



justice

foreign policy

south-south

business and human rights

institutional

JUSTICE

CONECTAS EMPLOYS A NUMBER OF different strategies to defend the human rights of the prison population against the systematic violations endured by this segment of the population on account of the country's flawed prison system and inefficient democratic institutions:

Pedrinhas Case.

Late in 2013, one of the worst crises in the Brazilian prison system erupted at the Pedrinhas Prison Complex, in the state of Maranhão, where more than 60 inmates had been killed over the course of the year. Since then, Conectas and partner organizations have defended [federal intervention](#) in the prison and the [federalization](#) of the crimes committed there. Read more [here](#). Conectas also launched an offensive in the national and [international](#) media to expose and galvanize public opinion on the Pedrinhas case and the Brazilian prison system as a whole. The organization also used the [Freedom of Information Law](#) to request details from the Maranhão state authorities on each of the crimes committed in Pedrinhas.



ON THE INTERNATIONAL LEVEL, Conectas and partners presented the 'Pedrinhas Case' and made an oral statement – during the 25th session of the UN Human Rights Council – on the killings and human rights abuses committed at the prison. Read more [here](#). Conectas also joined forces with a Maranhão state partner organization to work together on updating information on the unnatural deaths occurred at Pedrinhas to complement a [precautionary measure](#) issued by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights of the IACHR in December 2013.

In early July, 2014, Conectas and partner organizations conducted another inspection of the Pedrinhas complex, where another 12 unnatural deaths were recorded in the first six months of the year – 3 of which occurred while the inspection was underway. The inspectors concluded that Brazil had not complied with the precautionary measure issued by the OAS Commission. Read more [here](#). Conectas will continue to monitor the case closely.



Combating Mass Incarceration & Criminalization of Poverty.

In Brazil, the so-called war on drugs is, in fact, an effective means of [criminalizing poverty](#) and black youth. Conectas has challenged attempts by the Legislative to throwback the law even further, such as [Bill No. 7.663/10](#), that proposes to increase prison sentences for drug use. In March 2014, Conectas participated in the first [thematic hearing](#) on drug policies in Latin America, when the organization had the opportunity to expose the legal setbacks in Brazil.



CONECTAS ALSO CONTINUES TO SUPPORT the unconstitutionality of article 28 of the Drug Law (Law No. 11,343/2006), which bans the consumption of drugs. In an *amicus curiae* brief presented to the Supreme Court in 2012, Conectas and partner organizations defended the unconstitutionality of the article and demonstrated how the current drug policy causes mass incarceration and the unequal treatment of whites and blacks, rich and poor. The case is expected to be heard by the Supreme Court in the second half of 2014.

Prison Visits & Inspections.

Conectas is a member of the Community Council – the only body formed by public officials and civil society that has free access to Brazilian prisons. Once the visits have been completed, Conectas reports on the violations to the prison sentence enforcement authorities. More recently, in September 2013, the Associate Director of Conectas was appointed to the CNPCP (National Criminal and Prison Policy Council) of the Ministry of Justice, a body that examines and monitors prison conditions and recommends improvements to prison sentence enforcement standards.



Cases in the Supreme Court.

In 2013, Conectas continued to step up its engagement with the Supreme Court (STF) with the use of *amicus curiae* briefs, legal instruments that allow civil society to present its views and opinions to the court justices in an attempt to inform and influence their decisions. Conectas continues to monitor and present new *amicus curiae* briefs on a wide range of topics, including *quilombola* communities (Quilombos are settlements founded by escaped slaves before the abolishment of slavery in Brazil. Today, they are inhabited mostly by their descendants), the slave labor blacklist, decriminalization of drug use, the solitary confinement and stable homosexual unions, among others. All the *amicus curiae* briefs and other cases of strategic litigation presented by Conectas are now available on the organization's online platform, [STF in Focus](#).

Transparency and civil society participation in the Supreme Court.

As part of its strategy in 2013 to contribute to the transparency and civil society participation in the appointment of Supreme Court justices, Conectas and partner organizations presented 11 questions to senators during the confirmation hearing of Justice Luis Roberto Barroso in the Senate. Of the 11 questions, 7 were asked by the senators. [Read more here and here](#).



How the appointment process works:

the process begins with a nomination, by the Presidency of the Republic, of a candidate for the vacancy. The only criteria constitutionally established for this choice are for the candidate to be between 35 and 65 years old and have 'outstanding legal knowledge' and an 'unblemished reputation'. The nomination is published in the Federal Gazette and submitted to the Senate, where the candidate is subject to a confirmation hearing in the Constitution and Justice Commission (CCJ) of the house before being approved in the full Senate. Finally, the candidate is appointed Supreme Court Justice by a Presidential Act.



THE WAVE OF PROTESTS that swept Brazil in 2013 completed one year on June 13, 2014. The violent police repression arising out of these protests was roundly condemned by human rights defenders in Brazil. Conectas, in its role as a human rights organization, defended the protection of these rights during the protests and continues to conduct advocacy and engage in dialogue with partners to guarantee these rights, namely:



Debate on journalism at demonstrations.

Conectas and partners gathered journalists for a debate on the topic 'Reporting on the Demonstrations in São Paulo' that featured a panel on security, reporting techniques, use of multimedia and ethics, among other issues. Read more [here](#). At the second edition of the event, a meeting was held between journalists and the Military Police Colonel Erich Meier Júnior, who has served as a member of the UN police in Bosnia. The meeting discussed important issues for press coverage of the protests that have gripped the country. Read more [here](#) and [here](#).

Manifesto for freedom of the press and freedom of expression.

Conectas and partner organizations organized a press conference to discuss the violations of freedom of the press and freedom of expression that have occurred at the demonstrations. Read more [here](#).


Complaints against the police and government of São Paulo.

Conectas requested from the public authorities, namely the São Paulo State Public Security Department and the State Prosecutor's Office, information and investigations to identify those responsible for ordering the repressive police action at the protests. Read more [here](#), [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#).



NO WAY OUT
REPORTS SUGGEST ATTEMPT BY POLICE TO ENCIRCLE DEMONSTRATORS

- 1 "A police squad descended Consolação towards the demonstrators while another squad came from Rua Maria Antônia. I had the feeling we were being ambushed."
S.A.S., photographer
- 2 "We were confined within one large street block. Trapped between Consolação and Augusta."
C.L.C., cultural producer
- 3 "They started to fire tear gas at people who were in the square. They were surrounding us."
R.B.F., student
- 4 "I ran away and took shelter in a gas station in front of Praça Roosevelt square. Me and a bunch of other people."
C.L.C., cultural producer
- 5 "In front of Atenas bar, on Augusta, it was extremely traumatic. We thought we were going to die."
T.R.C., student





Reports of demonstrators.

