

URGENT ACTION

ANGOLAN ACTIVIST CONVICTED AFTER UNFAIR TRIAL

Human rights and pro-democracy activist, Manuel Chivonde Nito Alves, was charged with contempt of Court and subjected to a summary trial. He was sentenced to six months in prison and asked to pay a fine on 8 February. He is now serving his sentence at Viana Prison.

The trial against the 17 Angolan activists reconvened on 8 February and the father of the activist **Manuel Chivonde Nito Alves** was one of the witnesses to be heard. During his cross-examination, according to sources, Nito felt his father was being intimidated by the line of questioning of the prosecutor. Nito then said out loud "I'm not afraid of losing my life. This trial is a farce."

This utterance prompted the Public Prosecutor to request that Nito be charged with contempt of Court. The judge then stopped the hearing against the 17 activists, suspended the trial for the day and opened new proceedings against Nito on the same day. Fair trial guarantees, including his right to an adequate defence, were not respected and he was not allowed to present witnesses during the summary trial. He was then convicted and sentenced to six months in prison and asked to pay 50,000 kwanzas as a fine. He is now at Viana Prison serving his sentence.

Criticism of public officials, including the judiciary, is protected under the right to freedom of expression. Public officials should display a higher degree of tolerance to criticism than private individuals.

Manuel Chivonde Nito Alves is a prisoner of conscience, convicted solely for peacefully exercising his right to freedom of expression.

Please write immediately in Portuguese, English or your own language:

- Calling on the Angolan authorities to quash the conviction against Manuel Chivonde Nito Alves and immediately and unconditionally release him as he is a prisoner of conscience, imprisoned and convicted solely for the peaceful exercise of his right to freedom of expression;
- Urging the authorities to ensure that the criminal justice system is not used to target or harass activists and human rights defenders;
- Urging them to end the practice of arbitrary arrests, harassment and intimidation of activists and human rights defenders, and to uphold the rights to freedom of association, peaceful assembly and expression.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 1 APRIL 2016 TO:

Minister of Justice and Human Rights

Rui Jorge Carneiro Mangureira
Ministry of Justice and Human Rights
Rua 17 Setembro, No. 32
CP 1986
Email: rui.mangureira@minjus.gov.ao
Fax: +244 222 330 327
Luanda, Republic of Angola

Salutation: A sua Excelência/Your Excellency

General Prosecutor of Angola

João Maria Moreira de Sousa
Office of the General Prosecutor
Rua 17 Setembro
Largo do Amor, Vila Alice
Luanda, Republic of Angola

Salutation: Exmo. Dr. / Dear Prosecutor

And copies to:

Director

Ana Celeste Januario
National Center of Human Rights
Email: ana.januario@minjusdh.gov.ao
and celestejanuario5@yahoo.com
Fax: +244 222 333 407

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The United Nations Human Rights Committee General Comment 34 provides that “State parties should not prohibit criticism of institutions”, which includes public bodies of all kinds, including bodies that are part of the legislative, executive and judiciary.

The Human Rights Committee has also affirmed that the harassment, intimidation or stigmatisation of a person, including their arrest, detention, trial or imprisonment for reasons of the opinions they may hold, constitutes a violation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) to which Angola is bound and has a legal obligation to comply with.

Manuel Chivonde Nito Alves was arrested and detained alongside 14 other activists by Angolan security forces between 20 and 24 June 2015 in Luanda in connection with a peaceful meeting they attended to discuss politics and governance concerns in Angola. Two female activists, Laurinda Gouveia and Rosa Conde, are also standing trial alongside the other activists though they have not been detained. The 17 are on trial for acts of rebellion and plotting against the President, both deemed as crimes against the security of the State. Their trial has been ongoing since 16 November 2015. The 15 activists who had been detained were released from detention on 18 December 2015 and placed under house arrest. Nito has however been taken to prison to serve his six month prison sentence after being subjected to a separate trial for contempt of court.

Name: Manuel Chivonde Nito Alves

Gender m/f: m

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