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Interagency **Cooperation as a Strategy to Combat Transnational Organized Crime in the Tri-Border Area between Brazil, Colombia, and Peru**

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## Summary

The historical absence of effective public policies and a continuous state presence has contributed to the consolidation of an environment conducive to the actions of criminal factions, such as the Família do Norte (FDN), the Primeiro Comando da Capital (PCC), and the Comando Vermelho (CV), which compete for control of river and land routes in the Alto Solimões region. To understand this scenario, the research adopts a qualitative and bibliographical approach, based on the analysis of official documents, legislation, strategic plans, and academic studies on border security. The study hypothesizes that the effectiveness in combating transnational crimes in the Amazon depends on the real-time integration of police forces, military forces, and intelligence agencies, articulated through programs such as the Strategic Border Plan (PEF), the Integrated Border Protection Program (PPIF), and the Integrated Border Monitoring System (SISFRON), coupled with international cooperation with Colombia, Peru, and multilateral organizations.

**Keywords:** Interagency cooperation. Transnational crime. Border security. Amazon. Tabatinga.

## Abstract

The historical absence of effective public policies and continuous state presence has created a favorable environment for the consolidation of criminal factions such as Família do Norte (FDN), Primeiro Comando da Capital (PCC), and Comando Vermelho (CV), which compete for control over river and land trafficking routes in the Alto Solimões region. The research adopts a qualitative and bibliographic approach, based on the analysis of official documents, legislation, strategic plans, and academic studies on border security. The study is guided by the hypothesis that effective combat against transnational crimes in the Amazon requires real-time integration between police, military, and intelligence agencies, articulated through programs such as the Border Strategic Plan (PEF), the Integrated Border Protection Program (PPIF), and the Integrated Border Monitoring System (SISFRON), combined with international cooperation with Colombia, Peru, and multilateral organizations.

**Keywords:** Interagency cooperation. Transnational crime. Border security. Amazon. Tabatinga.



## 1. INTRODUCTION

Brazil's extensive border demarcation, exceeding 16,000 kilometers, poses challenges. unique to its administration and protection, with special attention to the Amazon region. Nature The continental Amazon rainforest constitutes a significant geographical and logistical barrier. compromising the ability to maintain a continuous state presence, which is costly and This complicates border control and surveillance operations. Furthermore, the territory is characterized due to a rich socio-environmental diversity, but also due to an intense dynamic that includes migratory movements, the development of a vast informal market, and the proliferation of Transnational criminal activities, adding a high degree of complexity to security. and national sovereignty in border areas.

The vastness and porous nature of the Amazonian borders both favor exchange. cultural and economic factors among peoples, as well as the actions of criminal groups that exploit the... Vulnerabilities of the territory. Drug trafficking, smuggling, illegal mining, irregular immigration. Human trafficking and other related phenomena occur frequently, transcending national boundaries. requiring a joint effort between neighboring countries and the various Brazilian security agencies public (Bueno; Lima, 2022).

The tri-border area between Brazil, Colombia, and Peru, located in the far west of the Amazon, This represents one of the most sensitive areas of the border region. In this area, the cities of Tabatinga (Brazil), Santa Rosa do Yavarí (Peru) and Leticia (Colombia) form a highly developed urban complex. permeability, where the intense circulation of people and goods makes physical borders... practically irrelevant. This peculiarity gives Tabatinga an ambivalent strategic status: While facilitating trade and cultural exchange, the region establishes itself as a crucial vector. for the flow of transnational illicit goods, such as drug trafficking and smuggling.

The inherently transnational nature of established crime in this area imposes a a fundamental requirement for coordinated and integrated responses between security agencies and both national and foreign institutions. However, the effectiveness of actions to repress crimes Border control is historically limited. This ineffectiveness stems primarily from a lack of historical context. of a robust state presence and the inherent difficulty of security forces in acting in a way unilateral, isolated or disjointed, which compromises the operational capacity necessary for To sustainably combat the complex criminal networks operating on the border. Given this... From this reality, the following research problem arises: how do cooperation strategies Interagency cooperation can be improved to strengthen the fight against transnational organized crime in tri-border area between Brazil, Colombia, and Peru, especially in the municipality of Tabatinga (AM)?



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To answer this question, it becomes necessary to understand how cooperation among the various security agencies, such as the Federal, Military and Civil Police, the Armed Forces, Intelligence agencies and foreign institutions contribute to combating crime. transnational and to strengthen the State's presence in the region. Interagency cooperation, In this context, it represents an essential tool, as it enables the sharing of information, joint operations planning, rational use of resources, and development more effective prevention and repression strategies (Paiva, 2013).