Conectas released the testimonies of 10 young people who were wounded and arrested during the demonstrations. The accounts describe the attempt by the police to encircle and attack the young demonstrators. Read more [here](#).

Against the bill that restricts the right to protest.

Conectas and partners presented a technical opinion recommending the rejection of Senate Bill 508/2013 that restricts the freedoms of expression, association and demonstration. Read more [here](#) and [here](#).

ON THE INTERNATIONAL LEVEL, Conectas also used regional and international human rights mechanisms to expose and denounce the police violence at the protests:

Urgent Appeal to the UN.

Conectas submitted an Urgent Appeal to independent United Nations rapporteurs requesting an investigation of the disproportionate use of force by the police, the violations of the freedoms of association, expression and movement, and the arbitrary detention, torture and violence against journalists at a protest in São Paulo on June 13, 2013. Read more [here](#) and [here](#).



Public hearing in the OAS.

Conectas participated in a hearing in the Organization of American States (OAS) on the repression of protests, based on more than 200 cases of abuse committed by the police during the repression of the protests that occurred in São Paulo since June 2013. Conectas and partner organizations presented videos and specific cases of aggression, illegal detentions, beatings, mutilations and other rights violations at the protests. The hearing was held at the request of Conectas and partner organization. Read more [here](#).

IN 2014, Conectas will continue monitoring the advocacy actions and accompany the investigation to hold accountable the perpetrators of the police violence and repression that occurred during the demonstrations, and also guarantee that human rights, as well as the freedoms of expression and the press, are upheld.



IN AUGUST 2013, six years after Brazil ratified the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention against Torture to create a torture prevention mechanism, the Presidency of the Republic finally signed the law that creates the National System to Combat and Prevent Torture. Ever since Brazil made this commitment in the UN to create a national mechanism to combat and prevent torture, Conectas has monitored and engaged in advocacy – both individually and with partners – and filed complaints in the UN to defend the approval of a federal law to establish the mechanism. In August 2013, the federal law was finally approved. Read more [here](#).



The mechanism will serve to curb the practice of torture and mistreatment in the Brazilian prison system. The number of people behind bars has soared 380% over the past 20 years. Today, Brazil has the world's fourth largest prison population, behind only the United States, China and Russia. Nearly 43% of the country's 550,000 prisoners are pre-trial detainees and there is a shortfall of 207,000 prison places.

In July 2014, the National Committee to Combat and Prevent Torture, in which civil society participates, was finally set up by President Dilma Rousseff. The Committee, which has unrestricted access to all Brazil's detention facilities, will be responsible for the creation of the national mechanism and may propose measures to prevent and combat torture, make recommendations on how to improve the facilities and monitor the implementation of these recommendations. Conectas will continue to monitor the case closely and engage in advocacy to ensure that the national mechanism is created.



NATIONAL MECHANISM TO COMBAT AND PREVENT TORTURE

In 2007, Brazil assumed in the UN the responsibility to create a torture prevention mechanism. It took five years for the country to make good on its commitment. On August 2, 2013, after intense mobilization from the UN Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture and several civil society organizations, the law that creates the **National System to Combat and Prevent Torture** was finally signed by President Dilma Rousseff. Understand the impact and scope of this law on the serious human rights situation in Brazilian detention facilities.

4 QUESTIONS

- 1 Which facilities will be inspected?**

All long-term detention facilities. This includes prisons, but also clinics for drug addicts, psychiatric hospitals, military detention centers, custody centers and youth reform centers.
- 2 When will they be inspected?**

At any time, without prior warning. There is only one body that should be notified by the National Mechanism prior to the visits: the State Mechanism, if one already exists in the state to be inspected.
- 3 What will the visits be like?**

The members of the National Mechanism may interview people, access documents and record anything they deem pertinent on video, photo or audio devices. They may also be accompanied by technical staff.
- 4 What should the Mechanism do if it finds cases of torture?**

After each visit, the members of the National Mechanism have 30 days to submit a report to the Committee – these documents will be public. If necessary, they may also demand the opening of criminal and administrative proceedings, or request medical reports, suggest alterations to the law and propose public policies.

The prison population has grown **202,7%** over the past 10 years.

In spite of the high number of detained people, there is no official data on cases of torture in the country.

548,000 people are imprisoned in Brazil. This is the world's 4th largest prison population.

Paraná, Pernambuco, Alagoas, Espírito Santo and Rio de Janeiro have already approved laws that create state-level prevention mechanisms, but only in Rio de Janeiro has the body actually been set up.

NATIONAL MECHANISM STRUCTURE

How the National System created by the new law will work:

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graph TD
    MJ[Ministry of Justice] --- NCP[National Council on Criminal and Prison Policy NCCPP]
    MJ --- BHR[Bureau of Human Rights]
    BHR --- NCPPT[National Committee on the Combating and Prevention of Torture]
    NCPPT --- NMT[National Mechanism to Combat and Prevent Torture]
    NMT --- UN[UN Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture]
    NMT --- DEP[National Prison Department Depen]
            
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COMMITTEE
Composed of 23 members: 11 from the Federal Executive Branch and 12 from civil society organizations.
Participation is not remunerated.
The mandates are for 2 years.
Responsible for monitoring the work of the Mechanism and keeping track of the implementation of its recommendations.

MECHANISM
Only linked to the Committee. It is composed of 11 experts with a higher education degree and experience in the area.
The work is remunerated.
The mandates are for 3 years.
Responsible for visiting detention facilities in order to monitor torture prevention.



THE “OPPRESSIVE SEARCH” consists of an extremely humiliating search, during which the relatives and friends of prisoners are required to undress and have their private parts inspected when they visit, under the pretext of barring the entry of drugs and mobile phones into the prisons. Relatives of detainees – including pregnant and elderly women and infants – have to endure intimate searches when they visit their relatives in the Brazilian prison system. The practice, which also includes stripping naked, being forced to squat and intimate searches, is known in Brazil as the “oppressive search”. In October 2013, Conectas and partners staged a seminar with national and international experts to address strategies and solutions to put a stop to this practice. Read more [here](#).



In March 2014, Conectas, in partnership with the [Criminal Justice Network](#), launched a national campaign to end the oppressive search. The campaign was announced at a press conference held at the organization's headquarters. The press conference also marked the launch of the campaign website, which, besides featuring videos of the actress Denise Fraga and the rapper Dexter reading statements written by the victims of the searches, also contained a message for the President of the Senate – Renan Calheiro – calling for the approval of Bill No. 7764/2014 that bans oppressive searches at Brazilian prisons. Access the campaign website [here](#). In June 2014, the bill was approved unanimously in the Senate. Read more [here](#) and [here](#).



