



RESPONSES TO INFORMATION REQUESTS (RIRs)

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6 April 2005

AGO43486.E

Angola: Potential punishment faced by an Angolan citizen found by Angolan authorities to have either trafficked, or been in possession of, illegal diamonds
Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board, Ottawa

The Research Directorate was unable to find specific information on the actual punishment faced by an Angolan citizen who is found by Angolan authorities to have either trafficked, or been in possession of, illegal diamonds. However, the following information may be of interest.

In December 2003, the Angolan government launched "Operation Brilliant" (also called *Brilhante*), an extensive plan to combat illegal diamond mining and trafficking (UN 10 March 2005; see also ANGOP 24 Jan. 2004; AP 20 Feb. 2005; *Country Reports 2004* 28 Feb. 2005, Sec. 1c; Marques and de Campos 9 March 2005, Sec. 3).

In April 2004, several sources reported on a joint police and army raid in southern Angola, in which about 3000 Angolan citizens and 46 foreigners were arrested for their alleged links to illegal diamond mining (AFP 10 Apr. 2004; BBC 10 Apr. 2004; see also RFI 11 Apr. 2004). Sources also mentioned that the police and army had destroyed miners' huts and seized equipment (AFP 10 Apr. 2004; BBC 10 Apr. 2004). According to the AFP, the Angolan nationals were "sent back to their home regions, while the foreigners [were] awaiting expulsion to their native countries" (AFP 10 Apr. 2004).

In a 10 March 2005 article, the Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN) reported that "more than 250,000 miners and smugglers, mainly from Democratic Republic of Congo and West African countries [had] been deported" since the beginning of Operation Brilliant. *Country Reports 2004* stated that "[s]ecurity forces detained, raped, performed invasive body searches, and shot migrant workers as part of this operation" (28 Feb. 2004, Sec.1c).

For further information on the human rights situation in the Lunda provinces in the course of 2004, including the prison conditions of individuals suspected of being in possession of illegal diamonds, please refer to the report entitled *Lunda's - The Stones of Death. Angola's Deadly Diamonds: Human Rights Abuses in the Lunda Provinces, 2004*, published by journalist Raphael Marques and lawyer Rui Falcão de Campos.

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of additional sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

References

Agence France-Presse (AFP). 10 April 2004. "Angola Rounds Up 3,000 Diamond Traffickers in South." (Dialog)

Angola Press Agency (ANGOP) [Luanda]. 24 January 2004. "Army Presents Equipment Seized From Diamonds Areas." < <http://allafrica.com/stories/200401260367.html>> [Accessed 4 April 2005]

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BBC. 10 April 2004. "Angola Swoops on Diamond Diggers." < <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/3616697.stm>> [Accessed 4 April 2005]

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Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN). 10 March 2005. "New Report Alleges Blood Still Stains Diamonds." <<http://www.irinnews.org/print.asp?ReportID=46053>> [Accessed 4 Apr. 2005]

Marques, Rafael and Falcão de Campos. 9 March 2005. *Lunda's - The Stones of Death. Angola's Deadly Diamonds: Human Rights Abuses in the Lunda Provinces, 2004*. (Netherlands Institute for Southern Africa [NIZA]). <<http://www.niza.nl/docs/200503141357095990.pdf>> {Accessed 4 April 2005}

Radio France internationale (RFI). 11 April 2004. "Plus de trois mille trafiquants de diamants arrêtés." < http://www.rfi.fr/actufr/articles/052/article_27367.asp> [Accessed 4 April 2005]

Additional Sources Consulted

Oral sources : Attempts to contact four oral sources were unsuccessful within the time constraints of this Response.

Internet sites, including : *Africa Confidential*; AllAfrica.com; Amnesty International (AI); *CIA World Factbook*; Freedom House; Global Witness; Human Rights Watch (HRW); *Jeune Afrique/L'Intelligent*; United Kingdom Home Office, Immigration and Nationality Directorate (IND); United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR).

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