

ALLIANCE FOR WELL-BEING

FOR THE UNIVERSAL RIGHT TO BREATHE AND AN END TO RACIAL VIOLENCE AGAINST BLACK PEOPLE



The **Black Women Alliance – All Against Violence** is an initiative of sixteen organizations in Brazilian civil society, led by Black cis and trans women, who have devoted themselves to the fight against racism and transphobia for over three decades. The Alliance seeks to build and consolidate debates national and international political advocacy about racial violence to be led by Black cis and trans women, based on racism's role and its intersections (such as gender, sexuality and territory) in the different forms of violence perpetrated by the State.

Black people in Brazil have been the victims of a historic genocide. Practices of extermination have intensified and become more sophisticated over the years. Although Brazil is a country with a majority Black¹ population, institutionalized racism has had an impact on generations, increasing inequality and promoting institutionalized physical and cultural extermination; it is a legacy of a slavery past that Brazil pretends it has overcome.

Through their struggles and mobilization, movements of Black people and Black women have made important progress over the last ten years and have celebrated the impact made by affirmative action policies; the law on femicide; the equivalence of racial slander to the crime of racism; the institution of a national day for original African traditions; and the result of the general elections in 2022, which had the largest proportion of Black candidates, numbering 49.3% Black people and 33.4% women². Nevertheless, these victories have been insufficient for the Black population, not to mention that Black candidates and members of Congress have been the most frequent targets of political violence.

After four years, Brazil currently has a federal government that was democratically elected on the promise to revert the impact of the setbacks experienced during the previous administration, and in its first semester in control it has reformulated the Ministry of Women and reinstated the Ministry of Racial Equality. Still, there are obstacles to overcome involving investment in these departments and winning over public opinion and the political class regarding the relevance of these agendas for social progress and citizenship. There is still a long road ahead for social movements because the new administration has not been able to unite a polarized population; hateful discourse has continued to propagate, and Nazi-fascist groups continue to operate and threaten democracy.

[1] 56.1% of the Brazilian population is Black (approximately 120,000,000) (IBGE, 2018)

[2] Superior Electoral Tribunal - TSE (2022)





WE WOULD LIKE TO MAKE KNOWN SOME DISTURBING QUESTIONS BRAZIL STILL FACES:

1 The State abuses the use of force, putting institutional actions into practice that reinforce the disdain, hate and genocide that the Black population suffers from. The following data shows that violent deaths suffered by the Black population in Brazil are the result of institutional racism: In 2019, Black people represented 77% of homicide victims, with a rate of 29.2 homicides per 100 thousand inhabitants, while among non-Black the rate was 11.2%. Black people are killed 2.8 times more often than white people in police operations. They are also the principal victims of these operations in at least 36 of the 50 cities with the greatest number of instances of police operations in the country. Homicide is the most frequent cause of death among Black youths from the age of 15 through 29, with men being the principal targets.³ According to the UN, a Black Youth dies every 23 minutes in Brazil.

2 Brazil ranks third in the world in the number of people incarcerated, while it is only the sixth most populous country. Clothed as a proposition for combating drugs, strategies of intervention have served as a mechanism for legitimizing actions against the lives and liberty of Black people, even as it has been proven that the most violent actions do not occur in the neighborhoods with the greatest presence of drugs.⁴ The system of deprivation of liberty is characterized by elevated prison occupancy rates and temporary imprisonment without conviction, with suspects awaiting judgment inside overcrowded prisons in deplorable conditions. In 2022, of the 820,689 people incarcerated, 67.4% were Black, an increase of 3.4% about 2020.⁵

3 When looking at data such as the numbers which show that Brazilian prisons house the fourth largest female prison population in the world, with 42 thousand incarcerated women (INFOPEN,⁶ 2018), going deeper reveals that the great majority are Black or Brown and have been the victims of some type of violence (such as physical, sexual, psychological), have not completed more than a very low level of formal education, are the products of broken families, and were arrested for drug trafficking. The data points to “an increase of more than 600% in the female prison population, an even greater increase than the 500% seen for the male incarcerated population.”

4 Black women are predominantly the victims of intra and extrafamilial violence. Gender bias deserves attention considering the violent scenario present in Brazil. Despite the reduction of indices of violence against women over the last several years, this fact doesn't hold when observing femicide and trans-femicide among Black women. In Brazil, 7 in 10 femicides are of Black women and for the sixth year in a row, trans people – especially Black transwomen – are those most likely to be murdered, representing 76% of the deaths registered in 2022, with an increase of 79.8% between 2017 and 2022 (ANTRA,⁷ 2023).