The overall objective of this work is to analyze the challenges and best practices of cooperation. Interagency cooperation in combating transnational organized crime in the tri-border area (Brazil, Colombia and Peru), with emphasis on actions developed in Tabatinga (AM). The aim is to understand the way in which Cooperation and coordination between different entities can be an effective tool. for the improvement of public safety and for the full consolidation of national sovereignty. This The study focuses on a particularly sensitive geographical context, characterized by The vulnerability of institutional structures and the intense activity of organized criminal groups.

To achieve this purpose, the research establishes three specific objectives: to identify the main bodies and institutions responsible for public safety and oversight in the tri-region border, analyzing its responsibilities and forms of action; and evaluating cooperation strategies. interagency programs already implemented in the region, observing their results, limitations, and potential.

The relevance of this research lies in demonstrating the effectiveness in combating crime. Transnational activity in the Tabatinga region depends not only on the physical presence of the State, but also primarily the capacity for coordination among the various institutional actors at the local level, national and international. Thus, interagency cooperation is not presented merely as a operational strategy, but as an indispensable instrument for the defense of sovereignty and promotion of stability and peace on the Amazonian border.

## **2. THEORETICAL DISCUSSION**

### **2.1. Society, Territory and Public Policies in the Amazon**

The Amazon is a territory of multiple dimensions, where nature, society, and the State intertwine. They interrelate in historical processes of occupation, exploitation, and resistance. The notion of territory It transcends mere physical space and encompasses political, cultural, and symbolic meanings.

This concept reveals that the Amazonian territory is the result of human practices and Power relations shape its landscape and define its uses. The Amazon, therefore, is not just a geographical unit, but a social and political construct in constant dispute among diverse groups.



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actors and interests. The vision reinforces the idea that public policies implemented in the Amazon

They often reproduce structural inequalities instead of overcoming them, and end up...

To weaken the effective presence of the State in critical areas such as health, security, and education.

Thus, the Amazonian territory expresses the contradictions between different visions for the future:

On one hand, there are policies of integration and economic exploitation; on the other, there are local practices that...

They prioritize sustainability and community autonomy. The social and environmental complexity of

The Amazon requires public policies that understand the territory as a space for life and not just...

as an economic resource.

This disarticulation reinforces the perception of the Amazon as a vulnerable frontier, where

The state's presence is episodic and selective, often restricted to territorial control operations.

On the other hand, it is essential to recognize the agency of Amazonian populations in the construction of

Social and territorial alternatives. Indigenous, riverside, and extractive communities have developed

unique forms of organization and resistance in the face of external pressures.

These alternative territorialities represent an essential dimension of sovereignty.

popular and environmental aspects of the Amazon, showing that the territory is also a space of resistance and

of producing new forms of coexistence. Discussing society, territory, and public policies in

Amazonia means understanding that the State needs to act in a coordinated and intersectoral manner.

recognizing the plurality of actors and regional specificities. The Amazon cannot be

reduced to a space for economic exploitation, nor treated solely from the perspective of national security.

Therefore, thinking about the contemporary Amazon means thinking about the territory as a living space.

where society and the state intertwine in symbolic and material disputes. Public policies, for

To be effective, they need to engage with local realities, value traditional knowledge, and...

to consolidate the legitimate presence of the State as a mediator and guarantor of rights.

## **2.2. Borders, Sovereignty, and National Security in the Amazon**

The Amazonian border region undeniably constitutes one of the most critical aspects and

vulnerable to Brazil's sovereignty. In a vast territorial domain characterized by extreme

Due to difficulty of access, state action is inherently restricted, transforming surveillance into a...

This is a complex challenge encompassing logistical, political, and institutional dimensions. Historically, these

Border areas have been relegated to a peripheral position in national planning, which

paved the way for the consolidation of vulnerabilities and the expansion of activities.

transnational criminal activity. In this context, the territorial boundary transcends its definition as

a mere geographical line; it establishes itself as a dynamic space of interaction, potential conflict and



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cooperation, where multiple actors — including the State, local communities and illicit organizations — They compete for effective territorial control.

This view reinforces the idea that, in the Amazon, borders play a strategic role in defense of the sovereignty and the projection of state power. However, when the state is absent, other actors (such as Criminal organizations or insurgent groups occupy this space, weakening the authority. national and creating zones of "contested sovereignty".

This duality between sovereignty and economic exploitation reveals the contradictions of politics. Amazonian region, where the discourse of national integration often overshadows the needs of Territorial defense and social protection.

Therefore, the security of the Amazonian borders must be considered in a way that... multidimensional, articulating defense, development, and citizenship. The presence of the State cannot It should not be limited to military or police actions, but must involve public policies that strengthen the local governance and reduce social vulnerabilities.

