

Anti-Gun Crowd Takes to the Streets in Brazil

Contributed by Flávia Albuquerque
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Around 15,000 people took part in the 9th March for Life, Peace and in Favor of Disarmament (Caminhada Pela Vida e Paz em Favor do Desarmamento) in São Paulo, Brazil, this past weekend.

The event was organized by the umbrella group Defense of Life Forum which brought together organizations that work to combat and prevent violence.

According to Célia Cymbalista, one of the event coordinators, it is the lack of social amenities and necessities that causes violence.

"We must give special attention to education, leisure, housing and healthcare," she declared.

The march included a "peace ceremony" and the inauguration of a police station for the turning in of weapons as part of the country's Disarmament Campaign.

"This will reduce the circulation of weapons, along with their sale and production," said Cymbalista.

Brazil's government program to disarm the country intended originally to collect 80,000 weapons by the end of the year.

The response of the population, however, has been much greater than expected.

Brazil's Minister of Justice, Marcio Thomaz Bastos, informed last month that the country's Disarmament Campaign has collected 120,000 weapons.

"We have raised our sights and now think we can collect 200,000 by December," said the minister.

In its latest phase the campaign has received the backing of churches, radio stations and health centers, which will also be receiving weapons. It was found out that some people were returning weapons because they were afraid of going to the police.

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