

URGENT ACTION

Release Activists From Arbitrary Detention

On 16 September 2023, four activists- Adolfo Campos, Abraão Pedro Santos, Gilson Morreira, and Hermenegildo Victor José - were arrested. On 19 September 2023, they were summarily tried, convicted and sentenced without any evidence to 2 years and 5 months in prison for 'disobedience and resisting orders' after an attempt to join a solidarity demonstration. In detention, the health conditions of Hermenegildo Victor José, Adolfo Campos and Gilson Morreira have deteriorated due in large part to their denial of access to medical treatment. Their conviction and sentence stem solely from the peaceful exercise of their human rights. They must be immediately released.

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

Minister of Justice and Human Rights

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Dear Minister,

I am writing to express grave concern about the health conditions of three activists, **Adolfo Campos, Hermenegildo Victor José (AKA Gildo das Ruas), Gilson Morreira (AKA Tanaice Neutro)**, who have been held in arbitrary detention since 16 September 2023, and to call for their immediate release as they are detained solely for peacefully exercising their human rights.

On 1 August, Gildo das Ruas was diagnosed with spinal deviation (abnormal alignment or curve of the vertebral column) and was recommended a wheelchair and lumbar correction prosthesis by the doctor. On 10 and 17 August 2024, Gildo das Ruas was not allowed to receive visits from his family and friends. Meanwhile, Adolfo Campos is gradually losing his sight and has so far not received any medical treatment for it. After being diagnosed with pneumonia, his doctors recommended urgent surgery. On 7 February, his lawyers submitted a request for his surgery, which has not yet been responded to. On 9 March, he was admitted to hospital due to his health complications. Tanaice Neutro was initially placed in solitary confinement for 36 days, for no clear reason. He was due to have surgery in November 2023, but it did not take place, further complicating his health situation. He is currently suffering from pain in his back and legs.

The four activists, including **Abraão Pedro dos Santos (AKA Pensador)**, were arrested on 16 September 2023, hours before they were due to take part in a peaceful demonstration in solidarity with motorcycle taxi drivers in Luanda, Angola's capital. On 19 September 2023, they were sentenced to two years and five months in prison for disobedience and resisting orders. Their lawyers submitted both an appeal and complaint against the decision, but both were rejected by the court. On 31 January, their lawyers submitted an unsuccessful habeas corpus application.

I urge you to take all necessary steps to ensure the immediate release of the four activists' as their detention stems solely from their peaceful activism. I also call on you to ensure that the activists have immediate access to all necessary healthcare and that their detention conditions are in compliance with the Mandela Rules.

Yours sincerely,

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 (29) 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 six months in Malange province in connection to his peaceful activism.

Abraão Pedro dos Santos (37) is an activist and member of Sociedade Civil Constestatária 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 23 June 2023. He was only free for two months before his arrest with other three activists on 16 September 2023.

Following their arrest in September 2023, the public prosecutor initially accused the four activists of "outrage and injury to the President of the Republic". Amid various inconsistencies and lack of evidence, the charge was changed to 'disobedience and resisting orders'. During the four activists' trial, one of the officers on duty of the day of the solidarity demonstration testified in court that the activists followed the due process of law 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.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: Portuguese

You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 30 November 2024

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

NAME AND PRONOUN: Adolfo Campos, Gilson Morreira (AKA Tanaice Neutro), Hermenegildo Victor José (AKA Gildo das Ruas), Abraão Pedro Santos (AKA O filho da revolução_pensador)
(All he/him/his)

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr12/7522/2023/en/>

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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