarifications on how the proposed plan would be implemented in practice and asked for the presentation of an action timeline, including the installation and operation of audio and video cameras on the uniforms and vehicles of the special police battalions, BOPE and CORE, as well as in police units located in areas experiencing the highest rates of police lethality.

photo: Carl de Souza / AFP



Here are 6 important points for the creation of the Plan for the Reduction of Police Lethality

1. Promote the discussion of the proposal with civil society, involving the Public Defender's Office, the Public Prosecutor's Office and the Rio de Janeiro Bar Association (OAB-RJ).
2. The new plan should be structured around the need to combat structural racism.
3. The plan should include the development of protocols for the proportional and progressive use of force, as well as for police stops and searches avoiding racial profiling. It should also include measures for the temporary removal from active duty of officers involved in deaths during police operations.
4. The new plan should include concrete measures, quantitative indicators, specific timelines, the allocation of necessary resources and expected objectives.
5. The new plan should adhere to the legal and philosophical principles of the ADPF of the Favelas, without prioritizing the reduction of victimization of supposed innocent people and without relying solely on the acquisition of more weaponry for the police.
6. The new plan should mandate the installation of GPS equipment and audio and video recording systems in all police vehicles and on the uniforms of all police officers, initially prioritizing the implementation of these devices in the poorest communities.



THE DEATH OF GENIVALDO AND THE OPERATION IN VILA CRUZEIRO

In June, at the UN Human Rights Council, Conectas denounced the violations committed by police officers in the deaths of Genivaldo de Jesus Santos in Sergipe and of at least 26 people during a police operation in Vila Cruzeiro, Rio de Janeiro. These incidents occurred in May.

According to the denunciation, Brazil has been negligent in addressing severe cases of lethal violence committed by police officers in the past and currently. "Unfortunately, the Brazilian government has made no effort to combat the violations committed by its police officers. On the contrary, such practices have been endorsed by local authorities, including by President Jair Bolsonaro." The organization said in its speech.



[See the full denunciation here](#)

FORCED DISAPPEARANCE: AN ONGOING PRACTICE IN BRAZIL

The practice of forced disappearance is ongoing in Brazil and mainly affects Black people. In light of this, the Brazilian state must adopt concrete measures to address the issue. This was the statement made by Conectas in September during the 51st session of the UN Human Rights Council.

The organization stated that "complacency at the highest levels of the police contributes to the lack of accountability of the State" and recalled the episodes known as the "May Crimes" which occurred in São Paulo in 2006, when more than 500 people were executed and others forcibly disappeared without ef-

fective investigation. The situation in the state of Rio de Janeiro was also mentioned. The denunciation states that over 18 years, more than 1 million people have disappeared in the state. However, there is no official information on which of these cases are being investigated as forced disappearances. Information in the IDMJR II.2021 Bulletin.

"Although the Brazilian state has ratified the UN International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, there is still no criminal classification of this conduct nor concrete policies to support and assist the families of the victims." It says in the denunciation.

**Watch the full
denunciation**



FEDERALIZATION OF THE INVESTIGATION OF A MAY CRIMES CASE

By unanimous decision, the Superior Court of Justice (STJ) decided in August to federalize the investigation of a massacre that occurred in 2006 in the southern zone of São Paulo's capital, during the so-called May Crimes in several cities in São Paulo. The court thus acknowledged the failures of state public agencies in handling the case.

In practice, the decision mandates the reopening of the case, transferring

jurisdiction from the São Paulo Public Prosecutor's Office, the State Public Security Secretariat and the São Paulo Court of Justice to the Federal Police, the Federal Public Prosecutor's Office and the Federal Court.

