# [Brazilian Police, Military Take Over Rio Slums Ahead Of World Cup](http://thinkprogress.org/sports/2014/03/30/3420762/brazilian-police-military-take-over-rio-slums-ahead-of-world-cup/)

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CREDIT: AP

Less than three months before the World Cup begins, more than 1,400 Brazilian police and military members have seized control of a network of Rio de Janeiro favelas that are home to 130,000 Brazilians, [the Associated Press reported Sunday](http://bigstory.ap.org/article/brazil-police-push-slums-rio).

As part of the takeover, the latest in the Brazil’s larger “pacification” program the government says will seize control of the favelas from drug gangs, police and military officials will set up “permanent posts” in the Mare slums near the Rio airport, just as they have in other favela neighborhoods across the country.

While areas like Mare have high rates of violence, favela residents and international organizations have raised questions about pacification because of the tactics of police and military members, who operate [with little oversight in a country with extremely high rates of police brutality](http://thinkprogress.org/sports/2014/02/05/3250971/brazilian-police-filmed-brutally-beating-fan-soccer-match/). 20 members of Brazil’s police force, for instance, are [already under investigation](http://thinkprogress.org/sports/2013/12/04/3020751/attention-turns-world-cup-brazil-ramps-security-prepare-protests/) amid allegations that they tortured and murdered Amarildo de Souza, a favela resident whose death became a rallying cry against police brutality and tactics during the protests that swept the country last summer.

Those in the favelas may be especially distrusting because of the “history of the police treating the people living in the favelas as if they are all criminals,” Amnesty International secretary general Salil Shetty [wrote in August](http://blog.amnestyusa.org/americas/the-other-side-of-the-olympics-rio-de-janeiros-pacification-program/). Shetty also wrote that pacification has also threatened the basic rights of residents, as police “routinely invade people’s homes without a search warrant, destroy what they don’t want, confiscate that which may be of value and too often threaten or beat the residents.”

In many instances, Shetty wrote, the massive police presence has increased violence in the favelas rather than reduced it. In the AP story, many residents of the Mare favelas “were too afraid of both the police and the gangs to give their names” or share their feelings about the program. That’s in part because there are questions about whether police will continue to pay attention to crime in slums once the World Cup and the 2016 Rio Olympics are finished and the world’s spotlight is no longer on Brazil.

“Those of us who live here are stuck between the gangs and the police; we don’t know who is really going to control this place,” one Mare resident told the AP.

The problems around pacification aren’t the only issue involving Brazil’s slums in the run-up to the World Cup. Brazil has also relocated [more than 15,000 families](http://thinkprogress.org/sports/2014/02/28/3345031/brazil-relocates-15000-families-world-cup/) out of slums that have been evicted and destroyed [to make way](http://sportsillustrated.cnn.com/soccer/news/20140227/brazil-world-cup-2014/) for sports-related facilities, and that number could increase to 100,000 by the end of the Olympics two years from now.