

# URGENT ACTION

## 4 ACTIVISTS SENTENCED FOR SOLIDARITY PROTEST

On 16 September, four activists- Adolfo Campos, Abraão Pedro Santos, Gilson Morreira, and Hermenegildo Victor José - were arrested hours before taking part in a demonstration in solidarity with motorcycle taxi drivers in Luanda, capital city of Angola. On 19 September, they were summarily tried, convicted and sentenced to 2 years and 5 months in prison, for 'disobedience and resisting orders', although no evidence was presented in court. Their conviction and sentence stem from the peaceful exercise of their human rights. They must be immediately released.

**TAKE ACTION: WRITE AN APPEAL IN YOUR OWN WORDS OR USE THIS MODEL LETTER**

**Minister of Justice and Human Rights**

Marcy Cláudio Lopes  
Casarão da Justiça, Rua 17 de Setembro  
Gombota, Luanda, LU, Angola  
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Dear Minister,

*I am writing to you to express concerns about the arbitrary detention and conviction of four activists, **Adolfo Campos, Gilson Morreira (AKA Tanaice Neutro), Hermenegildo Victor José (AKA Gildo das Ruas), and Abraão Pedro Santos (AKA O filho da revolução\_pensador)**, solely for exercising their human rights.*

*On 16 September, the four activists were due to take part in a peaceful demonstration in solidarity with motorcycle taxi drivers in Luanda, Angola's capital. Even though the event organizers complied with all legal requirements, including communicating to the authorities about the details of the demonstration, the police, without a warrant, arrested the four activists, hours before it was due to start.*

*The public prosecutor initially accused the four activists of "outrage and injury to the President of the Republic". Amid various inconsistencies and lack of evidence, the charge was changed to 'disobedience and resisting orders.' Witness reports and videos circulated showed that at the time of their arrest, the activists were lying on the ground, not resisting. On 19 September, the court sentenced them to 2 years and 5 months in prison and fined them 80 thousand Kwanzas (approximately 100 USD) each. Their lawyers submitted both an appeal and complaint against the decision, but both were rejected by the court.*

*Since their arrest, the penitentiary service has repeatedly prevented the wives of the four activists from delivering food directly to the prisoners. In protest, Adolfo Campos and Abraão, went on hunger strike in the first two weeks of imprisonment. Furthermore, since 27 October, three of the four activists are only allowed visits from their wives (who deliver the food) and lawyers. The health and safety of the four activists, while in detention, is also a concern. Adolfo Campos is being held in a cell with more than 100 other detainees where there are constant fights, including stabbings between prisoners. Meanwhile, Adolfo Campos is gradually losing his sight and has so far not received any medical treatment for it. Tanaice Neutro was initially placed in solitary confinement for 36 days, for no clear reason. He was due to have surgery in November but it did not take place, further complicating his health situation.*

***I urge you to ensure that the four activists are immediately released, since their arbitrary detention stems from the peaceful exercise of their rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly. Pending their release, all barriers to deliver food directly to the four activists must be removed and they must be allowed to receive visits from other members of their families and friends. The authorities must also ensure they have access to all necessary healthcare and that their detention conditions are in compliance with the Mandela Rules.***

Yours sincerely,

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Adolfo Miguel Campos André (44) is an activist and leader of the Angolan Revolutionary Movement. Father of four children, he works as head of assets for a local newspaper in Luanda. His activism began in 2011, when, along with other young people, he started a movement against the regime of former president José Eduardo Dos Santos, who at the time had been in power for 32 years, marked by corruption scandals, social inequalities, and serious violations of human rights.

Gildo das Ruas (28) is an activist and member of the Malangina Resistance Movement. Father of two young daughters, Gildo das Ruas began attending demonstrations in 2014. In 2021, he was arbitrarily detained for 6 months in Malange province in connection to his peaceful activism.

Abraão Pedro dos Santos (37) is an activist and member of Sociedade Civil Constestatária Movement and leader of the Panterra Negra Revolutionary Movement. Father of two young children, Abraão Pedro dos Santos always showed up in peaceful demonstrations, for which he was arbitrarily detained several times, but this is the first time he has been convicted. On the day of the trial, when the judge announced the names of those who were sentenced, Abraão Pedro dos Santos' name was not mentioned – only Adolfo Campos, Tanaice Neutro and Gildo das Ruas' were. Moments later, after the judge left the courtroom, the court writer was sent back to the room to read the summary of the trial. That was when Abraão Pedro dos Santos's name was added to the charge sheet and he too was convicted.

Tanaice Neutro (36) is an activist who uses art to express his opinions on social problems such as poverty, inequalities, and corruption through Kuduro, an Angolan music type. In October 2022, Tanaice was sentenced to 15 months of suspended sentence for calling the president a clown. Since he refused to apologize to the president, even with a release order from the court, he was kept in prison beyond the terms of his sentence. He was finally released on 23 June 2023. He was only free for 2 months before his arrest with other three activists on 16 September 2023.

During the four activists' trial, one of the officers on duty of the day of the solidarity demonstration testified in court that the activists obeyed all orders given by the authorities, but even that was not enough to stop their conviction.

Amnesty International is concerned about the growing number of activists and human rights defenders being targeted by Angolan authorities, in clear violation of their rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.

### **PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET:** Portuguese and English

You can also write in your own language.

### **PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 7 FEBRUARY 2024**

Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

**NAME AND PRONOUN:** Adolfo Campos, Gilson Morreira (AKA Tanaice Neutro), Hermenegildo Victor José (AKA Gildo das Ruas), Abraão Pedro Santos (AKA O filho da revolução\_pensador) [All he/him/his]