In 2009, Conectas, an interested party in the judicial action, requested the federalization of the case to the Office of the Prosecutor General (PGR). It was only in 2016, seven years after the request, that the PGR moved forward with the request to take the case to the federal level and it has now been accepted by the STJ.

litigation



photo: Antonio Augusto / SCO / STF



Strategic human rights litigation is used by organizations like Conectas to ensure that the rights enshrined in the Federal Constitution and international treaties are respected by the Brazilian state. The intention is to demand structural changes of the state and companies through judicial cases. In 2022, Conectas carried out this work in a number of different courts, particularly the STF and the Inter-American (OAS) and Universal (UN) human rights systems. Another important action of the year was promoting strategic human rights litigation in higher education institutions.

See below the principal litigation actions in 2022:

STF ADPF 635

this action, known as the ADPF of the Favelas, seeks to prosecute the state of Rio de Janeiro in the STF for its public security policy and requests, among other things, a concrete plan to reduce police lethality.

STF ADPF 289

this case in the STF seeks to ensure that military courts only handle cases related to the functioning of the Armed Forces.

STF ADO 59

this calls for the reactivation of the Amazon Fund, the disbursement of financial resources for already approved projects and the evaluation of projects in the consultation phase.

STF ADPF 607

an action against Decree No. 9,831/19, which undermines the National Mechanism for the Prevention and Combat of Torture.

STF ADI 5032

an action requesting the STF to maintain the jurisdiction of ordinary courts to prosecute and judge members of the Armed Forces who commit crimes during public security activities.

STF ADPF 760

this action requests a declaration of the unconstitutional state of environmental and climate protection in Brazil and calls for the resumption of the Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Deforestation in the Amazon.

STF ADPF 708

this action requests the adoption of administrative measures by the government for the operation of the National Fund on Climate Change (Fundo Clima).

Federal Court Climate Action BNDES

this action was proposed by Conectas against BNDESpar and BNDES due to their investments in carbon-intensive economic activities (which negatively impact the climate), contrary to the commitments assumed by the country.

Civil Public Action Córtex System

a representation formulated regarding the Córtex System, requesting the initiation of investigation procedures. This system allows the integrated use of federal databases, such as those of the Federal Highway Police (PRF) and other public security agencies, including Municipal Guards (GCMs). It can gather personal data with the ability to define targets for electronic fencing and persistent monitoring and can retain data for a period of ten years.

CONECTAS LAUNCHES CALL FOR APPLICATIONS: LITIGATORS OF THE FUTURE

In 2022, Conectas launched the Litigators of the Future call for applications, aimed at promoting training, mentorship and support for legal clinics, legal practice centers and similar student entities established within Higher Education Institutions in Brazil.

Through the call for applications four legal clinics or similar university centers within higher education institutions were selected. Conectas Human Rights provided a donation of up to R\$25,000 (twenty-five thousand reais) for each of the selected groups, to ensure the execution of the proposals that were submitted and to promote strategic human rights litigation.

See below the centers that were selected:

UFG – Human Rights and Public Policy Clinic;

UFPE – aSIDH (Extension Program for Access to the Inter-American Human Rights System);

UFGD – Legal Practice and Assistance Center;

UNICAP – Strategic Litigation and Public Interest Legal Clinic.

advocacy





Conectas' advocacy work monitors issues of societal interest, proposes an approach based on rights and defending democracy and denounces setbacks and violations, whether in the National Congress or the International Human Rights System. Since 2006, Conectas has held consultative status with the UN. In 2022, Conectas played a significant role in the fourth cycle of the Universal Periodic Review and in the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. Additionally, since February 2022, it has been an observer of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. See below:

UPR: BRAZIL UNDER EVALUATION BY THE UN

Approximately every four and a half years, all 193 member states of the United Nations are reviewed on the measures they have adopted to address human rights violations in their countries. This is called the UPR (Universal Periodic Review) and it takes place at the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva, Switzerland. It is a type of accountability process in the field of human rights. In November 2022, Brazil underwent its fourth review since the UPR was established in 2006.

