

JOINT PUBLIC STATEMENT

AI Index Number: AFR 12/2613/2015

07 October 2015

Joint Statement in Support of European Parliament Resolution on the Human Rights Situation in Angola

On 10 September, the European Parliament (EP) debated and [adopted a resolution](#) regarding Angola's recent human rights record.

The resolution calls for the release of all political prisoners and human rights defenders and highlights the case of José Marcos Mavungo, at that time on trial in Cabinda province for the crime of rebellion. Mr. Mavungo was organising a peaceful protest, but the government alleges he was involved with the handling of explosives and leaflets along with other individuals. Despite providing no evidence at trial to connect him with the persons or explosives, and that these men with explosives whom Mr. Mavungo is accused of associating with were not brought to trial, he was convicted and sentenced to six years in prison and to the payment of 50 000 Kwanzas legal fees (approx. US\$400) on 14 September. Amnesty International considers him to be a prisoner of conscience.

The resolution further notes the increasing shrinking space for freedoms of expression, assembly and association through arrests, instrumentalisation of the judiciary system to repress dissent by criminally prosecuting individuals for exercising these rights, and the use of violence by security forces to repress peaceful public gatherings. All of these concerns have been documented many times by human rights, civil society and other organisations from within Angola and elsewhere in Africa as well as internationally.

The EP resolution also calls for action from the European Union (EU) and its member states to deliver on their commitments to support and protect human rights defenders worldwide through concrete and visible measures.

In a vote of 550 in favor, with 14 opposed and 60 abstentions, a strong statement regarding these escalations became part of the official parliamentary record.

We, the undersigned national and international organisations, strongly support the resolution by the European Parliament on the Human Rights Situation in Angola. We believe that this resolution underlines the urgent need for action in response to the escalating human rights violations in Angola.

It will be crucial for the EU, its member states and other international actors to provide timely political and material support to Angolan human rights defenders, their lawyers and families and to engage the Angolan authorities on human rights at all levels of relations, including all political, trade and development relations.

We urge the Angolan government to fully implement the measures called for in the resolution including by ending continuing human rights violations, immediately releasing all detained political prisoners, respecting the rights of citizens to enjoy their rights to freedom of expression and assembly, and engaging positively in dialogue with the European Parliament about the very serious human rights issues detailed in the resolution.

The organisations are (in alphabetical order):

Amnesty International
Angola-Roundtable of German Non-Governmental Organizations
Front Line Defenders
Index on Censorship
International Press Institute
International Service for Human Rights
Liberdade Já
OMUNGA
Organização Humanitária Internacional
PEN American Center
Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights
Southern Africa Litigation Centre
Transparência e Integridade, Associação Cívica
Transparency International
World Organisation Against Torture