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Angola

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Country Reports on Human Rights Practices

Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor

2006

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Angola is a constitutional republic in transition since its 27-year civil war ended in 2002. Legislation provides for decentralization; however, the government remained highly centralized and dominated by the presidency. UN observers considered the 1992 presidential and legislative elections to have been generally free and fair. Civilian authorities generally maintained effective control of the security forces.

The government's human rights record remained poor and serious problems remained, although there were improvements in a few areas. Human rights abuses included: the abridgement of citizens' right to elect officials at all levels; unlawful killings by police, military, and private security forces; torture, beatings, and harsh and life-threatening prison conditions; corruption and impunity; arbitrary arrest and detention; an inefficient and overburdened judicial system; lengthy pretrial detention; lack of due process; restrictions on freedom of speech, the press, including self-censorship, and assembly; forced evictions without compensation; and discrimination and domestic violence and abuse against women and children.

The government increased investigation and prosecution of human rights violations, training, and partnerships with human rights nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in an effort to curb abuses by the National Police and Armed Forces of Angola (FAA).

RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Section 1 Respect for the Integrity of the Person, Including Freedom From:

a. Arbitrary or Unlawful Deprivation of Life

The government or its agents did not commit politically motivated killings during the year. Government security forces killed an unknown number of persons, although reports of such killings decreased significantly from past years. Impunity remained a problem, but the government was increasingly willing to prosecute human rights violators.

Domestic media and local human rights activists reported cases of police resorting to excessive force, including unlawful killings. In February the independent press reported that a youth suspected of gang activity was killed in a Luanda precinct. Police largely viewed extrajudicial killings as an alternative to relying on the country's ineffective judicial system. In May citizens reported that the body of a pregnant woman was discovered after her arrest by national police in Luanda Norte. These cases were reportedly still under investigation at year's end; however, national authorities were generally reluctant to disclose investigation results. In June human rights activists reported that police "accidentally killed" a disabled man during an abusive interrogation; the responsible officers were dismissed from the national police the same month.

A Memorandum of Understanding for Peace and Reconciliation for Cabinda province, signed on August 1, largely brought an end to the insurgency in the province. As a result of this and an FAA policy of cooperation rather than repression, there was only one report during the year, in November, of an unlawful killing in Cabinda that may be linked to FAA soldiers. The case remained under investigation by both military and civil authorities. There were also confirmed reports of 12 small clashes in the enclave between the FAA and the Front for the Liberation of the Enclave of Cabinda (FLEC) in the period immediately surrounding the signing of the memorandum. Four civilians were reportedly killed in these clashes between FLEC soldiers and FAA forces. Since early September there were no confirmed reports of armed conflict.

A human rights activist reported that private security companies hired to protect diamond concessions in the Cuango municipality of Lunda Norte province killed 10 persons between January and June. Other activists in the province also reported killings by private security companies outside of Cuango municipality; however, no arrests or investigations were reported.

On August 8, at the end of a five-month trial, a member of the National Police, Olivio Bernardino Ismael Fraga, was sentenced to 17 years' imprisonment and ordered to pay \$6,250 (480,000 kwanza) to the victim's family for the January 2005 killing of Antoninho Tchiswungo, also known as "Toi." There were no further developments in the numerous alleged 2005 or 2004 unlawful killings by police.

Early in the year six men were arrested and charged in the 2004 death of Mfulumpinga Landu Victor, leader of the Democratic Party for Congress. Five of the men were later killed while allegedly trying to escape police custody; the last man, Paulino Antonio "Tchiriri," received a 40-year prison sentence.

There were anecdotal and unconfirmed reports of vigilante violence.

Landmines placed during the long civil war were a continuing threat. Eight provinces, encompassing approximately 50

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