Civil society organizations that work with the UN are invited to contribute to the process. For 2022, Conectas submitted 12 reports for the evaluation process, in partnership with other organizations, covering the following areas:

Civil society organizations participated in sessions and panel discussions and were able to further contribute to important dialogues with the international community by presenting topics and reporting human rights violations. In November, the UN published the report with recommendations from member states to Brazil. Among them, it is worth highlighting those that focus on the following themes: the rights of Indigenous peoples, safeguarding human rights defenders and journalists, combating racism and sexual and reproductive rights.

photo: Fabrice Coffrini / AFP



- ◀ **Combating Slave Labor;**
- ◀ **Mining and Affected Communities;**
- ◀ **Deforestation, Environment and Indigenous Peoples;**
- ◀ **Police Lethality in Brazil;**
- ◀ **Military Justice;**
- ◀ **Combating Torture;**
- ◀ **Fines and the Right to Vote;**
- ◀ **Migration and Asylum;**
- ◀ **Sexual and Reproductive Rights;**
- ◀ **Civil Society Defense;**
- ◀ **Affirmative Actions on Race in Brazil;**
- ◀ **The Homeless Population.**

Explanatory video on how the UPR works. Watch here:





Conectas selects students from the north for training on UPR

Conectas carried out another edition of the Multipliers of the UPR project in 2022, to spread awareness about the importance and functioning of the United Nations' evaluation mechanism. xxx students, enrolled in higher education institutions in the North of the country, were selected under the initiative and received training on the UN process. In addition to training on the international human rights safeguarding system, the selected individuals received support to replicate their learnings and the simulation model at their educational institutions.

MEASURES ADOPTED IN BRAZIL TO COMBAT RACISM

Conectas also engaged with the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, which concluded its review of Brazil's periodic reports in November. Some measures, such as those related to the reception of migrants and refugees, were praised by the Committee's experts, who commended the new migration law of 2017, as well as the new humanitarian visas and measures to accommodate unaccompanied minors.

Regarding police violence, however, the UN highlighted that the primary victims of state violence are Black boys and men aged 12 to 21. Concerned about the increase in extrajudicial exe-

cutions and the excessive use of force by the police in favelas, particularly against members of the Afro-Brazilian and LGBTQIA+ communities, the Committee questioned incisively: "What measures have been taken to prevent police brutality and reduce the use of lethal weapons?"

Another point of concern for the experts was the impact of illegal mining and logging in preserved areas, as there has been increasing deforestation and a drastic reduction in Indigenous lands since 2016. "Has the State Party included Indigenous peoples in discussions involving mining projects?" Asked Vega Luna, who also requested information on measures to control illegal logging, mining and deforestation.

photo: Ramon Vellasco / NurPhoto via AFP



SEE BELOW THE PRINCIPAL ADVOCACY ACTIONS WITHIN THE INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS SYSTEM

Speeches at the UN Human Rights Council

- » **Public policy focused on people who use drugs in Brazil;**
- » **Warning about the risks of a bill to legalize mining on Indigenous lands;**
- » **A stand against bills that aim to modify and broaden the scope of anti-terrorism actions in Brazil ;**
- » **A stand against the dismantling of the system to combat torture in Brazil;**
- » **Brazil´s lack of commitment regarding investigations into Dom and Bruno;**
- » **The death of Genivaldo and the operation in Vila Cruzeiro;**
- » **Setbacks in migratory policy in Brazil;**
- » **Disinformation and the attack on the electoral system;**
- » **Climate catastrophes and Brazil´s lack of commitment to the Paris Agreement**
- » **Police lethality**
- » **Religious racism**
- » **Increased human rights violations against the peoples of the Amazon and serious socioenvironmental crimes**
- » **Protecting the forest and the peoples of the Amazon**
- » **Disaster in Mariana and Brumadinho**
- » **Forced disappearance**
- » **Denunciations of attacks on the electoral system and the increase in political violence in Brazil**

