IN FOCUS
Crime, Security and Violence Policy Institute

MANIFEST

IN FOCUS brings together a group of people that for more than 20 years have been interested in public policies linked to the management of violence, crimes, the functioning of the institutions of the penal system and the political definitions of the government of security. We merge academic knowledge and experiences in managing security public policies. This double anchoring guides our questions, views and urgencies.

IN FOCUS is a space dedicated to thinking and designing democratic security policies that guarantee everyone's rights. We are summoned by the need to promote effective and viable alternatives that replace the old policies that install repressive discourses and practices that, by avoiding addressing the crime of the dominant sectors and concentrating only on the illegalities of the popular sectors, reproduce inequality and stigmatization. These are policies that, incapable of reducing crimes, only contribute to the increase in violence in different territories. Perspectives that are articulated and legitimized through fallacious and grandiose speeches that produce easy enemies for the palates of those who, whether out of boredom, conviction or fear, see and propose the use of bullets and prison as the way out of the unquestioned labyrinth.

IN FOCUS proposes to review the dominant formula of policing and mass incarceration as a primary and privileged strategy in terms of security policy and conflict management. This is a necessary review because we understand that this formula promotes and encourages deprofessionalized and classist actions of law enforcement agents that go against the rule of law, this formula sediments institutional practices that leave traces that are difficult to reverse.

IN FOCUS emphasizes the need to think about the conflicts inherent to democratic social life based on the recognition of the cultural, social and political heterogeneity of the contexts, actors and interests in dispute. It is from there that the necessary interventions can be defined in order to reduce violence. The role of the State is to provide spaces for management and negotiation because violent interventions exacerbate conflicts and cost lives. For this reason, we propose strengthening interagency approaches to the problems that law enforcement agencies manage today. Approaches that prioritize the role of the different areas of the different government levels, and their articulations with citizens. We know that reducing social conflicts to mere security problems does not solve them.

IN FOCUS promotes a criminal policy based on empirical evidence and quality information that allows us to understand and therefore enables us to identify and prioritize those criminal phenomena that cause the most damage in economic, social and environmental terms. It is essential to consolidate a criminal prosecution strategy that includes the vertical association and transversal articulation of different criminal practices, the reproduction of large illegal markets and their link with financial activities and money laundering. We understand that this is one of the ways to dismantle complex criminal networks that immediately affect the majority and harm less privileged sectors.

IN FOCUS highlights the need for the professionalization of criminal investigation from a comprehensive perspective of organized crime to guarantee interagency work of prevention, control and oversight that exposes and neutralizes the articulations of organized crime with the

judicial, political, national and transnational business power, etc. The orientation of criminal policy cannot ignore the prosecution of crimes that affect public assets.
IN FOCUS maintains that practices that do not generate relevant social harm and that do not affect people's fundamental rights should be decriminalized. In this sense, it is urgent to reform Law 23,737 which, 30 years after its sanction, has exhibited its resounding failure in meeting its objectives and has led to the increase in prison overpopulation, condemning the life trajectories of thousands of people and destroying fundamental environments for a social life that seeks to reduce the violence to which we have been referring.
IN FOCUS considers that law enforcement agencies must be integrated into a government strategy driven and sustained politically based on three axes. Firstly, guarantee the control and transparency of the functioning of the security forces through protocols, comprehensive control policies, accountability and access to public information that involves organized civil society actors. Secondly, consider those who work in law enforcement agencies as subjects with rights who deserve decent working conditions, including a fair pay and enough time to rest and gender equality, that has to be institutionally guaranteed. Thirdly, professionalize its members, through education and regular access to police retraining instances.
IN FOCUS assumes the commitment to problematize three great debts of our democracy:

- the review of penitentiary policy that discusses the inertia of the management practices of punitive confinement.
- the definition of the parameters of legitimacy of intelligence activities in a State of Law.
- the Urgent reform of the Judiciary.

IN FOCUS promotes alternative communication that contributes to the deconstruction of the dominant media discourse about (in)security. The way in which the hegemonic media constructs crime and violence tends to be structured by the spectacularization of events and the criminalization of certain social groups. Under this logic, the media discourse enhances violence, stigmatization and the production of “dangerous subjects.” Faced with this, we promote “good practices” of communication that are based on respect for people's rights (their privacy, the presumption of innocence, their privacy, the best interests of children), which avoid the generalization of casuistry, decontextualization and the invocation of security as an explanation of social conflict.
IN FOCUS embodies critical thinking in action for the transformation of this unjust and unequal present. We promote the construction and consolidation of a democratic and federal security model capable of promoting, protecting and guaranteeing everyone's rights.