

URGENT ACTION

TRIAL OF ACTIVISTS VIOLATES FAIR TRIAL STANDARDS

The ongoing trial of 15 youth activists arrested after attending a meeting in Luanda in June 2015 to discuss politics and governance concerns is in breach of international fair trial standards. Two female activists are also part of the trial.

The trial against **15 male youth activists** started on 16 November 2015. Family members, the media, diplomatic representatives, independent observers and the general public have been barred from attending the trial. This is inconsistent with the right to a public hearing. The court spent two days reading out almost 200 pages of an unpublished book written by one of the defendants, Domingos da Cruz, at the beginning of the trial thus causing a delay in proceedings. The 15 activists were released from detention on 18 December 2015 and placed under house arrest.

The trial resumed on 11 January. There are still around 50 people to be heard as witnesses for the prosecution. As none of these people showed up on 12 January, the trial was adjourned to 25 January to allow the court time to notify these people to appear in court. The trial had to be postponed again on 25 January since witnesses had not been notified and thus did not show up to court. The next trial date is 8 February.

The 15 youth activists were arrested and detained 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 together with the 15 male activists though they have not been detained.

Amnesty International considers the 15 male youth activists that are under house arrest to be prisoners of conscience as their trial is politically motivated and they were charged and have been on trial solely for peacefully exercising their right to freedom of expression. In case the other two female activists are detained, the organization will also consider them to be prisoners of conscience.

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

- Calling on the Angolan authorities to immediately and unconditionally release the 15 youth activists as they are prisoners of conscience, imprisoned solely for the peaceful exercise of their rights, and to drop the charges against them and the two female activists;
- Urging the authorities to comply with international fair trial standards;
- Urging them to end the practice of arbitrary arrests, harassment and intimidation of activists, and to uphold the rights to freedom of association, peaceful assembly and expression.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 10 MARCH 2016 TO:

Minister of Justice and Human Rights

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

Salutation: A sua Excelência/

Your Excellency

General Prosecutor of Mozambique

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. This is the fourth update of UA 143/15. Further information:

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr12/2822/2015/en/>

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The 15 male youth activists and the two female activists were charged with preparing a “rebellion” and “plotting against the president” on 16 September 2015. Both are considered crimes against the security of the State and each charge carries a maximum penalty of up to three years in jail or a corresponding fine.

Three of the activists are facing additional charges: Manuel Nito Alves for illegal change of name (penalty: a fine), Luaty Beirão for falsification of documents (penalty: 2-8 years imprisonment) and Osvaldo Caholo for theft of documents (penalty: 2-8 years imprisonment and a fine).

Angolan security forces arrested and detained the 15 activists between 20 and 24 June 2015 in Luanda after they had attended a meeting to discuss politics and governance concerns in the country.

Name: Henrique Luaty da Silva Beirão, Manuel Chivonde (Nito Alves), Nuno Álvaro Dala, Afonso Mahenda Matias (Mbanza Hanza), Nelson Dibango Mendes dos Santos, Hitler Jessy Chivonde (Hitler Samussuko), Albano Evaristo Bingocabingo, Sedrick Domingos de Carvalho, Fernando António Tomás (Nicolas o Radical), Arante Kivuvu Italiano Lopes, Benedito Jeremias, José Gomes Hata (Cheick Hata), Inocêncio António de Brito, Osvaldo Sérgio Correia Caholo, Domingos da Cruz, Laurinda Gouveia and Rosa Conde.

Gender m/f: both

Further information on UA: 143/15 Index: AFR 12/3218/2016 Issue Date: 28 January 2016