[3] Atlas of Violence (2021)

[4] Research conducted by the civil society organization Iniciativa Negra (2021)

[5] According to the Brazilian Annual of Public Safety (2022)

[6] National Study on Penitentiary Information.

[7] Associação Nacional de Travestis e Transexuais.



5 The major Brazilian media outlets are racist in their silence regarding racial questions in their production of news. This violence isn't presented from a racial viewpoint, either through the classification of the torturers or of the victims. Regarding coverage of police actions in the press, of the 7,062 reports that involve policing, the expression "Black" appeared only once. The expressions "racism", "race" and "racial" weren't mentioned even a single time. In Brazil, in the coverage of the case involving George Floyd, which led to protests against racial violence in many countries, the question of race/color was ignored. Regarding violence against women, despite the official data, of the 1,348 mentions registered during the period, the color of the victim wasn't given in 1,230 of them, more than de 91%.⁸

[8] Em levantamento realizado pela revista Gênero e Número (2020).

[9] São eles o Globo, Folha de São Paulo e o Estadão.

[10] According to a study by the Multidisciplinary Study Group for Affirmative Action (GEMAA) of the State University of Rio de Janeiro (UERJ).

6 Brazilian media is a reproducer of racism through the narratives it creates and the low representation of Black people on TV. The participation of the media in this complex racist system reinforces and allows the continuance of racist narratives: subalternity, the enemy within, criminalization and other controlling images that are produced by the media mold public opinion, vilifying rights and respect for citizenship by normalizing violence against these people. Add this to the invisibilization of Black professionals in the media outlets with wide circulation in the country. The country's three principal print newspapers⁹ are predominantly white, with percentages of over 90%. When the situation of Black women is analyzed, in the three main major media vehicles in Brazil, the newspaper Folha de São Paulo doesn't have a single Black columnist, the newspaper O Globo employs 4% in this position, and the newspaper Estadão has 1%.¹⁰

RECOMENDATIONS

- 1** The Brazilian State should guarantee policies instituted by the State and not by administrations, that take responsibility for cases of violence and apply stricter punitive measures against the curtailment of Black population rights, such as the invasion of territories in favelas and urban outskirts, and police operations without legal foundation.
- 2** Urgent measures should be taken to curb and eradicate police violence in any phase of policing, whether from police, or the armed forces, in the fulfillment of their missions on Brazilian soil.
- 3** Guarantee the investigation of crimes committed against LGBTI+ people in any territory and facilitate the collection of public data about these crimes.
- 4** Confront institutional racism and the genocide of the Black people, with revised plans for public policies for safety and combat newest racist technologies such as the policies regarding facial recognition and racial profiling.



- 5** Address the situation concerning violations of the rights of incarcerated people with seriousness it deserves; review policies on incarceration in the war on drugs considering the abolition of imprisonment for these offenses.
- 6** Guarantee the right to due process and the presumption of innocence after having served time in prison for Black women, because procedural guarantees and the presumption of innocence are violated for the Black population; ensure the commitment that the legal system makes to justice and liberty.
- 7** Create a budget plan for combating violence against women, effectively applying the Maria da Penha Law (Law n.º 11.340) to all women; fight impunity and the revictimization and banalization of violence with protection and reparation for victims.
- 8** Promote racially oriented campaigns to create awareness, provide information and mobilize society toward denouncing situations involving police brutality and the violation of the human rights of Black people; combat the proliferation of disinformation related to racism; protect individuals and groups defending human rights.
- 9** Promote deeper discussions on the role of images and representations in mass communication related to race markers, gender identity, blackness, and their repercussions. Thus, overcoming, in the long term, inhumanity and violence in society with the use of tools such as philosophy, the arts, and digital approaches, through discussions stemming from technologies of information and communication.

THIS DOCUMENT IS SIGNED BY THE FOLLOWING ORGANIZATIONS:

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ASSOCIAÇÃO DAS PROSTITUTAS DE MINAS GERAIS - APROSMIG
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IROHIN - CENTRO DE DOCUMENTAÇÃO, COMUNICAÇÃO E MEMÓRIA AFRO-BRASILEIRA
REDE DE MULHERES NEGRAS DE ALAGOAS EM REPRESENTAÇÃO DA COALIZÃO NEGRA POR DIREITOS
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