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First UA: 115/23 Index: AFR 12/7522/2023 Angola of December 13, 2023

ANGOLA

FOUR ACTIVISTS SENTENCED FOR SOLIDARITY PROTESTS

On September 16, four activists were arrested hours before taking part in a demonstration in solidarity with motorcycle taxi drivers in Luanda, capital city of Angola. The four, Adolfo Campos, Abraão Pedro Santos, Gilson Morreira, and Hermenegildo Victor José were summarily tried, convicted and sentenced to 2 years and 5 months in prison on September 19. They had been charged with “disobedience and resisting orders”, although no evidence was presented in court. Their conviction and sentence stem from the peaceful exercise of their human rights. They must be immediately released.

Write to the Minister of Justice and Human Rights urging him to:

- Ensure that the four activists are immediately released, since their arbitrary detention stems from the peaceful exercise of their rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.
- Pending their release, ensure that all barriers to deliver food directly to the four activists are removed and that they are allowed to receive visits from other members of their families and friends.
- Ensure they have access to all necessary healthcare and that their detention conditions are in compliance with the Mandela Rules.

Write to:

Minister of Justice and Human Rights
Marcy Cláudio Lopes
Casarão da Justiça, Rua 17 de Setembro
Gombota, Luanda, LU, Angola
E-mail: dndh.mjdh.angola@gmail.com
Salutation: *Dear Minister,*

And copy:

Ivan Levita, Director of Human rights at Ministry of Justice
E-mail: ivanlevita@hotmail.com
Secretary Ana Celeste Cardoso Januário, Secretary of State for Human Rights and Citizenship
Email: anaceleste.januario@minjusdh.gov.ao or celestejanuario5@yahoo.com

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Adolfo Miguel Campos André (44) is an activist and leader of the Angolan Revolutionary Movement. Father of four children, he works as head of assets for a local newspaper in Luanda. His activism began in 2011, when, along with other young people, he started a movement against the regime of former president José Eduardo Dos Santos, who at the time had been in power for 32 years, marked by corruption scandals, social inequalities, and serious violations of human rights.

Gildo das Ruas (28) is an activist and member of the Malangina Resistance Movement. Father of two young daughters, Gildo das Ruas began attending demonstrations in 2014. In 2021, he was arbitrarily detained for 6 months in Malange province in connection with his peaceful activism.

Abraão Pedro dos Santos (37) is an activist and member of Sociedade Civil Constestatória Movement and leader of the Panterra Negra Revolutionary Movement. Father of two young children, Abraão Pedro dos Santos always showed up in peaceful demonstrations, for which he was arbitrarily detained several times, but this is the first time he has been convicted. On the day of the trial, when the judge announced the names of those who were sentenced, Abraão Pedro dos Santos' name was not mentioned – only Adolfo Campos, Tanaice Neutro and Gildo das Ruas' were. Moments later, after the judge left the courtroom, the court writer was sent back to the room to read the summary of the trial. That was when Abraão Pedro dos Santos's name was added to the charge sheet, and he too was convicted.

Tanaice Neutro (36) is an activist who uses art to express his opinions on social problems such as poverty, inequalities, and corruption through Kuduro, an Angolan music type. In October 2022, Tanaice was sentenced to 15 months of suspended sentence for calling the president a clown. Since he refused to apologize to the president, even with a release order from the court, he was kept in prison beyond the terms of his sentence. He was finally released on June 23, 2023. He was only free for 2 months before his arrest with other three activists on September 16, 2023.

Since their arrest, the penitentiary service has repeatedly prevented the wives of the four activists from delivering food directly to the prisoners. In protest, Adolfo Campos and Abraão, went on hunger strike in the first two weeks of imprisonment. Furthermore, since October 27, three of the four activists are only allowed visits from their wives (who deliver the food) and lawyers.

The health and safety of the four activists, while in detention, is also a concern. Adolfo Campos is being held in a cell with more than 100 other detainees where there are constant fights, including stabbings between prisoners. Meanwhile, Adolfo Campos is gradually losing his sight and has so far not received any medical treatment for it. Tanaice Neutro was initially placed in solitary confinement for 36 days, for no clear reason. He was due to have surgery in November, but it did not take place, further complicating his health situation.

During the four activists' trial, one of the officers on duty of the day of the solidarity demonstration testified in court that the activists obeyed all orders given by the authorities, but even that was not enough to stop their conviction.

Amnesty International is concerned about the growing number of activists and human rights defenders being targeted by Angolan authorities, in clear violation of their rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.

*Please send your appeals until **February 7, 2024**. If there's the need for further action after that date, the UA will be duly updated.*