This perspective reinforces the need for coordination between the Armed Forces and the agencies. civilians and local governments, through interagency cooperation strategies, capable of expanding the The State's ability to protect its borders and promote human security.

The Amazonian border is a strategic space where the dilemmas of sovereignty manifest themselves. contemporary: the need to protect national territory against transnational threats and, Simultaneously, guarantee rights and promote regional development. The consolidation of Sovereignty in the Amazon therefore depends on integrated policies that combine security and governance. and social justice, reaffirming the legitimate and lasting presence of the Brazilian State in its most important region. sensitive and symbolic.

### **2.3. Interagency Cooperation and Combating Transnational Organized Crime**

The rise of transnational crime in border regions has posed new challenges to... Public safety and the sovereignty of nation-states. Given the complexity of criminal networks, operating with a high degree of organization and mobility, the isolated action of security institutions It has become insufficient. In this context, interagency cooperation emerges as an essential strategy. for the integration of efforts between different bodies: civilian, military and international, in combating crimes that transcend national borders.

According to Amorim (2021), interagency cooperation is not limited to the exchange of information, but it constitutes a model of shared governance, based on institutional articulation and in joint decision-making. The author explains that:

Interagency cooperation is a strategic management tool that seeks to break with the institutional fragmentation characteristic of Brazilian public security. By promoting the



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Through dialogue between bodies from different spheres, it expands the operational capacity of the State and favors coordinated responses to complex problems, such as transnational organized crime (Amorim, 2021, p. 63).

This concept highlights that combating transnational crime depends directly on...

the capacity of institutions to act in an integrated and complementary way, sharing resources and responsibilities.

Interagency cooperation has been consolidated in Brazil, especially through federal programs such as the Strategic Border Plan (PEF) and the Integrated Protection Program Border Protection and Integration Program (PPIF), both created to promote integration between the Armed Forces, the police, the regulatory bodies and intelligence agencies. These initiatives represent an effort by The Brazilian state is structuring a border security policy based on coordination. interinstitutional and in federative collaboration.

According to Paiva (2013):

Joint operations along borders demonstrate that no single institution is capable of confronting the economic and logistical power of criminal organizations. Integration between the Army, Federal Police, Federal Revenue Service, IBAMA (Brazilian Institute of Environment and Renewable Natural Resources), and state forces is the most effective way to consolidate the State's presence and strengthen national sovereignty (Paiva, 2013, p. 49).

From this perspective, interagency cooperation ceases to be merely a guideline.

administrative and becomes a strategic component of national defense and security.

In theoretical terms, interagency cooperation is also associated with the notion of security.

multidimensional, proposed by the Organization of American States (OAS) in the early years

2000, which recognizes that threats to national security are not limited to military conflicts,

But they encompass drug trafficking, arms trafficking, corruption, and environmental crimes.

From this reading, it becomes clear that interagency cooperation is not just one

An administrative alternative, but a structural necessity in the face of the transnationalization of threats.

to public safety. However, the implementation of this cooperation faces bureaucratic obstacles,

political and operational. The overlapping of competencies, the absence of a unified system of

Information sharing and lack of interoperability between forces are recurring obstacles.

Overcoming these barriers requires a coordinated effort in planning, training, and...

Strengthening command and control structures, based on a governance model.

collaborative. Beyond the national scope, Brazilian interagency cooperation extends to partnerships.

international agreements, especially with neighboring countries such as Colombia and Peru.

trilateral security and defense initiatives. These initiatives seek to improve the exchange of information.

intelligence, conducting joint operations, and strengthening institutional capabilities.

As De Moura (2020) points out:

Border security policies in Brazil have evolved towards multi-level cooperation models, in which coordination between national and foreign institutions becomes indispensable. Combating transnational crime in the Amazon requires the convergence of...





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political, military and social efforts, under an integrated perspective of shared sovereignty (De Moura, 2020, p. 145).

In this way, interagency cooperation, by promoting the integration of different levels of government and neighboring countries strengthen the fight against organized crime and reaffirm their presence of the State in the most vulnerable areas of the national territory.

Combating transnational organized crime in the Amazon requires a comprehensive approach. Interdisciplinary and interinstitutional. Interagency cooperation is configured as an instrument indispensable for consolidating Brazilian sovereignty, protecting its borders, and promoting public safety. By coordinating different spheres of power and promoting integration between the forces In terms of security, the State expands its response capacity and ensures a more effective presence and legitimate in the border regions of the Amazon.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

This research is characterized as qualitative, descriptive, and exploratory, using the The deductive method and the case study are central procedures, focusing on the analysis of... Interagency cooperation in combating transnational organized crime in the tri-border area between Brazil, Colombia, and Peru, especially in the municipality of Tabatinga (AM). The qualitative approach. It allows us to understand the institutional relationships and integration practices between the bodies of Public security and defense. The study is based on bibliographic and documentary research, using books, scientific articles, legislation, decrees and official reports, such as the Strategic Plan of Borders (PEF) and the Integrated Border Protection Program (PPIF). Additionally, Semi-structured interviews may be conducted with professionals in the field of public safety and border defense.