On the international level, Conectas and partners denounced the oppressive search at the 25th session of the UN Human Rights Council, with a request of support for the bill and the establishment of minimum rules for the treatment of prisoners. Read more [here](#) and [here](#).

IN 2014, CONECTAS will continue to fight for the approval of the federal law and monitor the advocacy actions already undertaken by the organization on the subject, such as the public civil action against the state of São Paulo for reparation for the harm caused to the victims of the searches. Read more [here](#).



SINCE 2003, Conectas has been working with criminal justice and the prison system to combat human rights violations in Brazilian prisons, particularly in relation to access to justice and guaranteeing the rights of prisoners. The effectiveness, transparency and strengthening of democratic institutions like the São Paulo State Public Defender's Office (DPSP) is key to guaranteeing rights and access to justice for the marginalized population.



Since its creation in 2006, the DPSP has entered into agreements with institutions such as the São Paulo chapter of the Brazilian Bar Association (OAB-SP) and the Professor Manoel Pedro Pimentel Foundation (FUNAP), due to a lack of sufficient resources and to share the responsibility for providing free legal counsel to the population. As a result of this situation and on account of the lack of mechanisms to control and monitor the services provided by the DPSP, in 2013 Conectas conducted a pioneer research on the quality of the free services provided by the Office.

The research project concluded that, besides lacking transparency, the agreements also lack a standard of control in relation to the quality and services rendered by the institutions that celebrate agreements with the DPSP. These results are a first step and they will inform future dialogue with the DPSP on concrete proposals to influence the institutional policy of quality control in the provision of free legal counsel in the state.

In 2014, Conectas will continue to strengthen and foster the policy of free legal counsel provided by the DPSP, particularly for the prison population.



GENERAL LINKS ON THE WORK OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER'S OFFICE:



Right to a Defense (+)



*Inquiries and indictments:
whose interests are served by
this justice system?* (+)



*São Paulo government denies
education to prisoners* (+)



*In São Paulo, World Cup ushers
in state of emergency-like
situation* (+)



FOREIGN POLICY

BESIDES MONITORING Brazilian foreign policy as member of the Brazilian Human Rights and Foreign Policy Committee (*CBDHPE*), in Brasília, Conectas has stepped up other courses of action in order to give more visibility to Brazil's position in its foreign policy, particularly in cases of human rights violations. Therefore, actions such as direct dialogue with public officials and key stakeholders in Brasília, engagement with partners and strategic use of the media have been valuable tools for exposing and increasing the political cost for the Brazilian government, as well as raising transparency, in cases that involve human rights, such as:

Human Rights: The world in 2013

At the end of 2013, Conectas published a [map](#) identifying some of the main human rights crises experienced over the course of the year, together with the concrete steps taken by the organization. Read more [here](#) and [here](#).



From the war in Syria to the demonstrations in São Paulo, the map of Conectas in 2013 pinpoints the main fronts in the struggle for human rights. By clicking on the markers, the map provides information on some of the main crises experienced over the past 12 months, together with the concrete actions taken by the organization in support of the victims.



Podcast on the main points of the speech given by President Dilma Rousseff at the opening of the UN General Assembly

Conectas analyzed the main points of the speech given by Dilma Rousseff at the opening of the UN General Assembly, in New York. In her speech, the president criticized the United States for spying on confidential Brazilian correspondence and expressed her opposition to any military action in Syria. Read more [here](#).



Confirmation hearing of the Brazilian ambassador in Geneva

Prior to serving as the Permanent Representative of Brazil in Geneva, Ambassador Regina Maria Cordeiro Dunlop attended a confirmation hearing with senators in the Foreign Relations and National Defense Committee of the Federal Senate. At the time, Conectas submitted [seven suggested](#) questions on Brazil's role in the human rights forums of the UN. Of the seven suggested questions, two were posed to Dunlop by the senators. The involvement of civil society in these confirmation hearings guarantees more transparency and dialogue with civil society regarding Brazil's cooperation at the international level. Read more [here](#).



Minister, #IWantToKnow

To raise public participation in the dialogue on human rights and foreign policy, Conectas launched its first online campaign [Minister, #IWantToKnow](#). During the four days the campaign was online, Conectas received 30 questions submitted by the public, via Facebook. All the questions were sent, in writing, to the members of the Senate Foreign Relations and National Defense Committee of the confirmation hearing of the then appointed minister Antônio Aguiar Patriota. The #IWantToKnow campaign demonstrated that there is significant interest among Brazilians in foreign policy, particularly concerning human rights. A [second edition](#) of the Minister, #IWantToKnow campaign was held in February 2014, for the hearing of Foreign Minister Luiz Alberto Figueiredo. Of the five senators who took to the floor during the hearing, four mentioned the questions compiled and submitted by Conectas.



**MINISTER
#IWANTOKNOW**

On Thursday, Nov. 14, Foreign Minister Luiz Alberto Figueiredo will appear before the Senate to account for Brazilian foreign policy.

WHAT QUESTIONS DO YOU WANT HIM TO ANSWER?

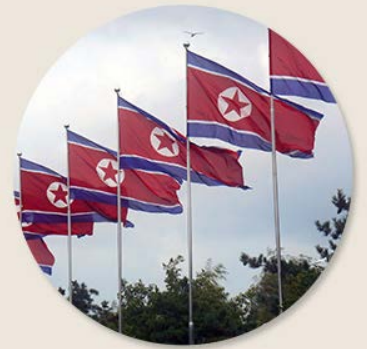
All the questions that you post in the comments section of this page will be sent to the minister and the senators by Conectas.

PARTICIPATE. ASK. SHARE.



Campaign for Brazil's support in the investigation of crimes in North Korea.

In North Korea, nearly 200,000 people live in forced labor camps. In March 2013, the UN Human Rights Council created the Commission of Inquiry to investigate decades of abuse and impunity by the North Korean regime against its citizens. Conectas launched a [campaign](#) calling on Brazil to support the adoption of the resolution and to not repeat the ambiguous position taken in 2009, when it abstained from the vote. Nearly 200 people supported the campaign, sharing messages on social networks and sending emails to the Brazilian Embassy in Geneva. The appeal for support from the Brazilian people was made by the North Korean Shin Dong-hyuk, who in a video recorded by Conectas asked for the support of the Brazilian delegation in the UN Human Rights Council. Shin was born in a forced labor camp for political prisoners in North Korea and was subject to torture at age of 14, hung by the skin of his stomach by an iron hook and suspended over a fire.



