

PUBLIC

AI Index: AFR 12/009/2006

31 October 2006

Further Information on UA 267/06 (AFR 12/008/2006, 4 October 2006) - Arbitrary Arrest/ Possible Prisoner of Conscience

ANGOLA

Raul Danda (m), journalist and human rights defender

Raul Danda was conditionally released on the afternoon of 27 October. He had been arbitrarily arrested on 29 September by members of the Provincial Criminal Investigative Police, on his arrival at the airport in Angola's Cabinda province. He appeared to be a prisoner of conscience, arrested solely for his peaceful exercise of his right to freedom of expression and his membership of a banned human rights organization Mpalabanda - *Associação Cívica de Cabinda* (Mpalabanda – Civic Association of Cabinda).

Raul Danda was initially held without charge at the headquarters of the Provincial Criminal Investigation Police in the city of Cabinda until 3 October, well over the 48 hours allowed by Angolan law. He was charged with instigating, inciting and condoning crimes against the security of the state and transferred to the Civil Prison (*Cadeia Civil*) in Cabinda, from where he was released on 27 October pending a trial. According to reports he was not tortured or ill-treated; however he was reportedly denied access to a doctor by prison guards on one occasion when his legs had swollen. He has been allowed to return to his home in Luanda while criminal investigations continue, but cannot leave Luanda without permission from the prosecutor's office.

Raul Danda, a journalist and human rights defender, was arbitrarily arrested at Cabinda airport, where police officers searched and confiscated documents from his luggage. Apparently the documents contained opinion pieces about the conflict in Cabinda, written by Raul Danda and several other journalists, some of which had already been published in national newspapers in Angola. According to reports, the Provincial Directorate of Criminal Investigation stated that Raul Danda was in possession of documents calling for secession of Cabinda province and containing words "injurious to the President of the Republic."

Mpalabanda - *Associação Cívica de Cabinda* is the only human rights organization operating in the Angolan province of Cabinda. The organization was created in July 2003, but was banned by the authorities on 20 July 2006, for its alleged involvement in politics.

Thank you to all who sent appeals on behalf of Raul Danda, which Amnesty International believes contributed greatly to his release. No further action is requested.