Hearings at the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights

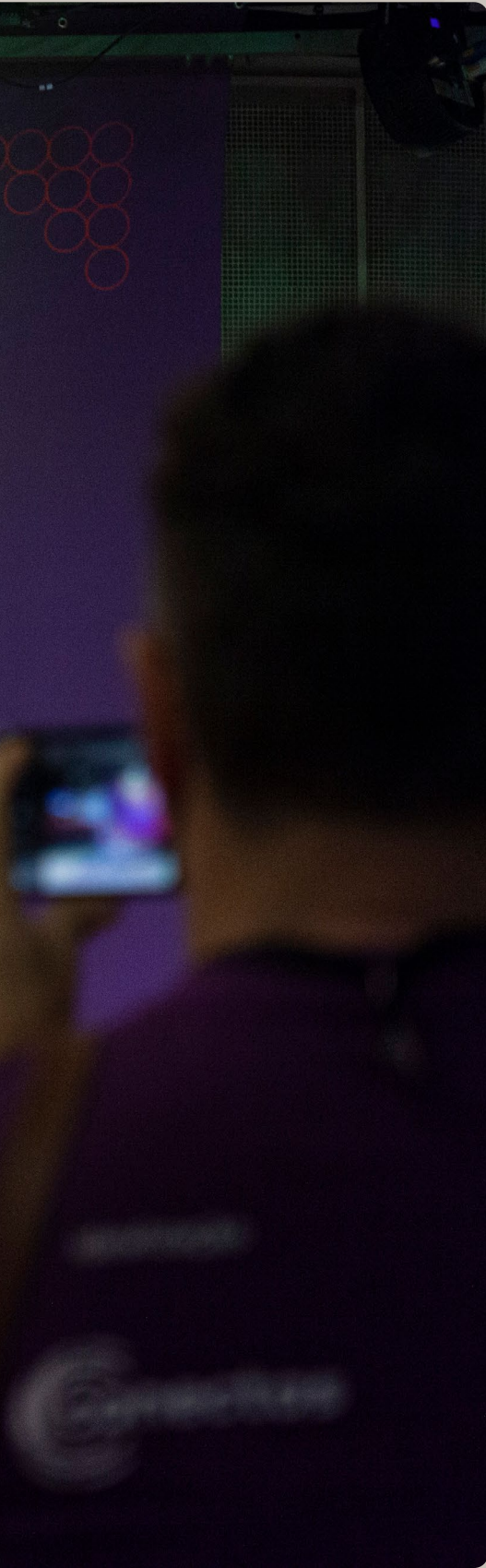
- » **The situation of the military justice system in Brazil;**
- » **The situation of religious freedom in the region;**
- » **The situation of the human rights of the Indigenous peoples of Brazil.**

Urgent appeals sent to the UN

- » **Denunciation of the Bolsonaro government for environmental destruction and human rights violations**
- » **Denunciation of attacks on the Guarani Kaiowá communities**

communication





The communication and engagement area of Conectas is essential in supporting the actions of programs that defend human rights. It works closely with other areas of the organization, particularly Advocacy and Litigation. In 2022, the communication team provided support to the press, assisted professional journalism and organized events to foster reflection on the human rights movement. See below:

SCHOLARSHIPS FOR BLACK PEOPLE IN THE AREA OF TECHNICAL INVESTIGATIONS

In February, Conectas, Data Privacy Brasil, Data Labe and Intercept Brasil launched a call for applications offering four scholarships for Black people interested in reporting on how different technologies are being used to violate fundamental rights.

See here the reports that were produced



IDEAS FAIR CELEBRATES INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS DAY

After a hiatus caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, Conectas and Sesc 24 de Maio resumed the Ideas Fair in November. This event is held to celebrate International Human Rights Day. The sixth edition of the Fair, as in previous years, featured projects aimed at promoting and implementing human rights across a number of areas, many of which focus on the peripheries of São Paulo and the city's central region.