IN 2014, CONECTAS will continue to defend and promote human rights in Brazilian foreign policy, primarily to increase the involvement of society in this discussion and to act as a control mechanism in Congress (checks and balances), whether through advocacy and engagement or pressure using media strategies to guide the debate and give visibility to the foreign policy actions of the Brazilian government that are at odds with human rights.



AS THE ECONOMIC CLOUT OF THE BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) has captured the spotlight of the local and international media, the position of these countries in the defense and promotion of human rights, particularly with regard to economic and social development policies, has also acquired growing global attention. In 2013, Conectas' human rights advocacy in the context of the foreign policy of emerging countries focused on two fronts:



Crisis in Syria

In 2013, the [*crisis in Syria*](#) sadly commemorated its two-year [*anniversary*](#). Ever since the outbreak of the crisis, Conectas has called for firmer action from Brazil, for example by sending a [*joint statement*](#) with other human rights organizations to the Brazilian Foreign Ministry. The statement called on the Brazilian government to come out in favor of referring the Syrian crisis to the International Criminal Court (ICC).

At the [*5th BRICS Summit*](#), held in Durban, South Africa, in March 2013, Conectas and partner organizations attended with the primordial goal of influencing the BRICS governments. The advocacy focused on ensuring that the [*final declaration*](#) adopted by the BRICS governments contained recommendations on, for example, the conflict in Syria. The endorsement for the entry of humanitarian aid into Syria was indeed given in the final declaration of the BRICS Summit. The Brazilian government informed Conectas that Brazil was responsible for including the topic in the final declaration. More recently, in February 2014, Conectas and partner organizations welcomed UN Security Council [*Resolution 2139*](#). The resolution established unhindered humanitarian access to the victims of the armed conflict in Syria.

BRICS Bank

In September 2013, during the G20 summit, [*Brazil announced that it would commit US\\$18 billion to a US\\$100 billion reserve fund to be set up by the BRICS*](#). The creation of a new multilateral development bank brought to light and underlined the need to define human rights standards for the credit granted by the recently created BRICS Bank.



The creation of the bank is justified by the need to invest in infrastructure and development projects in emerging countries and to diversify the lines of credit beyond those offered by existing institutions, namely the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). The need for investments in infrastructure projects in poor and emerging countries is undeniable, but the development model currently adopted by the BRICS is strongly biased towards large-scale and complex projects that generate social and environmental impacts. These impacts, meanwhile, have caused alarming cases of human rights violations.

In view of this situation, Conectas and partner organizations prepared and called on the leaders of the BRICS to incorporate *five minimum points* into the operating strategies and policies of the BRICS Bank – such as guidelines and policies for respecting human rights and free, prior and informed consultation – before investing in projects that impact the lives of indigenous and tribal peoples.



BRICS BANK
5 POINTS THAT THE BLOCK'S FIRST PROJECT CANNOT OVERLOOK

- 1** Socio-environmental and human rights-respecting policies and guidelines
- 2** Free, prior and informed consultation for projects that impact the lives of indigenous and tribal peoples
- 3** Solid transparency and access to information policies
- 4** Effective and transparent grievance and conflict resolution mechanism
- 5** Participation by society during the formalization of the bank and the cycle of the projects

IN 2014, CONECTAS will continue engaging in advocacy and liaising with partners to urge the BRICS to adopt a policy that is more responsible and protective of human rights, and to take a firmer position in cases of human rights violations on the international level.



AT THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY in April 2013, 154 countries voted in favor of the first international treaty to regulate the trade of conventional weapons – from handguns to missiles – establishing criteria for arms exports and introducing more transparency to transfers.

In June 2013, Brazil *signed the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT)* at the UN headquarters in New York, together with another 66 countries. The goal of the treaty is to curb the illicit trade and prevent the diversion of arms that are used for genocidal purposes, supply terrorists and international organized crime. In accordance with the provisions of the treaty, it will only come into force 90 days after it is ratified by the 50th State. To date, only 11 countries have ratified the treaty. Conectas and partner organizations have been advocating for the Brazilian government to ratify the treaty, by pressuring for more celerity by the Executive and Legislative branches.

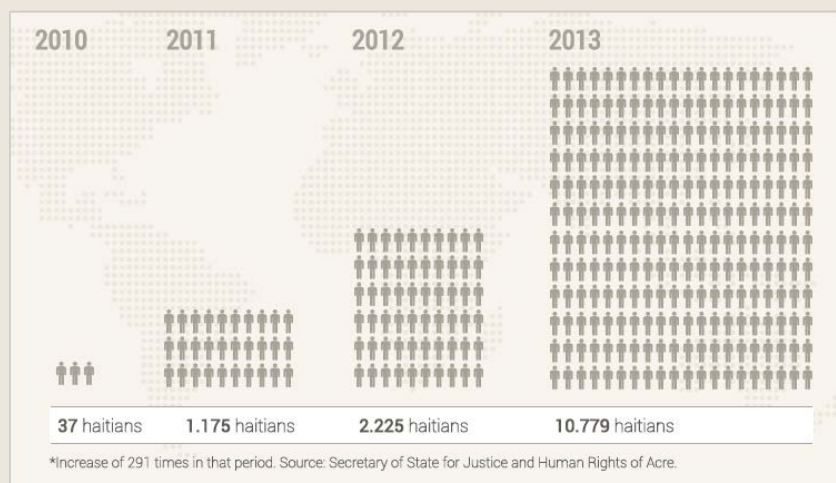
In March 2014, more than 8 months after it was signed by Brazil, the treaty was still pending approval by the Ministry of Foreign Relations and had not even reached Congress. Despite this slow progress by the Brazilian government, Conectas and its partners will continue to pressure Brazil to ratify the treaty.



Invisible Crisis: The Case of Haitian Immigrants in Brazil

August 2013

SINCE THE BRAZILIAN GOVERNMENT started issuing humanitarian visas to Haitians in 2012, the inflow of Haitian immigrants to the country has been growing rapidly. This increased inflow has occurred in an improvised and unstructured manner from a legal and operational point of view, leading to flagrant violations of immigrant rights. Conectas believes that by influencing how Brazil responds to the increased inflow of immigrants, it will also be able to influence the country's international position on human rights. Brazil's prominent role among emerging countries and the responsibility that this role entails is one of the central features of the program.