The data will be analyzed using content analysis, identifying categories. Themes, patterns of interinstitutional action, and recurring aspects in cooperation practices. among security agencies. The scope of the research encompasses institutions that operate in the range of Amazonian border, such as the Federal Police, the Brazilian Army, the Military Police of Amazonas, the The Brazilian Federal Revenue Service and IBAMA (Brazilian Institute of Environment and Renewable Natural Resources), whose joint action is fundamental in combating crimes. transnational. The analysis is composed of data and information from official sources and public, directly related to the activities of these institutions. Thus, the data analyzed have empirical and documentary in nature, obtained from laws, ordinances, decrees, institutional reports, strategic plans and constitutional provisions already published, which allow us to observe empirically, how interagency cooperation is structured and operationalized in the region. Amazonian.



#### 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

##### 4.1. The agencies involved in border policing in the city of Tabatinga and their responsibilities.

The Tabatinga region, in the state of Amazonas, located at the tri-border area between Brazil, Colombia and Peru is a strategic and sensitive area from a security and defense standpoint. Oliveira Cardoso (2019) explains the dynamics of the border well:

In general, along this border, Brazil employs forces at various levels to prevent drugs from entering the region. In the city of Tabatinga (Brazil), security policies regarding the fight against drug trafficking are carried out through joint action between the Army, the Federal Police, and the security forces of the state of Amazonas, with the aim of reducing the entry of drugs into the region. Secondly, in the city of Leticia (Colombia), there are no supervision posts. Finally, on the island of Santa Rosa (Peru), there is only one local police post to search vessels attempting to leave that city.

This region is marked by challenges such as drug trafficking, smuggling, and crime.

environmental issues, illegal immigration, and the activities of transnational criminal organizations. Because of these Due to various factors, several agencies are involved in the security and defense of this area, both locally and nationally. in an integrated and coordinated manner.

The Armed Forces (Army, Navy, and Air Force) play a crucial role in combating cross-border crimes. The Brazilian Army maintains a robust presence in the region, with the Jungle Infantry Brigade in Tabatinga, belonging to the Amazon Military Command (CMA). It conducts surveillance and patrol operations along the borders. It also participates in logistical support missions in hard-to-reach areas, as well as presence operations to ensure the Brazil's sovereignty in the Amazon region; The Brazilian Navy patrols the region's rivers, such as the Rio The Solimões and Amazon rivers are important routes for the transport of illegal goods. The 9th Naval District Command, based in Manaus, is responsible for naval operations in the Amazon. including the Tabatinga area; The Brazilian Air Force (FAB) is responsible for surveillance and defense. of the airspace, using aircraft for monitoring and intercepting suspicious flights, which They often transport drugs or illegal goods.

The Federal Police (PF) plays a central role in the region, with a police station located in Tabatinga. Its responsibilities include: combating international drug trafficking, smuggling, and... arms trafficking, in cooperation with other countries; conducting intelligence operations and investigations focused on dismantling transnational organized crime networks; immigration control, since Tabatinga is an entry and exit point for foreigners, especially those coming from Colombia and From Peru.

The Federal Highway Police (PRF), although its focus is on monitoring federal highways, The work in the Tabatinga region involves monitoring roads that connect the city with the The rest of Amazonas and other nearby areas. The most significant activity of the PRF is on BR-307 in Benjamin Constant, a city located near Tabatinga, bordering Peru. The Federal Highway Police (PRF).





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It also collaborates with the Federal Police and the Armed Forces in joint operations to combat...

Drug trafficking and smuggling.

The National Public Security Force is activated on a temporary basis in situations specific to crisis situations and increased crime. It operates under the coordination of the Ministry of Justice and Public Security and has already been employed in actions to reinforce security in the tri-border region. It primarily operates in patrol missions and in support of local security forces in certain situations. criticism.

The Military Police of Amazonas (PMAM) is responsible for visible policing and... Maintaining public order in Tabatinga and surrounding areas. Works in conjunction with the Police. Federal and other forces are involved in combating crime, especially in urban areas. In turn, the The Civil Police of Amazonas is responsible for criminal investigations at the state level. Civil police investigate crimes such as homicides, robberies, and other offenses that occur in the region. Also collaborates with the Federal Police in investigations of more complex or serious crimes. International.