Watch the best moments of the Fair

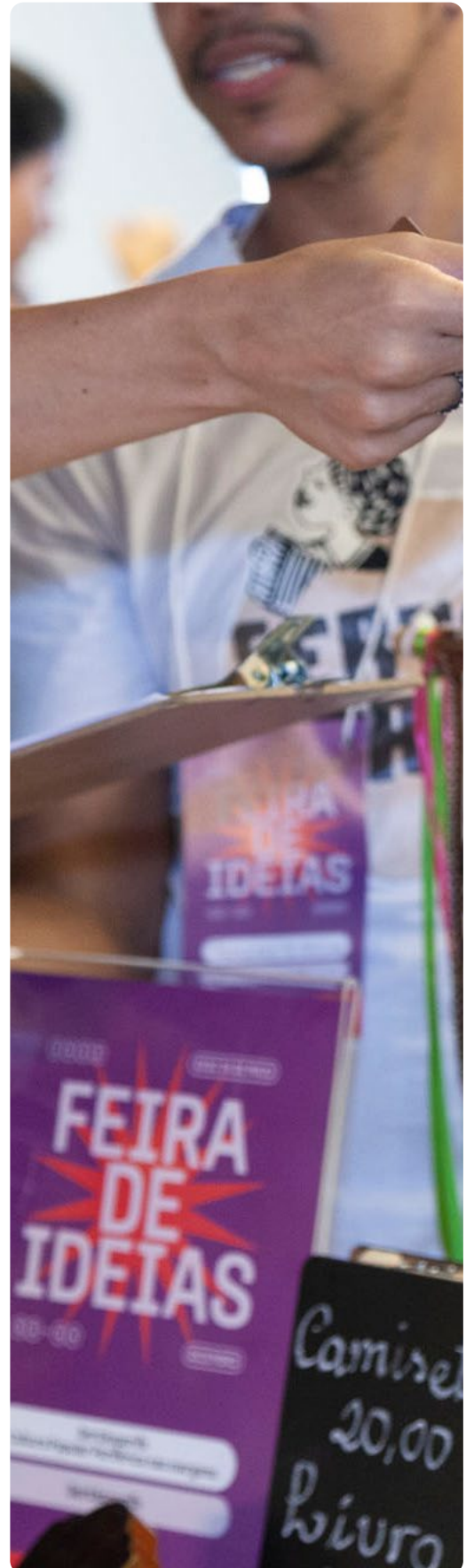


photo: Coletivo Enóá

photo: Vladimir Herzog Journalistic Award



44TH VLADIMIR HERZOG JOURNALISTIC AWARD

Conectas was one of the organizations participating in the 44th Vladimir Herzog Journalistic Award in November. The award is promoted and organized by a committee composed of the following institutions: National Federation of Journalists (FENAJ); São Paulo State Union of Professional Journalists; Justice and Peace Commission of the Archdiocese of São Paulo; Brazilian Press Association (ABI); Brazilian Association of Investigative Journalism (ABRAJI); Periferia em Movimento; School of Communications and Arts

of the University of São Paulo (ECA/USP); Vladimir Herzog Institute; Federal Council of the Brazilian Bar Association (OAB Nacional); São Paulo State Bar Association (OAB-SP); Conectas Human Rights; São Paulo State Police Ombudsman and the Brazilian Society for Interdisciplinary Communication Studies (Intercom). The 2022 edition received strategic partnership and support from the São Paulo City Council, Brazilian Writers Union, OBORÉ, PUC-SP and TV PUC.

[See here the list of award winners.](#)

institutional





NEW DIRECTOR TAKES OVER AT CONECTAS

The Board of Directors of Conectas appointed internationalist Camila Asano as the new Executive Director of the organization, along with lawyers Julia Neiva and Gabriel Sampaio, who are the current coordinators of the Socio-Environmental Rights Defense and Institutional Violence Response programs, respectively. Marcos Fuchs' term as Deputy Director was renewed.

Asano joined Conectas in 2006. She holds a degree in International Relations from the University of São Paulo and a Master's in Political Science from the same institution. She has coordinated the Conectas Foreign Policy and Human Rights Program, the Strengthening Democratic Space Program and most recently served as the NGO's Program Director.