According to data from the Acre State Department of Justice and Human Rights, the state of Acre received 37 Haitians in 2010. In 2011, this number increased to 1,175. In 2012, it rose to 2,225 and, last year, to 10,779 – a 291-fold increase in three years. The situation facing Haitians in Acre is, in fact, a humanitarian emergency that has been hidden by the government. In August 2013, Conectas conducted an [on-site mission](#) to Brasileia, a small town in the state of Acre on the border with Bolivia, to investigate the situation facing the Haitians there. At the time, more than 830 immigrants – nearly all of them Haitians – were living in unhealthy conditions in a shelter built for just 200 people. During the mission, Conectas took [20 statements](#) from Haitians who were sheltered in Brasileia.

Given the humanitarian crisis facing the Haitian immigrants, Conectas conducted a series of advocacy actions – on the national and international levels – to give visibility to the situation and to call for effective measures from the Brazilian government to provide shelter for them.





Denouncing the situation in Brasília

Conectas met with officials from the Ministries of Labor, Justice and Foreign Relations to denounce the disrespect and violation of human rights in the town of Brasileia. During these meetings with authorities, Conectas addressed the humanitarian visa, the state of the shelter in Brasileia and the need for federal intervention, as well as the country's problematic national immigration policy. Read more [here](#).



1st National Conference on Immigration and Refugees

In December 2013, Conectas was elected a member of the Committee on Civil Society Monitoring of Immigration and Refugees Actions (CASC-Migrante) of the National Justice Department. The Committee serves to raise the involvement of civil society in the monitoring and assessment of immigration policy. As a member of CASC-Migrante, Conectas was able to vote in the first National Conference on Immigration and Refugees (COMIGRAR) held in May 2014. The Conference was organized to provide an opportunity for broader dialogue to discuss legislation and to develop a National Plan for Immigration and Refugees based on human rights.





Advocacy in the transfer of Haitians to São Paulo

In April 2014, the Acre state government informed Conectas of the [closure of the shelter in Brasileia](#) and the transfer of the immigrants living there – mostly Haitians – to São Paulo. As a result of this change of scenery, Conectas liaised with its partners and conducted a series of advocacy actions, such as engaging with the Immigration Coordination Authority in the state of São Paulo to assure that the state had the capacity to coordinate and cope with the arrival of these immigrants. In May 2014, the São Paulo government personally notified Conectas about the establishment of a new temporary shelter for the Haitians, in the region of Glicério. The temporary shelter, to be used for 3 months, has the capacity to hold 120 people. Moreover, in a public hearing that discussed the draft bill of the new Immigration Law, held in the same month, the government announced that it was looking for a permanent shelter that would start operating once the temporary shelter had been used for three months. The new permanent shelter will also serve as a reference center for immigrants.

Recommendations to the UN and OAS

In an Urgent Appeal to the United Nations, Conectas called for the humanitarian crisis in Brasileia to be considered a consequence of the humanitarian situation in Haiti. The organization also asked for UN rapporteurs to be sent to Brasileia and to the places that are part of the route taken by Haitian immigrants across South America, to gather information in situ and question the management of the crisis by the countries involved. In the Organization of American States (OAS), Conectas and a partner organization submitted extensive documentation requesting a thematic hearing in the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) of the OAS to address the shelter and the regional responsibility for this crisis, which involves at least five countries (Brazil, Haiti, Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru). *Read more at [conectas.org](#).*

OAS thematic hearing: “The Human Rights Situation of Haitian Immigrants in the Americas”

In a thematic hearing of the IACHR held – at the request of Conectas and a partner organization – in Washington, United States, proposals were presented to the States through which the Haitians travel on their journey to Brazil. The purpose of the hearing was to ask for the IACHR to serve as a forum of regional dialogue, guaranteeing that the Haitians can travel along the immigration route safely and without abuse and exploitation. During the hearing, Conectas and the partner organization guided the debate and obtained recognition from the IACHR itself for its work with Haitian immigrants. Read more [here](#) and [a](#).





Statement in UN on the situation of Haitian immigrants

In March 2014, Conectas and the partner organization made an oral statement in the UN Human Rights Council on the humanitarian crisis at the shelter in Brasileia, in the state of Acre. Read more [here](#).

CONECTAS WILL CONTINUE TO PRESSURE for a reform of Brazil's immigration law and work with partner organizations to defend the human rights of immigrants.

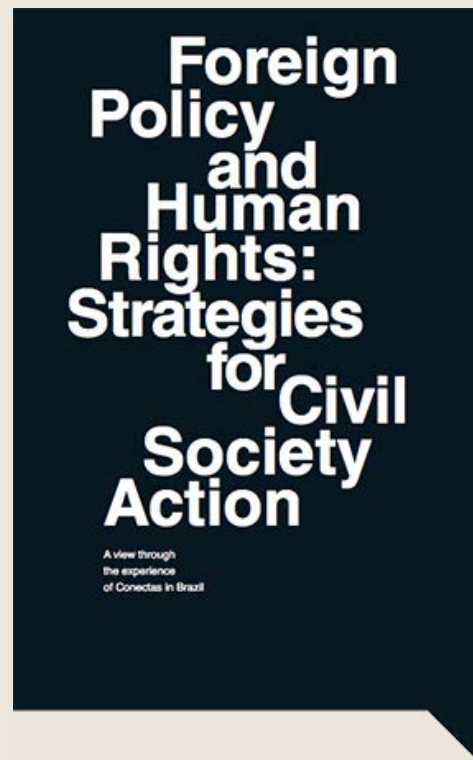


SINCE ITS FOUNDATION, Conectas has invested in knowledge as a tool and an essential ally in the realization of its mission.

Publicizing and disseminating the knowledge it produces, as well as the experience acquired by the organization over the course of the years, is essential to the organization's goal of contributing to the collective construction of a critical debate on human rights, and also to the engagement of society in the defense of rights. In 2013, the following initiatives to produce knowledge for action were undertaken:

Foreign Policy and Human Rights: Strategies for action by civil society

October 2013, Conectas released a [case study](#) on its experience working with foreign policy, explaining the challenges and strategies implemented by the organization in this area. Read more [here](#).



Experience of organizations from the Global South in Foreign Policy

In the [19th issue](#) of [SUR Journal](#) on Foreign Policy, Conectas, CIVICUS and CHRI, three organizations from emerging countries in the Global South, shared their experience working with foreign policy.

Training African partners: access to UN human rights mechanisms

During the 26th session of the UN Human Rights Council, held in June 2014, Conectas organized an informal training course with 4 partners (from South Africa, Ghana, Ivory Coast and Indonesia) that were interested in working with foreign policy and learning about the UN human rights mechanisms. During the week-long immersion course, the participants could meet with members of the UN, interview various different stakeholders, diplomats, UN employees and other organizations from the Global South that do work in Geneva. The training also included workshops on how to work with foreign policy, both inside and outside the UN.