IBAMA (Brazilian Institute of Environment and Renewable Natural Resources) acts in the Tabatinga region combating environmental crimes such as illegal deforestation and illegal mining. and predatory fishing. It works in collaboration with the Armed Forces, the Federal Police, and the Command. and the Environmental Battalion of the PMAM (Military Police of Amazonas) and other enforcement agencies to protect the biodiversity of Amazon and curb illegal activities that exploit natural resources.

FUNAI (National Indian Foundation) works to protect indigenous lands in the region of The tri-border area, which is frequently threatened by invasions, deforestation, and illegal exploitation. of resources and to protect indigenous communities.

The Federal Revenue Service carries out its duties by combating smuggling and tax evasion. on the border. Conducts inspection operations to seize illegal goods, such as weapons, Drugs and contraband products, in partnership with security forces.

Thus, the Tabatinga region is a point of convergence for various security forces. Brazilian organizations, which work in collaboration with international bodies and neighboring countries to ensure the Border protection and combating transnational organized crime. Integrated work between The Armed Forces, Federal Police, Military Police, National Force, and other agencies are fundamental to... to face the challenges of this strategic region.

#### **4.2. The impacts of crime in Alto Solimões**

According to Justamand (2015), the Upper Solimões region comprises nine Brazilian municipalities and is a complex:



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[...] It is made up of nine Brazilian cities (Amaturá, Atalaia do Norte, Benjamin Constant, Fonte Boa, Jutai, Santo Antônio do Içá, São Paulo de Olivença, Tabatinga and Tonantins); two Peruvian cities (Santa Rosa and Islândia) and one Colombian city (Letícia, the departmental capital). There is a whole complexity with its many indigenous languages, in addition to Portuguese and Spanish. It is a mixture of diverse national, state and municipal cultures, of the encounters and disencounters of those who came from outside. As in the case of Brazil, with the migration of people from the Northeast during the time of work focused on rubber extraction (Justamand, 2015, p. 57).

The Upper Solimões region, despite being located deep within the South American continent, possesses a cultural and ethnic diversity, shaped by generations of peoples who have inhabited it. De Souza (2018) demonstrates this in his work:

This region is made up of a heterogeneous population of about one hundred and fifty thousand people, composed of various indigenous ethnic groups (Ocaina, Ticuna, Yasha-Mishara, Cocamas and Uitoto), Andean migrants and mestizos. This population is especially concentrated in the region's urban centers, such as Atalaia do Norte, Benjamin Constant and Tabatinga, in Brazil; Caballocha and Islândia, in Peru; Puerto Nariño and Letícia, in Colombia (Chaumeil, 2000, p. 8).

The indigenous populations living in the Upper Solimões region are particularly vulnerable to...

Drug trafficking, illegal mining, and deforestation. These communities often suffer from...

The presence of criminal groups that invade their lands and threaten their safety and way of life.

Crime also contributes to the disruption of indigenous cultures and traditions, since

that young people from these communities may be recruited by criminal factions and illegal activities, breaking with their traditions and values.

Tabatinga is in a critical geographical position, being a border region and a route.

Important for drug trafficking, arms trafficking, and other transnational crimes. Proximity to countries

Like Colombia and Peru, both major cocaine producers, this intensifies the city's vulnerability.

to drug trafficking activities, which utilize the Amazon's waterways for drug transportation.

for other regions of Brazil and for international export. The absence of effective state control.

In many parts of this vast Amazonian region, the conditions favor the activities of criminal groups.

According to Pêgo (2018 *apud* Amorim, 2021), there are a number of contributing factors.

Regarding the state's shortcomings in the border area:

The border area between Brazil and Colombia and Peru can be considered one of the most complex locations in Brazil in terms of security. Its length comprises a total of 4,639 km of borders, with 1,644 km with Colombia and 2,995 km contiguous with Peru. In this region, there is a deficiency in equipment and communication methods between public agencies, with a lack of integration of telecommunications services and an integrated control center with neighboring states. There is also a shortage of personnel, especially in the security sector, which leads to reduced dialogue between federal and state agencies and hinders a policy focused on the exchange of intelligence information with institutions in other areas, such as defense and environmental control (Pêgo *et al.*, 2018, p. 277).

Crime in Tabatinga is frequently associated with networks of organizations.

transnational criminal organizations, including Brazilian factions such as CV and PCC, that compete for control of trafficking routes, according to Amorim (2021):

[...] the existence of a criminal organization (ORCRIM), called Família do Norte (FDN), specialized in the practice of international drug trafficking and the transportation of large quantities of cocaine produced in the tri-border region, was verified (BRASIL, 2016e). The structure of this ORCRIM allowed for complete control and dominance of the flow of drugs through the so-called Solimões route using various types of vessels, achieving almost a monopoly on drug distribution in the state of



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Amazonas. [...] In recent years, a dispute has been observed between the FDN, Comando Vermelho (CV) and Primeiro Comando da Capital (PCC) for control of the Solimões route, which has affected social peace and increased violence in the region, including in inland waters through which narcotics are transported from the border region (Ferreira; Framento, 2019. p.99).

