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Angola: Front for the Liberation of the Enclave of Cabinda-Armed Forces of Cabinda (FLEC-FAC), including human rights abuses committed by this organization (2001-April 2004)

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According to *Mondes rebelles*, the Front for the Liberation of the Enclave of Cabinda-Armed Forces of Cabinda (FLEC-FAC) is the most "radical" of the factions of the Front for the Liberation of the (FLEC) (2001, 1095; also see IRIN 14 Oct. 2003), and fights for the independence of the Cabinda enclave (Africa Research Bulletin 18 Dec. 2003, 15530; *ibid.* 26 June 2003, 15306; *Mondes rebelles* 2001, 1095). According to the Integrated Regional Information Network (IRIN), "FLEC and its factions (FLEC Renovada and FLEC-FAC) do not recognise the Alvor Treaty that signed the Cabinda province over to Angola after independence from Portugal in 1975 and have been calling for independence ever since" (7 Apr. 2003).

Angolan government authorities and FLEC FAC conducted "exploratory talks" during a January 2003 meeting in Paris (*Africa Research Bulletin* 18 Dec. 2003, 15530; *Europa* 2003, 2003, 478). However, FLEC-FAC rejected the Angolan government proposals (*ibid.*; *Africa Research Bulletin* 18 Dec. 2003, 15530), arguing that for the future of the Cabinda enclave, a referendum in which "only Cabindans would vote, could finally end the conflict" (*ibid.*). Conecta Sur, an organisation that operates a human rights portal on the Internet, in its 3 November 2003 report on the human rights situation on Cabinda indicated that "talks between the government and the leaders of FLEC's various factions have so far been limited, clandestine and without tangible results" (8).

Information on human rights abuses committed by FLEC-FAC is limited among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate. However, with regards to conflict between Angolan Armed Forces (FAA) and FLEC-FAC that was going on in Cabinda province in 2003 (*Africa Research Bulletin* 18 Dec. 2003, 15530; *Europa* 2003, 478; AFP 19 Sept. 2003), *Country Reports 2003* stated that civilians in Cabinda had been "tortured" and killed by FLEC-FAC forces (25 Feb. 2004, sect. 1.a). Without giving the details, Amnesty International also reported that in Cabinda, there had been human rights abuses committed by FLEC factions (13 Dec. 2002).

While a 11 February 2003 IRIN report alleged that both Angolan security forces and FLEC-FAC had committed human rights abuses against civilians in Cabinda, two

years earlier, Amnesty International reported that both FLEC/FAC and FLEC-Renewed, have resorted to kidnapping to draw attention to their cause and, in March 2001, had taken five Portuguese and one Angolan hostage (AI 2001). According to Amnesty International, all of the hostages were released after two months of captivity (AI 2002).

For more information on the historic background of the FLEC, including its factions, please refer to AGO37160.E of 1 June 2001, AGO36441.E of 19 February 2001, AGO36059.E 15 January 2001, AGO33474.E of 25 January 2000 and AGO30516.E of November 1998.

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.

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Websites, including: Africatime, AllAfrica, Dialog, European Country of Origin Information Network (ecoi.net), FIDH, Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA), Missionary Service News Agency (MISNA), Radio Ecclesia, ReliefWeb.


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