IN 2014, CONECTAS will continue to produce and disseminate knowledge for action, whether individually or in partnership with other organizations.



ON THE INTERNATIONAL LEVEL, Conectas continues to use regional and international human rights mechanisms, such as the UN Human Rights Council (HRC) and the Inter-American Human Rights System of the Organization of American States (OAS) to denounce and expose human rights violations.

In the UN, thanks to a permanent representation in Geneva, Conectas actively participates in the sessions of the HRC to monitor and influence Brazilian foreign policy with regard to the implementation of recommendations and the position of Brazil concerning the protection and defense of human rights by other States, particularly in countries of the Global South. In the OAS, Conectas has engaged in advocacy to pressure Brazil to take firmer action to strengthen the system and, increasingly more so, it has used the system to denounce cases of human rights violations committed in Brazil.



UN Human Rights Council

In 2013, Conectas participated actively in the sessions of the HRC, engaging in advocacy with partners, ranging from side events during the sessions, oral statements on human rights violations, participation on debate panels and other actions, such as:

Read more at conectas.org.

- Advocacy and online campaign on behalf of the North Korean activist Shin Dong-hyuk, requesting the support of Brazil for the creation of a Commission of Inquiry to investigate the human rights situation in his country (22nd session);

- Side event "World Cup for Whom? Red card to the World Cup and Olympics in Brazil" (23rd session);

- Oral statement with partner organizations against the detention of individuals for indefinite periods and without trial at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba (23rd session);

- Support, through a joint letter signed with organizations from different countries, for two resolutions adopted by the UN at the 24th session on the role of civil society and reprisals against human rights defenders;

- Joint statement with other organizations and a coordinated campaign on Twitter for a resolution that was more committed to the human rights violations taking place in Sudan (24th session);

- Support, in a joint letter with another 23 organizations from the Global South, for the international investigation into the crimes committed in Sri Lanka during the civil war (25th session);



- Advocacy with partner organizations against the amendments weakening the UN resolution on protests and in favor of a ban on the use of lethal weapons by agents of the State during demonstrations (25th session);

- Complaints over the crimes committed in the Pedrinhas prison complex, in the state of Maranhão, the situation of Haitian immigrants in the town of Brasileia and the abusive body searches performed on prison visitors in Brazil (25th session);

- Debate, organized by Conectas and partner organizations, on the influence that NGOs have on the foreign policy of their countries (26th session);

- Publication of an analysis report and delivery of an oral statement on the first three years of the UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights (26th session).



Inter-American Human Rights System

The Inter-American Human Rights System consists of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, two regional bodies that play a crucial role in the defense of human rights in the Americas, such as in protecting the victims of Latin American dictatorships. Conectas has used this mechanism more frequently to expose and denounce cases of human rights violations in Brazil:

- First thematic hearing of the IACHR on drug policies in Latin America, requested by Conectas and partner organizations;

- Denouncement, with partner organizations, of the more than 200 cases of police abuse committed by officers during the repression of protests that have taken place in the country since June 2013;

- Thematic hearing of the IACHR, in Washington, requested by Conectas and a partner organization, on the situation of Haitian immigrants in the Americas.

IN 2014, CONECTAS will continue to step up its engagement with the regional and international human rights systems, particularly the integrated use of these mechanisms by the organization's different programs, such as Justice and Foreign Policy. This joint action has strengthened the work of Conectas – as a collective voice – in the defense and protection of human rights.



SOUTH-SOUTH

IN 2013, CONECTAS STEPPED UP its activities on the African continent, establishing new partnerships and improving its credibility with existing partners. The organization also liaised and worked together with organizations in Africa to expose cases of human rights violations and to engage in advocacy, namely in:

Zimbabwe

Monitoring of human rights violations in Zimbabwe since 2007. In the elections held in the country in 2013, Conectas liaised with local organizations and requested from the Brazilian diplomatic mission in Pretoria, South Africa, an official statement on the transparency of the election process in Zimbabwe. As a result of this pressure from Conectas, the Brazilian Foreign Ministry provided clarifications about the Brazilian position on the case to the organization. Read more [here](#) and [here](#).



Egypt

Support and collaboration with local organizations in Egypt to expose the crisis in the country and defend an end to the violence. In July 2013, following the popular demonstrations that culminated in the ousting of President Mohamed Morsi, serious human rights violations resulted in the death of more than 600 people. The demands of civil society – which were supported by Conectas – included the identification of those responsible for the excessive violence and the reform of the security services in Egypt. Read more [here](#).

Zambia

Condemnation of the national law in Zambia that limits the freedom of action of civil society organizations in the country. In October 2013, Conectas joined a group of 112 organizations from 46 countries that expressed to the President of Zambia their opposition to the law and proposed an open dialogue between government and civil society before its implementation. Read more [here](#).





Ivory Coast

Advocacy with a partner organization from Ivory Coast calling for measures from Brazil's Ministry of Defense to stop Brazilian arms sold to the African continent from being diverted from their intended destination. Since 2004, an arms embargo has been imposed on the country by the UN Security Council. Weapons trafficking threatens the protection of human rights and security stability in the region, especially since the country is still recovering from a civil war and armed conflict. Read more [here](#).

Guinea Bissau

Partnership with local organizations from Guinea Bissau to defend human rights in the country. In January 2014, Brazil's former Foreign Minister – Antônio Aguiar Patriota – was in Guinea Bissau in the capacity of president of the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission, and he met with representatives from the government and the Armed Forces. Conectas and local partners called for greater involvement of the Brazilian government in the country, particularly since the upcoming elections, held in April 2014, were the first since the coup of April 2012. Read more [here](#) and [here](#).



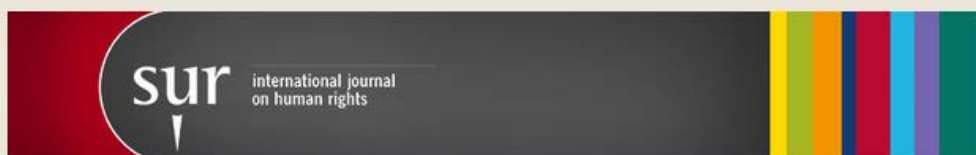
IN 2014, CONECTAS intends to expand its cooperation with partners from the Global South in the regions of Latin America and Asia.



DEVELOPMENT AND HUMAN RIGHTS was the theme of the [17th issue](#) of SUR Journal. The issue focuses on the challenges and questions surrounding the conflict between development and the defense of human rights, such as the accountability of multinational companies for human rights violations against workers or local populations. Read more [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#).



