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## Brazil's *caveirão*: "What are you most afraid of?"

The *caveirão* ("big skull") is a military-style assault vehicle used to police Rio de Janeiro's *favelas*. It targets socially excluded communities, increasing violence and criminalizing poverty. Between May and September 2005, 11 people were killed in *caveirão*-led operations.

Stop the *caveirão*!

The *caveirão*, literally meaning "big skull", is a military-style assault vehicle, with heavy armoury, a turret, and firing positions running along its body.

Used to police Rio de Janeiro's *favelas*, it is known to storm into communities, firing at random. It's loudspeakers blaring out:

**"Children, get out of the street. There's going to be a shootout."**

Between May and September 2005, 11 people were killed in *caveirão*-led operations.

**"Here they don't have the death sentence - they use the *caveirão* instead."**

The *caveirão* is part of a pattern of confrontational and intimidating policing. It targets socially excluded communities, increasing violence and criminalizing poverty in Rio.

Watch the video and write to the Governor of Rio de Janeiro, demanding an end to excessive use of force and urging him to implement human rights-based policing to ensure the effective protection of the residents of Rio's *favelas*.

Dear Governor of Rio de Janeiro,

The militarization of policing policies has failed to provide security for Rio de Janeiro's most vulnerable communities.

I urge you to stop using the *caveirão* to:

- o kill indiscriminately
- o intimidate whole communities
- o mount violent policing operations involving excessive use of force.

An inclusive public security policy based on respect for human rights must be introduced without delay. Only then will there be an end to the cycle of violence in Rio de Janeiro.

Yours sincerely,

Exmo. Sr. Governador do Estado do Rio de Janeiro

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Thank you very much for taking part in this letter writing action.

### Read more

- o "We have come to take your souls": the *caveirão* and policing in Rio de Janeiro  
<http://web.amnesty.org/library/index/engamr190072006>

- o 'They come in shooting'  
<http://web.amnesty.org/wire/December2005/Brazil>
- o Brazil: Policing socially excluded communities  
<http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/ENGAMR190252005>
- o Control Arms  
<http://www.controlarms.org/>

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