According to Theo Dias, Chair of the Conectas Board of Directors, the

new executive team reflects confidence in the current direction of the organization and a commitment to racial diversity in its leadership positions.

"We are placing the organization in the hands of a committed, resilient and highly professional team who it will be a pleasure to work closely with, to fulfil Conectas' mission of defending and promoting human rights and democracy in Brazil and around the world." Said Dias.

JUANA KWEITEL LEAVES CONECTAS

After leading Conectas for six years, Juana Kweitel stepped down from her role as Executive Director in December. During her tenure, she worked tirelessly to consolidate the area of strategic litigation in human rights. Additionally, she emphasized the importance of combating racism, making it a core institutional value and a theme that permeates all the organization's activities. Kweitel joined Conectas in 2003.

Theo Dias, President of the Conectas Board of Directors, highlighted

the organization's progress during Kweitel's tenure: "During her time as Executive Director of Conectas, Juana faced the challenge of leading the team through one of the most significant periods of rising authoritarianism since Brazil's re-democratization as well as the COVID-19 pandemic. Under her leadership, there were advances in internal diversity and in combating racism, which is now a core value and a theme that permeates all our programs. In addition to leaving the organization financially sound, with a high degree of transparency and good governance, she also leaves as a legacy the culture of caring for the team."

INTERNATIONAL PHILANTHROPY

Conectas was one of the organizations chosen by American philanthropist MacKenzie Scott to receive a donation in 2022. At a time of rising authoritarianism in Brazil and around the world, this recognition is given to organizations that

have worked with transparency and perseverance in promoting and defending fundamental rights and freedoms and strengthening democracy. The funds will be invested in programs to promote human rights, combating setbacks and reporting violations, as well as maintaining the infrastructure and human resources necessary for this work.

SUR 32: "POSSIBLE FUTURES: IS THERE A NEW NORMAL?"

"Possible Futures: Is there a new normal?" is the theme of the new edition of Sur – International Journal on Human Rights, edited by Conectas and published during the second semester of 2022. The 32nd edition of the magazine gathers reflections on paths for the human rights movement in the context of a global political, economic and health crisis. The the-

mes covered in Sur 32 are: the reconfiguration of global power; technology, disinformation and democratic processes and structural challenges for NGOs. These themes are explored in articles, essays, institutional reflections and artistic pieces among other formats. The authors of this edition work in different areas and countries including Brazil, Argentina, Switzerland, Denmark, Zimbabwe, the United States, Peru, Costa Rica, Mexico and France.

[Read Sur 32](#)





photo: Gabriel Guerra / Conectas

CONECTAS AMONG THE BEST NGOS

For the fourth time, Conectas is among the 100 best NGOs in Brazil. The selection was made by the Melhores ONGs Award, which considers best practices in areas such as governance, transparency, communication and funding. Conectas was also among the winners in 2018, 2020 and 2021.

Since 2017, the Melhores ONGs Award has recognized the essential work performed by non-governmental institutions in Brazil and also serves as a beacon to guide donations. Additionally, it encourages best practices and contributes to improving the management of all participants, including those that are not awarded, who also receive detailed feedback from the evaluation.

TEAM: FOCUSING ON A CULTURE OF CARE

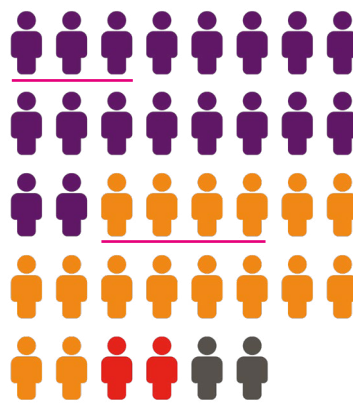
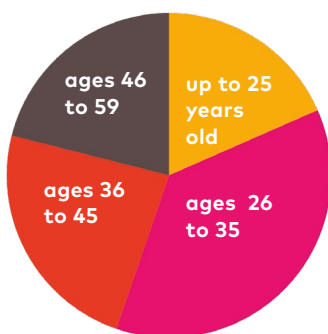
In the face of the global crisis that directly impacts human rights organizations and their teams, Conectas believes that people must come first and that care and well-being are paramount. In 2022, the organization continued its work in institutional development, whereby people management was grounded in the organization's values and the collective and individual profiles of each member, rather than in

models inspired by the corporate world.