Does access to information polarize society, generating greater human rights violations, or serve to prevent them from occurring? Other topics, such as a human rights-based internet, access to and freedom of information, and the development of a global internet governance are also addressed in the [18th issue](#) of SUR Journal, which looks at the relationship between **Information and Human Rights**. Read more [here](#), [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#).



The way emerging countries cope with dilemmas involving foreign policy and human rights, and the role and growing pressure of civil society on the foreign policy of their countries, are some of the topics covered in the [19th issue](#) of SUR Journal on **Foreign Policy and Human Rights**. Read more [here](#).

The 20th issue of SUR Journal is a commemorative issue to mark 10 years of the journal. It is available for download. Click [here](#) for back issues. Click [here](#) for the website.



THE 13TH INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS COLLOQUIUM took place between October 12 and 19, under the theme "A new global order in human rights? Actors, challenges and opportunities". The event was attended by 61 activists from 44 countries. Compared to the 12 previous editions, the 2013 Colloquium featured some bold innovations in its methodology and format, namely a day of talks on multipolarity in TEDx format, the staging of an *Extraordinary International Commission on Human Rights*, greater use of technology and the internet (e.g.: electronic voting in real time surveys) and new group activities, such as a fish bowl discussion and a Thinking Hats exercise. A different topic was featured on each day of the Colloquium: (i) TEDx organizes talks on multipolarity in São Paulo; (ii) Inconsistencies and contradictions in human rights; (iii) The complex relationship between business and human rights; (iv) New order and international systems; (v) 13th Colloquium discusses funding for NGOs; and (vi) To what extent are NGOs and street movements associated?



From 2001 to 2013, more than 1,400 people have participated in the Colloquium, among them activists, observers and volunteers from 74 countries, primarily from Africa, Asia and Latin America.

STARTING IN 2014 the Colloquium will be held every two years. In the years when the event is not held, Conectas will stage regional strategic meetings with human rights activists from partner organizations from the Global South. The meetings will serve to set a common agenda for action.

TEDxRuaMonteAlegre WHAT ARE THE IMPACTS OF THE NEW GLOBAL ORDER ON HUMAN RIGHTS? WHAT CHALLENGES DOES IT IMPOSE ON CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS? WHAT CHANGES WITH THE EMERGENCE OF COUNTRIES FROM THE SOUTH?

Over 10 speakers from eight countries will provide answers to these questions at the TEDxRuaMonteAlegre, an event supported by Conectas under the central theme: **MULTIPOLARITY**

Oct/14 . 8:30am to 5pm
 TUCA (São Paulo Catholic University Theater)
 Address: Rua Monte Alegre, 1024, São Paulo

Speakers: Dima Khalil Al-Jawara - Sérgio Amadeu de Silva (Federal University of ABC) - Mario Veloso Kozowski (International Advisor of the Secretary General to the Presidency) - Hosam Bahgat (Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights) - Teng Bao (China Against Death Penalty) - Gloria Careaga (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México) - Janis Dolezal (American Civil Liberties Union) - Salih Mahmoud Osman (Sudanese human rights lawyer) - Denise Hills (B&B Bank) - Deisy Ventura (University of São Paulo) - Lucia Nader (Conectas) - Debbie Shestard (Federation Internationale des Droits de l'Homme) - Luis Roberto Baptista (NGO Amigos da Ciência/Friends of Science) - Amazing Break

Support:
 Live broadcasting: www.tedxruamontealegre.com CONECTAS HUMAN RIGHTS

ECONOMY VS HUMAN RIGHTS
 What the participants think at the 13th International Human Rights Colloquium

1 Do the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, adopted in 2011, represent advances for the development of ways to prevent, regulate and hold companies to account for human rights violations? ■

2 Would it be appropriate to start a campaign for the adoption of a new binding treaty on holding companies to account for human rights violations? ■

88% YES / **12% NO**

81% YES / **19% NO**

CONECTAS HUMAN RIGHTS



BUSINESS
AND HUMAN RIGHTS

IN 2011, the UN Human Rights Council created the UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights with the primary goal of disseminating and implementing the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (Guiding Principles), and also to discuss good practices and provide support for capacity-building efforts on the subject, among other activities. [Read more here.](#)



Since the creation of the UN Working Group, Conectas and its partner organizations [Dejusticia](#) (Colombia) and [Justiça Global](#) (Brazil) have been monitoring and accompanying the group, leading them to create the Observatory of the UN Working Group ([Observatory](#)). Besides monitoring and accompanying the Working Group, the Observatory also proposes to fill the gaps in the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, by stepping up the debate on issues such as access to justice and judicial remedies in cases of violations committed by companies. Another objective of the Observatory is to urge the Working Group to play a more active role, for example by maintaining a fluid communication channel with victims of human rights violations committed by companies.



In 2013, the Observatory prepared a review of the first two years of the Working Group (see the review [here](#)) and it also produced critical analyses of the reports released by the group, such as pilot surveys of States and companies and the relationship between indigenous peoples, human rights and companies. [Read more here.](#)

IN 2014, CONECTAS will continue to monitor the Working Group, guiding the debate on the dissemination and implementation of the Guiding Principles in the countries of the Global South.



FOR A LONG TIME, the human rights movement rarely addressed the relationship between human rights and development. In recent years, however, the movement's interest in the development agenda has grown on account of the increasing legal application of the conceptual and social debates it has triggered, placing resource distribution and economic issues – such as inequality – back at the center of human rights agendas. Moreover, the rise of 'emerging countries' has revitalized development policies and, with them, the tensions on both the national and international level involving the relationship between the development projects and the human rights of the affected people and communities.

Brazil in particular, in recent years, has reported strong rates of growth and has significantly reduced poverty, but this improvement has not resulted in better access to basic rights, such as quality health care and education. Furthermore, the dominant development model (sometimes called growth-based development), built on mineral extraction, hydroelectric power and large-scale agriculture, has been disproportionately affecting the most vulnerable communities.

Meanwhile, Brazilian companies have expanded their international operations, particularly in certain countries of the Global South (such as Angola, Mozambique, Ecuador and Bolivia). This situation has resulted in numerous complaints of human rights violations, primarily forced evictions, a lack of respect for the rights of indigenous peoples and excessive use of force, among others



2ND UN FORUM ON BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS: WILL IMPUNITY BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY?
Follow on the website www.conectas.org
FROM DECEMBER 2-4

* A/HRC/8/5/Add.2 - 23/5/08

In nearly 60% of cases, companies are directly responsible for the violations **59%**

Companies in the production chain are involved in 18% of cases **18%**



The work of Conectas in the area of Business and Human Rights includes advocacy with a focus on increasing the accountability of institutions that finance development and promoting reforms to the institutional and regulatory framework. And since 2013, Conectas has been developing research and advocacy activities in order to mitigate the shortfall in transparency at the Brazilian Development Bank (BNDES).



