

Angola

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| Response to Information Request Number: | AGO01002.ZNK |
| Date: | 14 October 2000 |
| Subject: | Angola: Information on human rights violations by the Angolan Air Force specifically in connection with MI-8 and MI-17 helicopters |
| From: | INS Resource Information Center, Washington, DC |
| Keywords: | Angola / Armed forces / Combatants / Impunity / Law of War / Military equipment / Military personnel / Military service / National defence / War crimes |

Query:

Is there any record of human rights violations by the MI-8 and MI-17 squadrons of the Angolan military? Does a co-pilot of the MI-8 and MI-17 in the Angolan Air Force have authority to launch the rockets that the helicopters carry?

Response:

Information on specific human rights violations committed by the Angolan Air Force or agents of the Angolan Air Force could not be found among the sources consulted by the RIC. Additionally, information regarding a co-pilot's capability of firing rockets from the MI-8 or MI-17 helicopters could not be found among the sources consulted. However, the following on the MI-8 and MI-17 helicopters and the Angolan Air Force may be of some use.

The Angolan Air Force has some forty helicopters remaining of 42 MI-8 and 18 MI-17 originally delivered (*Encyclopedia of World Military Aircraft*, Mil Mi-8/17 'Hip', 1997-2000). The MI-8 (Hip) of the kind used in Angola carries a two-pilot crew plus a flight engineer. It functions as an armed assault-transport (able to carry 24 equipped troops, light weapons, and vehicles) and carries rockets, antitank missiles, machine gun, and bombs (Cooke, May 2000).

The Angolan government was aided in its conflict with the armed UNITA opposition by a mercenary force known as Executive Outcomes whose pilots flew combat sorties in Mi-8 ("HIP"), Mi-17 ("HIP-H"), and Mi-24 ("HIND") helicopters and MiG-23 and MiG-27 fighters. A UNITA soldier in Angola acknowledged, "We used to know we could sleep well at night. In this recent war, new tactics meant that fighting continued at night and that light infantry units led by these Executive Outcomes guys would come from deep behind our lines. We could no longer rest. It weakened us very much. It is the new tactics in which they trained the FAA [Angolan armed forces] that made the difference. They introduced a new style of warfare to Angola. We were not used to this" (Center for Defense Information, "What is EO?," no date).

This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the RIC within time constraints. This response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee or asylum status.

References

Center for Defense Information (CDI), "What is EO," no date. [Internet] URL:
http://www.cdi.org/ArmsTradeDatabase/CONTROL/Small_Arms/Mercenaries/What_is_EO.txt

Cooke, Gary W. *Gary's Combat Air Reference Guide* (27 May 2000). [Internet] URL:
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Encyclopedia of World Military Aircraft, Mil Mi-8/17 'Hip', 1997-2000. [Internet] URL:
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