Naif Arab University for Security Sciences (NAUSS)

Control and Management Risk in Brazil – Experience with Major International Events

By Flavio Marega – Ambassador of Brazil in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

The analysis and risk management are very important activities for all countries, particularly for those who, like Brazil, are involved in organizing major international events. In recent years, Brazil has hosted the Pan American Games in 2007, the United Nations Rio + 20 Conference in 2012, the Football Confederations Cup and the World Youth Day in 2013, as well as the FIFA World Cup in 2014. In large events with great visibility as those hosted by Brazil, there are several risks that should be considered. These risks include - but are not limited to - the action of terrorists and criminal groups, as well as threats to public safety, to the premises where events take place, airport operations, to critical infrastructure, among others.

Brazil has made every effort to ensure the safety of major international events it has hosted, especially in light of the number of participating athletes, tourists, journalists and officials from all around the world. The good results achieved in recent years indicate the success of the approach adopted by Brazil in major events security. This approach is characterized by the integration at all levels of government, Federal, State and Municipal, together with the various competent Brazilian institutions and through dialogue and exchange of information with foreign authorities.

Unfortunately, the world at present is marked by terrorist attacks in countries of Africa, Europe, Middle-East and Asia which shows that no country is immune to the scourge of terrorism. While there are no acts of terrorism registered so far in Brazil, the country has been paying special attention to prevention measures in this area. Therefore, the actions taken by Brazil related to the security of major events involves planning by Federal, State and Municipal agencies, combining three elements: intelligence, national defense and public safety.

In order to integrate security actions, strong coordination was established between the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Defense and institutions responsible for coordinating federal intelligence activities and information security. The Special Secretariat for Security of Major Events (SESGE) was created by Decree No. 7538, dated 1 September 2011, and operates under the umbrella of the Ministry of Justice, with the objective to articulate the actions of the Brazilian government on the subject.

Additionally, in 2013, the Integrated Command and Control for Public Security of Major Events (SICC) was established by Decree No. 112, dated 05 August 2013, under the coordination of SESGE, with the participation of various agencies of the Brazilian
government. The SICC aims to plan and execute preventive and risk response operations, threats and incidents that may affect the realization of the great events in the country. The Ministry of Defense, on its turn, has established a Special Advisory Group on Major Events, linked to the Joint Staff of the Armed Forces, and used the Joint Operations Center established in Brasília as a framework for coordinating and monitoring the actions of the three armed forces. It's also important to note the establishment of the Joint Command of Prevention and Combating of Terrorism (CCPCT).

The Brazilian Intelligence Agency (ABIN), in its turn, coordinates the preparation of risk assessments, knowledge production and dissemination of information. A National Intelligence Center was created, in Brasilia, to manage and control major events, together with Regional Intelligence Centers in the cities involved with big events. Coordinated by ABIN, these centers have, among its functions, the objective to conduct periodic risk assessments to support the planning and execution of operations to be carried out by the bodies in charge of defense and public security at major events. Confidential evaluation risk reports prepared by ABIN serve as support to the work of the competent authorities in order to identify and prioritize the actions in a timely manner according to relevance and impact. It is an important tool to support decision making process, with the objective to evaluate and determine risk levels on a possible event, based on probability criteria and estimation of resulting impacts.

The experience gained by Brazil in the organization of major international events in recent years has been instrumental in the preparatory process, now under way, to the Rio Olympic and Paralympic Games-2016. The knowledge accumulated in organizing these events contributed to the development of the Strategic Plan of Integrated Security for the Rio Olympic and Paralympic Games-2016 (PESI), approved by Inter-ministerial Ruling 1678, adopted on 30 September 30, 2015. PESI establishes, among other things, guiding principles, goals, strategic objectives, strategies to be used, actions to be implemented, financial resources to be applied and lines of action to guide law enforcement by public, national defense and intelligence agencies in the development of their respective tactical and operational plans.

Based on experience from previous events, PESI has listed the main risk scenarios that could impact the security of the Rio Olympic and Paralympic Games - 2016. These scenarios include acts of terrorism or sabotage of any kind; crime and urban violence; impairment of the urban mobility system; commitment of public health; impairment of essential services; cyber-attacks; natural phenomena; incidents and disasters. In this regard, it's worth mentioning the action of ABIN, responsible for producing information that support decision-making and is disseminated to the relevant institutions, through the Brazilian Intelligence System (SISBIN), which enables mutual data exchange. It's also important to mention that ABIN maintains fluent and permanent official communication channels with other foreign intelligence services.
As a matter of fact, international cooperation plays a very important role for the success and the security actions of the Rio Olympic and Paralympic Games-2016. Accordingly, on 25 and 26 November 2015, PESI was presented to security authorities of countries with athletes that will participate in the Rio Olympic and Paralympic Games-2016 and to the national Olympic and Paralympic Committees.

It’s also worth mentioning an International Seminar about Confronting Terrorism in Brazil took place recently in Brasília, from 23 to 27 November, 2015. Organized by the Brazilian Government, the event brought together officials and experts, domestic and foreign, linked to intelligence and security of the Rio Olympic and Paralympic Games-2016, to exchange information on the prevention of terrorism.