In early 2014, the organization published a report on the human rights standards that could be used by the bank for its loans. Read the report [here](#). Additionally, Conectas has been actively involved in the Dialogue Forum set up by the BNDES to discuss thematic issues with civil society, such as transparency and safeguards. In the first half of 2014, we organized a training course to show civil society organizations how to monitor and document human rights violations committed by companies.

IN 2014, Conectas will continue to press for greater transparency from institutions that finance development, such as the BNDES, in order to strengthen their operational, environmental and social safeguards.

27/03/2014

**BNDES:
Accountability in the Senate** (+)

05/12/2013

**What are the human
rights obligations
of the BNDES?** (+)



THE UN FORUM on Business and Human Rights is a place where civil society can participate, together with companies and other relevant actors, in the debate on the implementation and dissemination of the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (Guiding Principles). The participation of civil society in these debates fosters discussion on violations committed by companies, on the accountability mechanisms of these companies and on the role of civil society in ensuring that the human rights of the victims are protected.



The 2nd UN Forum on Business and Human Rights was staged in December 2013, with the participation of Conectas. The first panel of the Forum was devoted to the debate on the Guiding Principles and their application on the regional level. The Forum also discussed the review of the first two years of the Working Group on Business and Human Rights and the analyses of its reports, which were released shortly before the Forum. The release of this material raised the knowledge of civil society on the activities of the Working Group, fostering a more critical debate on the items presented. At the time, Conectas was also a panelist in the debate on the contrasts between the practices of different financial institutions from the public sector on matters such as transparency and indigenous peoples, among others. *Read more [here](#) and [here](#).*

2ND UN FORUM ON BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS: WILL IMPUNITY BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY?
Follow on the website www.conectas.org
FROM DECEMBER 2-4

68% of violations committed by companies occur in Asia, Africa or Latin America.

* A/HRC/18/5/Add.2 - 23/5/13

CONECTAS



INSTITUTIONAL

Institutional Development

The Institutional Development department oversees the organizational sustainability of Conectas. This includes obtaining and managing financial resources (fundraising, accountability, prospecting and strengthening relationships with new and existing donors), as well as other non-financial organizational aspects, such as planning, training, integration and assessment of the programs and departments.

ASSESSMENT

In 2013, Conectas formalized and concluded its first formal process to internally assess all its programs and institutional departments. The initiative was headed up by the Institutional Development department with the collaboration of all the members of the organization. Although the organization has already undergone other assessments since its foundation, this internally developed process was an innovation. On account of the specifics of each program and department, and of the organization itself, this pioneering initiative allowed us to start mapping and identifying methodologies that will be implemented and streamlined over the course of the next assessment processes. In 2014, Conectas will stage a semi-annual assessment process to complement the annual process at the end of the year.

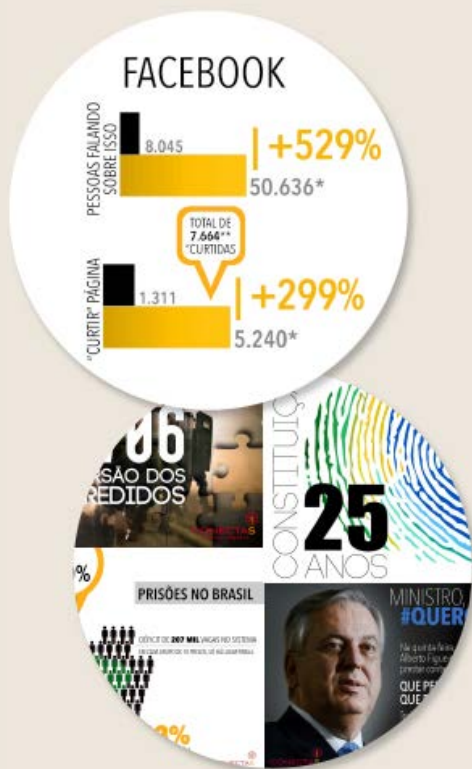
SUSTAINABILITY

The financial independence and sustainability of Conectas is essential for the organization to accomplish its short, medium and long term strategic goals. The organization's new expanded budget has enabled the programs and institutional departments to pursue more ambitious goals and aspire to achieve results with a greater impact for society. In 2013, Conectas took steps to continue assuring the financial sustainability of the organization. We engaged with potential new donors and also continued to strengthen our relationship with existing donors that already trust and have a long history with the organization. These efforts allowed us to bring new supporters on board and renew funding for projects that were already in progress. As a result, the financial health of the organization will guarantee the continued execution of the organization's strategic plans.



IN 2013, THE COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT OF CONECTAS matured significantly, helping strengthen the advocacy and the scope of the organization.

The reformulated website enhanced the "Conectas" brand and identity, providing a more accessible platform that is better suited to media content. The new website is a direct channel for dialogue and information available to the public and it also strengthens the interaction between the organization and its partners. **From January 2013 to December 2013, the website had 81,766 hits, an average of 11,680 per month and an increase of 90,73%. From January 2014 to July 2014, the website had 139,864 hits, an average of 19,980 per month and an increase of 71,05%.**



The use of the media has become a strategic component for the organization. It has been incorporated into all the programs and has been used strategically to raise awareness and mobilize the general public, strengthen and build constituency and promote a more critical debate on human rights. **From January 2013 to July 2014, the number of followers of Conectas on Facebook grew 489,04% (from 1777 followers to 11,881 followers).** Much of this growth is due to successful online campaigns, as well as the sharing of posts.

Today, all the organization's media are integrated. Therefore, whenever the organization performs a communication action, it appears in all the media (website, Facebook and Twitter) like a collective and joint action. In 2013 and in the first half of 2014, we ran successful campaigns that involved all these media to give more visibility and exposure to the advocacy actions conducted by the programs, such as: *Abusive Body Searches* and *Minister, #IWantToKnow*.



Administrative & Financial

In 2013, Conectas invested in strengthening the transparency of the organization. With a more active role by the Audit Committee, the financial department has been able to map and make improvements to the organization's financial operations and processes, such as contracting a new external auditor – PricewaterhouseCoopers. The planning and coordination of the administrative and financial operations of Conectas continue to ensure the fluidity and smooth execution of the programs and departments. The financial department also continues to strengthen its action and interaction with the programs and the other institutional departments of the organization, thereby ensuring its financial and administrative health.

