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23 May 2008

Angola: Whether the 4 April 2002 General Amnesty (Law No. 4/2002) is still in effect; whether an Angolan soldier who escaped from a military prison where he was being held on charges of treason would be covered by the amnesty

Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

No information on whether the 4 April 2002 General Amnesty (Law No. 4/2002) is still in effect could be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

In February 2004, Luanda-based Radio Ecclesia noted that police officers covered under the April 2002 amnesty were still waiting to be reinstated into their former jobs even though, according to the officers' spokesperson, their reinstatement was scheduled to occur within three months of the amnesty (12 Feb. 2004).

Media sources reported that in the summer of 2006, the Angolan government signed several agreements with rebel groups, including an offer of amnesty to rebels who have fought against the government for more than 30 years in the separatist province of Cabinda (AFP 1 Sept. 2006; *Global Insights Daily Analysis* 11 Aug. 2006). The amnesty agreement, which covered people who had committed military crimes or crimes against the security of the state (Child Soldiers 2008), also allowed rebels to join the military (AFP 1 Sept. 2006; *Global Insights Daily Analysis* 11 Aug. 2006) or obtain senior positions in the government and in state-run companies (ibid.). According to the Swiss Peace Foundation, some 49 prisoners were released in January 2007 under this amnesty (14 Mar. 2007). The same month, a number of amnestied fighters of the Cabinda Enclave Liberation Front (Frente para a Libertação do Enclave de Cabinda, FLEC) were incorporated into the Angolan Armed Forces (Forças Armadas Angolanas, FAA) (AIIAfrica 8 Jan. 2007).

No information on whether an Angolan soldier who escaped from a military prison where he was being held on charges of treason would be covered by the amnesty could be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

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

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Swiss Peace Foundation. 14 March 2007. "Fast Update Angola: Trends in Conflict and Cooperation." (ReliefWeb) <<http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/db900SID/YSAR-6ZASWL?OpenDocument&RSS20=02-P>> [Accessed 21 May 2008]

Additional Sources Consulted

Oral sources: The Embassy of Angola in Ottawa and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Branch Office for Canada did not provide information within the time constraints of this Response. The Angolan Bar Association (Ordem dos Advogados de Angola) and the Faculty of Law at Agostinho Neto University in Luanda did not respond to requests for information within the time constraints of this Response.

Internet sources, including: Action for Southern Africa, Angola Anti-Militarism Initiative for Human Rights, Angola Press Agency, British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), Central Committee for Conscientious Objection (CCCO), Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, European Country of Origin Information Network (ecoi.net), Human Rights Watch (HRW), Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), *Jornal Apostolado*, *Jornal de Angola*, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Relief Web, *Semanário Angolense*, War Resisters' International (WRI).

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