In addition to drug trafficking, there are cases of human trafficking, smuggling of goods and...

River piracy, as well as environmental imbalances (De Souza, 2018):

[...] the rapid growth of coca plantations in the Javari River region in Peruvian territory is causing havoc in the Amazon rainforest, especially on the border with Brazil. Environmental impacts pose a threat to the ecosystem of the nearly untouched Vale do Javari Indigenous Territory, home to isolated Brazilian ethnic groups. [...] Thus, it is observed that, even with policies to combat the expansion of coca cultivation, the activity has a high environmental and economic impact on the Amazonian Trapezoid region. It is evident, therefore, that broad action by the Brazilian State is necessary to address the problem adequately, in order to try to reduce the environmental and economic impact on this Amazonian triple border (De Souza, 2018, p. 13).

Violence in the region is also exacerbated by conflicts between criminal factions that

They are vying for control of these illegal activities. These groups not only impact local security,

but they also create a climate of fear and insecurity for residents, with frequent reports of

Homicides, executions, and armed confrontations. These impacts demonstrate how crime can...

to undermine the potential for economic growth, social well-being, and environmental preservation in areas border and remote areas of Brazil.

#### **4.3. Existing interagency cooperation strategies and future trends**

Brazil, due to its extensive land border, which stretches for approximately 17,000 km, has a vast territory. km faces significant challenges related to security and combating crime.

cross-border. The Brazilian government, over the years, has implemented several strategies and programs.

and plans to protect, monitor and oversee its borders, with the aim of combating crimes such as

Drug trafficking, smuggling, arms trafficking, and environmental crimes.

One important milestone that deserves highlighting is the Strategic Border Plan (PEF).

Established by Decree No. 7,496, of June 8, 2011, created to reinforce security and increase

The integration of security forces in border areas. Its main objective is to intensify the

combating cross-border crimes through cooperation between federal, state and federal agencies.

municipal. This program was implemented through actions centralized in offices "Art. 5º

The actions of the Strategic Border Plan will be implemented through: I - Offices of

Integrated Border Management - GGIF; and II - Joint Operations Center – COC."

Among the main actions are: Operation Agata <https://www.gov.br/defesa/pt-br/assuntos/exercicios->

[e-operacoes/operacoes-conjuntas/operacao-agata-1](https://www.gov.br/defesa/pt-br/assuntos/exercicios-e-operacoes/operacoes-conjuntas/operacao-agata-1), commanded by the Armed Forces, which aims to combat the

The operation targets drug trafficking, weapons and contraband, as well as monitoring environmental crimes.

in border areas and involves the participation of the Federal Police, Federal Revenue Service and IBAMA. Another

The action is Operation Sentinel, coordinated by the Ministry of Justice and Public Security, aimed at...



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Strengthening border surveillance is carried out by the Federal Police with the support of other agencies.

institutions, aiming to combat crimes such as drug trafficking, smuggling, and illegal immigration.

The Brazilian Army also possesses a very valuable tool for inspection.

border control through the Integrated Border Monitoring System (SISFRON)

<https://inovaexercito.eb.mil.br/index.php/sisfron>, which is one of the largest monitoring projects. The

The system utilizes advanced technology, such as radars, sensors, unmanned aerial vehicles (RPAs), and...

Satellite communication is used to monitor border regions and detect illegal activities.

The goal of SISFRON is to provide comprehensive, real-time coverage of the border, integrating

Information to enable a rapid response from security forces.

The Vigia Program <https://www.gov.br/mj/pt-br/assuntos/noticias/vigia-programa-nacional-de-seguranca-nas-fronteiras-e-divisas-completa-um-ano-de-atuacao-com-resultados-expressivos-1>, launched by the Ministry of Justice in 2019 aims to expand border monitoring and combat crime.

organized. The program involves integrated actions between different bodies, in addition to having the

participation of states and municipalities. Among the program's operations are Operation Horus and

Border Protector (Operação Proteger das Fronteiras) <https://www.gov.br/mj/pt-br/assuntos/noticias/operacao-protetor-das-fronteiras-causando-perdas-de-mais-de-r-75-milhoes-em-crime-organizado-na-amazonia> focused on surveillance and enforcement, continues in vulnerable border areas.

What these operations have in common is their origin, that is, through the Plan.

Strategic Border Program, and today as the Integrated Border Protection Program (PPIF)

<https://www.gov.br/gsi/pt-br/centrais-de-conteudo/noticias/2023-1/programa-de-protecao-integrada-de-fronteiras-ppif-completa-7-anos>, which provides a basis for joint action between the competent bodies in

Border control, especially in combating crime, therefore, isolated actions

Inefficient projects are no longer implemented.

