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Angola

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Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor
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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 and ruling Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) party. 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 there were numerous, serious problems. Human rights abuses included: the abridgement of citizens' right to elect officials at all levels; unlawful killings by police, military, and private security forces; security force torture, beatings, and rape; harsh prison conditions; official corruption and impunity; arbitrary arrest and detention; judicial inefficiency and lack of independence; lengthy pretrial detention; lack of due process; restrictions on freedom of speech, press, and assembly; forced evictions without compensation; and discrimination, violence, and abuse against women and children.

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; however, human rights activists and domestic media sources reported that security forces arbitrarily killed numerous persons during the year. Impunity remained a problem, although the government prosecuted some human rights violators. Results of investigations into security force abuses were seldom released. Police reportedly viewed extrajudicial killings as an alternative to relying on the country's ineffective judicial system.

Domestic media and local human rights activists reported that police use of excessive force resulted in killings.

On December 17, police shot and killed two actors as they filmed a movie in a high-crime area of Luanda. Police reportedly mistook the actors for armed robbers, fired without warning until stopped by the frantic movie director, then left the scene without rendering medical aid. An investigation was pending at year's end.

On December 18, police shot and killed two vendors in an open-air market during a raid of pirated DVD vendors. The minister of interior and national police commander immediately suspended the officers in question and promised a swift investigation. The government was still considering civil criminal charges against the accused police officers at year's end.

In February local human rights nongovernmental organization (NGO) Maos Livres reported that a man arrested in Luanda for stealing three cases of cod died in police custody. Maos Livres claimed the man was severely beaten and denied medical care; police said the officers were acting in self defense. During the year there were media reports in Luanda that police deliberately targeted and killed persons suspected of gang and other criminal activity; the National Police neither confirmed nor denied the reports.

There were no further developments into the following 2006 incidents of alleged unlawful killings by security forces: the February killing of a youth in Luanda suspected of gang activity and May death of a pregnant woman after her arrest by police in Luanda Norte.

The Memorandum of Understanding for Peace and Reconciliation for Cabinda Province, signed in August 2006, largely brought an end to the insurgency in the province, though international and domestic media sources reported sporadic attacks by dissident factions of the Front for the Liberation of the Enclave of Cabinda (FLEC), and counter-insurgency operations by the Armed Forces of Angola (FAA) continued during the year. There was one report of an unlawful killing in Cabinda that could be linked to FAA soldiers. The incident remained under investigation. There were no updates during the year on the 2006 unlawful killing in Cabinda linked to FAA soldiers.

Reports of killings by private security companies in diamond concession areas continued, but declined significantly during the year, according to Partnership Canada Africa's Diamond Industry Annual Review. While local or Luanda-based authorities investigated some of the cases, no arrests were reported.

There were no further developments in the numerous alleged 2006 or 2005 unlawful killings by police.

There were reports of vigilante violence during the year. In November violent riots broke out in Huambo after a policeman shot and killed a taxi driver, reportedly for his refusing to pay a bribe. Angry witnesses attacked and severely beat the

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