

PUBLIC

AI Index: AFR 12/05/00

4 April 2000

Further information on UA 76/00 (AFR 12/04/00, 31 March 2000) - Unfair trial

ANGOLA Rafael Marques (freelance journalist)

And new name: Aguiar dos Santos (director of weekly newspaper "Agora")

On 31 March 2000 Rafael Marques was convicted of "defamation of the President" and sentenced to a six month prison term and a fine of between about US\$ 8,000 to 16,000.

Amnesty International has received confirmation that his co-defendants, the director of the weekly newspaper *Agora*, Aguiar dos Santos, and the chief editor, António José Freitas, were tried at the same time. Aguiar dos Santos was also convicted of "defamation of the President" and sentenced to two months in prison and a fine of about \$US 6,000. António José Freitas was acquitted.

Rafael Marques and Aguiar dos Santos have said they will appeal to the Supreme Court against their convictions and sentences. Both are free at present pending their appeals.

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send faxes/express/airmail letters in Portuguese or in your own language:

- expressing concern that Rafael Marques and Aguiar dos Santos have been sentenced to prison terms solely for exercising their right to freedom of expression;
- expressing concern that their trial did not conform to international standards for fair trial, or with Angolan law, that it appears the court was neither independent nor impartial and that their trial were conducted in secrecy behind closed doors;
- expressing concern that the charges against both men appear to be politically motivated, intended to silence criticism of government policy;
- pointing out that, if imprisoned, you would consider both men to be prisoners of conscience.

APPEALS TO (please note that fax tones to Angola can be difficult to obtain):

President

Sua Excelência José Eduardo dos Santos
Presidente da República
Palácio do Povo
Luanda

República de Angola

Faxes: + 2442 331 885 (if voice answers say: "ligar o fax, por favor")

Salutation: Sua excelência / Your excellency

Minister of Justice

Sua Excelência Paulo Tjipilica
Ministro da Justiça
Ministério da Justiça
Rua 17 de Setembro
Luanda

República de Angola

Faxes: + 2442 330 327 (if voice answers say: "ligar o fax, por favor")

Salutation: Sua excelência / Your excellency

Procurator General

Exmo. Sr. Dr Domingos Culolo
Procurador-Geral da República
Procuradoria Geral da República
Rua 17 de Setembro
Luanda
República de Angola

Faxes:+ 2442 333 170 (if voice answers say: "ligar o fax, por favor")

Salutation:Exmo. Sr. / Dear sir

COPIES TO:

Minister of Foreign Affairs

Sua Excelência João Bernardo Miranda
Ministro das Relações Exteriores
Ministério das Relações Exteriores
Palácio do Comércio
Avenida Comandante Gika
Luanda
República de Angola

Faxes:+ 2442 393 246

and to diplomatic representatives of Angola accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat,
or your section office, if sending appeals after 15 May 2000.