The PPIF was established by Decree No. 8,903, of November 16, 2016, due to

The need for better coordination among its members, according to Amorim (2021):

Previously, control of the plan was not managed by a specific leadership appointed by law, which resulted in a lack of coordination among the three responsible Ministers of State.

Now, the body responsible for the entire direction of the program, at the strategic level, is the Institutional Security Office of the Presidency of the Republic (GSI-PR).

This Decree has already undergone two amendments aimed at adapting and expanding its powers, such as such as: I - repression of administrative infractions; II - internal regulations of the PPIF Executive Committee; and III – restructuring.

Brazil participates in several international cooperation initiatives to combat crime.

cross-border, given its extensive border with ten South American countries and its vulnerability.

to combat drug trafficking, weapons, smuggling, and environmental crimes. These cooperations involve agreements.

bilateral, regional and global organizations, and joint security initiatives.



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Mercosur (Southern Common Market), an economic bloc formed by Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay include in their agenda cooperation agreements in the area of security and combating crime. transnational crime. Initiatives include information sharing and cooperation between the police forces of the member countries. As well as the Security Affairs Working Subgroup which It maintains working groups focused on border security, immigration, and combating crime. organized, especially drug trafficking and smuggling.

UNASUR (Union of South American Nations) promotes political and security cooperation. among the countries of South America, including the formation of the South American Defense Council, which One of its missions is to combat transnational crime. Cooperation within the scope of UNASUR includes joint border patrol actions and information exchanges. Intelligence and coordinated operations against drug and arms trafficking. However, according to De Moura (2020), this action is falling into disuse:

Although there is no South American security policy, it is necessary to mention some attempts made by its countries within the framework of the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR), which is currently undergoing a process of weakening. The first meeting between Ministers of Defense of South American countries took place in 2003, with Brazil playing a leading role and being instrumental in the process. Subsequently, at the beginning of 2008, there was a first Brazilian attempt to create a South American Defense Council (CDS), but no agreement was reached to confirm its institutionalization. In December of the same year, the CDS was finally created, in a way, as a response to the 2008 crisis in Bolivia, the Colombian attack on a FARC stronghold in Ecuadorian territory, and the recreation of the US Fourth Fleet (FUCCILLE, 2014). The council was created under the aegis of UNASUR, marking a certain autonomy in defense matters among the countries of the bloc, attempting to weaken the American presence in the subcontinent. In addition, three main aspects were defined for the council's actions, namely: mitigating mistrust and rivalries within the bloc, cooperation in confronting transnational crimes, and reaffirming regional sovereignty (FUCCILLE, 2014).

The United Nations (UN) cooperates with UN initiatives to combat to transnational organized crime and drug trafficking, through bodies such as the Office of United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). The UN also assists in training forces. Brazilian security measures and the development of strategies to combat organized crime in at a global level, with a focus on international cooperation practices and respect for human rights.

Brazil is a member of INTERPOL (International Criminal Police Organization), which It facilitates cooperation between police forces from different countries in the fight against organized crime. Transnational. INTERPOL offers platforms for information exchange and coordination. international investigations, especially in the fight against drug trafficking, arms smuggling, and cybercrimes. The Brazilian Federal Police works closely with INTERPOL to issue Issue alerts and coordinate joint operations to capture fleeing criminals.

The US DEA (Drug Enforcement Administration), with which Brazil maintains a partnership, with a focus on combating drug trafficking. This cooperation includes the sharing of Information on trafficking routes, joint investigations, and the exchange of experiences to combat trafficking. international drug trafficking. Furthermore, De Moura (2020) discusses American involvement:



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The United States government declared a "War on Drugs" in the 1970s to reduce the circulation of these narcotics within its territory. Since then, it has directed its anti-drug trafficking policy towards South American producing countries such as Bolivia, Colombia, and Peru. In this way, the country addressed the drug problem as a security issue. Initially, financial aid was granted to these states to support the replacement of their planted areas with other agricultural crops and to help the affected populations (De Moura, 2020, p. 20).

The country also participates in joint operations with the DEA in intercepting shipments.

Drugs originating from neighboring countries and destined for the US and Europe.

Another important and very effective instrument is Bilateral Security Agreements and Defense:

- Brazil-Paraguay: bilateral agreements with Paraguay, especially due to the Triple Frontier region.

