

URGENT ACTION

FORTY PROTESTERS FREED, TEN STILL DETAINED

A judge at the Cabinda Court ordered the provisional release of 40 more protesters on 19 April. Ten other protesters remain arbitrarily detained without charge, arrested for their involvement in peaceful protests. One female is detained at Yabi prison and nine males are detained at Cabinda civil prison. Several of the protesters have alleged that police officers subjected them to ill-treatment.

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

Minister of Justice and Human Rights
Francisco Manuel Monteiro de Queiroz
 Ministério da Justiça e dos Direitos Humanos
 Rua 17 de Setembro,
 Luanda, Angola
 Email: anaceleste.januario@minjusdh.gov.ao

Dear Minister Francisco Manuel Monteiro de Queiroz,

I write to you to bring attention to the case of the 10 protesters who remain in arbitrary detention without being charged for their involvement in peaceful protests in Cabinda, Angola. They are being investigated for the crimes of “criminal association” (article 8 of 3/14 Law), “rebellion” (article 21 of 23/10 Law), “insult (ultraje) of the State” (article 25 of 23/10 Law) and “public disturbance and resistance” (articles 185 and 186 of Penal Code).

Alfredo Duda, António Marcos Soqui, Daniel de Oliveira, Eduardo Muindo, Filomão Futi, Filipe Macaia, Maurício Chocolate Tati and Maurício Ngimbi were arrested on 29 January while peacefully protesting to demand the release of their family members and colleagues, including activists from the Independence Movement of Cabinda (Movimento Independista de Cabinda – MIC), who had been arrested the previous day. **Maria Mabo Deca and Alberto Puna** were arrested on the streets of Cabinda on 1 February as they were celebrating the 134th Anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Simulambuco. Ms Maria Mabo Deca is detained at Yabi prison, while the others are held at Cabinda Province civil prison.

The 10 protesters had been detained together with 53 others who were arrested between 28 January and 12 February. A judge at the Cabinda Court ordered the provisional release of 13 detainees on 27 February ruling that their arrest at home without a warrant was illegal. Later, on 19 April, the judge ordered the provisional release of a further 40 protesters on condition that they present themselves before the court every 15 days.

The crackdown by the authorities on peaceful protesters in Cabinda undermines the rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly in Angola. I therefore urge you to:

- Ensure the immediate and unconditional release of the 10 protesters detained solely for peacefully exercising their rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly;
- Ensure that the rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly are fully respected and that activists in Cabinda are guaranteed their right to express their views freely without fear of reprisals and unlawful restrictions.

Yours sincerely,

AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The Treaty of Simulambuco was signed on 1 February 1885. It gave Cabinda the status of a protectorate of the Portuguese Crown.

On 7 January, the Independence Movement of Cabinda (Movimento Independista de Cabinda – MIC) Secretary sent a communication to the President of the Republic of Angola, João Manuel Gonçalves Lourenço and copies to the Provincial Government of Cabinda, the Provincial Police Command, the Public Prosecutor of the Republic, to Angolan political parties and other authorities to inform them about the peaceful protest scheduled for 1 February. The MIC asked for the Angolan Police to be present at the protest to ensure the safety of protesters.

Cabinda is located on a sliver of land sandwiched between the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Congo Republic. It is internationally recognized as part of Angola and produces most of the country's oil export. Separatist groups have been seeking independence or autonomy from Angola for over 20 years. The Angolan Government's attempts to negotiate with representatives of the Cabindan separatist groups have not been successful.

Angolan security forces arrested eight youth activists from MIC at their homes on 28 January in Cabinda Province, Angola. They were preparing leaflets in readiness for a peaceful protest scheduled for 1 February.

The next day, 20 people, including family members and colleagues of the detained youth activists, were arrested by the police while peacefully protesting to demand their release in front of the Service of Criminal Investigation building also in Cabinda. Protesters took to the streets of Cabinda on 1 February to celebrate the 134th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Simulambuco and to reiterate calls for Cabinda's independence from Angola. They also called for the release of those previously arrested. On 12 February, the police arrested another activist allegedly for his involvement in the same peaceful protest.

Amnesty International is also concerned with the continued excessive use of force by police against protesters and their arbitrary arrests. On 1 March, MIC activists and family members of the 50 detained protesters were preparing a demonstration at the 1st of May square in Cabinda to demand their release. The police arrived before the start of the protest and began to assault the protesters, kicking and punching them. The police arrested 11 people who were released hours later without charge. Seven of the arrested protesters were hospitalized due to the police beatings and returned home on the next day.

Several protesters, some of who have been released, allege being subjected to ill-treatment by police officers at the time of their arrest and while in prison. They say that they were beaten by police officers.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: Portuguese

You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: [21 JUNE 2019]

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

NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN: Cabinda Protesters (They/Their): Ms. Maria Mambo Deca (She/Her), Mr. Alfredo Duda (He/Him), Mr. António Marcos Soqui (He/Him), Mr. Alberto Puna (He/Him), Mr. Daniel de Oliveira (He/Him), Mr. Eduardo Muindo (He/Him), Mr. Filomão Futi (He/Him), Mr. Filipe Macaia (He/Him), Mr. Maurício Chocolate Tati (He/Him) and Mr. Maurício Ngimbi (He/Him)

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr12/0051/2019/en/>

ADDITIONAL TARGETS

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. HIS EXCELLENCY DR RUI JORGE CARNEIRO MANGUEIRA, Embassy of the Republic of Angola, 22 Dorset Street W1U 6QY
Tel 020 7299 9850 Fax 020 7486 9397
Email embassy@angola.org.uk Salutation: Your Excellency **Please check with your section before sending appeals after the above date.**