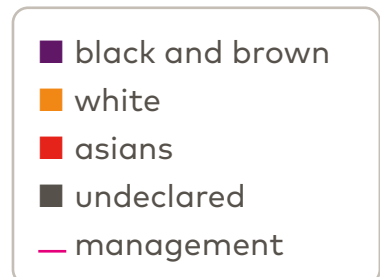
During the year, we focused on strengthening the Anti-Racism Working Group, formed by the organization's collaborators and developed ways to support the transition to a new director and the integration of new team members. Another significant activity was the creation of a hybrid work model. Respecting and valuing the diversity present among team members were also key actions. Here is the composition of the Conectas team:

	employees	management	non-brazilian
female	25	5	1
male	11	3	0
non-binary	2	0	0
	38	8	1
+ 1 volunteer			

age group



diversidade racial



transparency

Conectas receives donations from national and international foundations, as well as cooperation agencies and individuals who align with human rights issues and believe in the impact of our work. For us, operational independence is a fundamental value.

Therefore, we do not accept donations from the Brazilian government, national political parties or from the tobacco, alcohol and arms industries. The funds raised are fully invested in activities related to the promotion and defense of human rights, as well as in the infrastructure and human resources necessary for carrying out this work. Our accounts are audited by an independent consulting firm and made publicly available.

receitas 2022	
Luminate Foundation	2.870.027
Laudes Foundation	1.683.480
Open Society Foundations	1.462.742
OAK Foundation Ltd	1.434.248
The Ford Foundation	1.047.900
Sigrid Rausing Trust	1.021.700
Stiftung Auxilium	627.610
Charles Stewart Mott Foundation	585.350
Stichting Onderzoek Multinationale Ondernemingen – SOMO	507.130
Tides Foundation	218.819
Instituto Galo da Manhã	207.850
Embaixada dos Países Baixos	136.797
Derecho, Ambiente Y Recursos Naturales - DAR	119.305
European Climate Foundation	108.274
Instituto Ibirapitanga	107.470
Instituto Clima E Sociedade - iCS	100.000
Fundação Tide Setúbal	83.500
Silicon Valley Community Foundation	57.137
Rockefeller Phylanthropy Advisors	49.245
Credit Card Donations	23.744
Volunteer Work	2.677
Others	1.156
	12.456.161

thematic area	expenses 2022 (BRL)	initiatives	
Administrative and Financia	1.171.993	Administrative and Financia	1.171.993
Fundraising	1.183.267	Fundraising	1.183.267
Communication	1.025.864	Communication	1.025.864
Institutional Development	543.189	Institutional Development	543.189
Fight against Institutional Violence	1.784.800	Incarcerated Individuals	535.665
		Control of Law Enforcement and the Use of Force	483.880
		Drug Policy	454.346
		Gun Control	310.909
Strengthening of the Democratic Space	3.062.519	Defense of Civil Society	653.723
		Migration and Refugees	330.811
		Religious Mobilizations and Rights Agenda	276.281
		Defense of Race-based Affirmative Action	321.396
		Incidence	967.431
		Sur Journal	410.551
		"Possible Futures: Is there a new normal?"	102.326
Defense of Socio- Environmental Rights	3.149.751	Development Funding	877.212
		Extractive Industry Impacts	1.029.396
		Fight against Contemporary Slavery and Precarious Labor	545.759
		Climate Justice	697.384
Strategic Litigation	1.403.357	Strategic litigation	1.403.357
	13.324.740		13.324.740



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