The border (Brazil, Paraguay and Argentina), considered a strategic point for drug trafficking, Smuggling and money laundering;

- Brazil-Colombia: Brazil also cooperates with Colombia in the fight against drug trafficking, especially in the Amazonian regions, where there is a high incidence of drug trafficking and crime. environmental. The cooperation involves joint military operations and the sharing of intelligence information;

- Brazil-Bolivia: Cooperation with Bolivia is fundamental in the fight against drug trafficking, given that the country is a major producer of cocaine. Brazil offers technical support and training to Bolivian security forces conduct joint operations to intercept drugs.

Brazil is a member of Ameripol (Community of Police Officers of the Americas), a network of Cooperation between police forces in Latin America. The organization facilitates coordination between the forces. police officers to combat transnational crime, including drug trafficking, human trafficking and Money laundering. Through Ameripol, Brazil participates in joint operations, exchange of information and training programs to strengthen the capacity of their security forces in combating organized crime.

Within the framework of the OAS (Organization of American States), Brazil cooperates with other countries in the Americas to combat transnational crime, through initiatives such as CICAD. (Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission). Cooperation involves the exchange information gathering, personnel training, and joint actions to combat drug trafficking and crime. organized. As well as within the OAS, Brazil participates in discussion forums on security. public policy and the development of policies to combat arms and drug trafficking.

These actions aim not only to repress, but also to prevent crime. organized and ensure national security, especially in border regions considered vulnerable due to their vast size and low population density.



## 5. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The analysis developed throughout this article shows that transnational crime in the Tabatinga region of Amazonas constitutes a multifaceted phenomenon, deeply rooted in various factors. Geographical, social, economic, and institutional factors. The city's strategic position on the tri-border area between Brazil, Colombia and Peru, coupled with the vast Amazonian territory and low population density. And due to the structural limitations of the State, it creates an environment conducive to the actions of criminal organizations. transnational organizations, especially those linked to drug trafficking, smuggling, environmental crimes, and... human trafficking.

It has been demonstrated that, although the Brazilian State possesses a robust regulatory framework... and various strategic initiatives aimed at border protection — such as PPIF, SISFRON, the The Vigia Program and the Agata, Sentinela, and Protetor das Fronteiras operations. —, Challenges still persist. significant factors related to effective integration between federative entities and the continuity of policies public policies and the consolidation of a permanent, and not merely episodic, state presence in the region of Alto Solimões. While relevant, targeted operations are proving insufficient to address the situation. Highly adaptable criminal organizations that operate in networks and exploit vulnerabilities. local institutional and social factors.

In this context, interagency cooperation emerges not only as a strategic option, but as a structural necessity. The isolated action of institutions such as the Military Police of In Amazonas, the Federal Police, the Armed Forces, or environmental agencies limit the scope of the actions. both repressive and preventive. Transnational crime demands equally cross-cutting responses. integrated and coordinated, both domestically and internationally. The accumulated experience The results in the Tabatinga region demonstrate that the best outcomes stem from the coordination between forces. security agencies, intelligence agencies, law enforcement agencies, the justice system, and partners international.

Given this, some strategic solutions and recommendations can be pointed out: I. Permanent institutional strengthening of the border, with increased personnel and improved security. logistical conditions and recognition of professionals working in hard-to-reach areas, reducing I. Staff turnover while ensuring operational continuity; II. Consolidation of integrated centers of command and control in the Upper Solimões region, with the effective participation of federal agencies, state and municipal governments, allowing for the exchange of information in real time and joint planning. of operations; III. Enhancement of integrated intelligence, with interoperability between databases. national and international data, expanded use of monitoring technologies (drones, sensors) Riverine and satellite surveillance) and strengthening strategic analysis of criminal data; IV. Reinforcement international cooperation, especially with Colombia and Peru, through operational agreements.



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permanent joint patrols, mutual training, and standardized operational protocols in

Triple border; V. Greater protagonism of municipal public power, especially in actions

preventive measures, social policies, urban planning, and support for security forces, recognizing that

Public safety is also built at the local level; VI. Integration between public safety and

social policies, with a focus on protecting vulnerable populations, especially communities

indigenous and riverside communities, reducing recruitment by criminal organizations and strengthening the

Citizen presence of the State; VIII. Structured fight against environmental crimes, recognizing their

Direct connection to transnational organized crime, through the joint action of agencies.

environmental agencies, police forces, and the Public Prosecutor's Office.

It is concluded, therefore, that the effective tackling of transnational crimes in Tabatinga and

In the Upper Solimões region, success depends on overcoming fragmented actions and consolidating governance.

Integrated border cooperation. Interagency cooperation, coupled with international cooperation and...

Strengthening territorial public policies represents the most consistent path to...

Preservation of national sovereignty, public order, and the dignity of the Amazonian population. A

Understanding this dynamic, as proposed in this study, is a fundamental step towards the formulation of

More effective and sustainable public security strategies in the Brazilian Amazon.

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