



## Angola - Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on 12 September 2014

### Q18619 - Information on the Revolutionary Movement of Angola.

In July 2014 a report issued by *Action for Southern Africa* notes:

“The Angolan Revolutionary Movement, a youth group, reported that 20 of its members were beaten and detained by police when they protested on 27 May at Luanda’s Independence Square. 27 May is the anniversary of the 1977 opposition protest during the civil war, described as an attempted coup at the time, which was followed by thousands of deaths. The events of 1977 are covered in a recently published book, ‘In the Name of the People: Angola’s Forgotten Massacre’ by Lara Pawson. The group was protesting the death of three activists by security forces, two in May 2012 and one in November 2013.” (Action for Southern Africa (25 July 2014) *Angola Monitor Issue 3.2014*)

*Defense Web* in May 2014 states:

“Angolan police have beaten and detained 20 people protesting against the killing of three activists by security forces, demonstrators said on Wednesday. Neither police and nor Interior Ministry officials responded to several requests for comment about Tuesday’s incident. Security forces have in the past denied using violence on protesters, saying detentions are made to maintain public order. The youth-driven Angolan Revolutionary Movement has staged several protests since 2011, accusing security forces of murder and President Jose Eduardo dos Santos of restricting political freedom during his 34 years at the helm of Africa’s No. 2 oil producer. “Police detained 20 of us as soon as we arrived at Independence Square for the protest,” activist Manuel Nito Alves told Reuters. “Inside the police van they beat us with sticks, drove us to Catete, 60 km away from Luanda, and released us there several hours later.” The demonstration was organised through social media to demand justice for the killings of three opposition activists by security forces in the last two years.” (Defence Web (29 May 2014) *Angolan police detain, beat protesters*)

A report issued in February 2014 by the *United States Department of State* commenting on events of the preceding year states:

“According to several NGO and civil society sources, police arbitrarily arrested individuals without due process and routinely detained individuals who participated in antigovernment protests, despite this right being protected by the constitution. Police used this tactic to prevent protests from taking place. They often released the detainees after a few hours but reportedly sometimes kept them for days. For example, on March 30, police detained up to 14 members of the antigovernment group “Revolutionary Movement of Angola.” Police reportedly picked up prominent members of the movement early in the morning as they were en route to a protest planned for later that morning. Police reportedly shuttled the protesters from one station to another, took them on long drives, and used other tactics to hold them throughout the day. Police released all of the detained protesters that same night or

early the next morning.” (United States Department of State (27 February 2014) *Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2013 – Angola*, Section 1d Arbitrary Arrest or Detention)

A document issued in October 2013 by *Amnesty International* notes that:

“Nito Alves was arrested by the police at about 10 am on 12 September 2013, in Viana municipality in Angola’s capital, Luanda. He was arrested after collecting T-shirts which he had ordered to be printed with slogans against the Angolan president. The T-shirts were expected to be worn by individuals at a demonstration organized by a group of young people known as the Movimento Revolucionário Angolano- MRA (Angolan Revolutionary Movement) for the following week, on 19 September in Luanda.” (Amnesty International (29 October 2013) *Angola: Free Nito Alves: Case sheet*)

*Agence France Presse* in September 2013 notes:

“An Angolan court has freed on bail seven young people who were arrested after organising a banned demonstration against social injustice last week, one of their lawyers said Tuesday. “They were all freed yesterday (Monday) by the police tribunal in Luanda for lack of sufficient charges, but each one must pay bail of \$2,000 (1,484 euros) or return to prison,” Salvador Freire dos Santos, the president of the Maos Livres (Free Hands) association, told AFP. “Neither the police nor the prosecutor were capable of defining the charges that justified their arrest or their detention,” added the lawyer, whose association is working to raise the bail money. The youths were first arrested last Thursday for trying to organise a demonstration in the capital against the government and its failure to improve living conditions for most people in the oil-rich country. Those who tried to join the demonstration, called by a group of students and young professionals known as the Angolan Revolutionary Movement, were dispersed by a large police contingent.” (Agence France Presse (24 September 2013) *Seven Angolans freed on bail after banned demo: lawyer*)

This report also states that:

“Police said the protest, sparked by the state's demolition of homes and forced evictions of poor families, constituted a disturbance of the peace and public security. The arrested youths were freed the following day, then arrested again together with three Angolan journalists, as they came out of the courtroom, and they spent the end of the week in prison. The Angolan Revolutionary Movement was behind the first demonstrations held in the tightly ruled southern African country in March 2011. Its activists also level charges of nepotism against President Jose Eduardo dos Santos's authoritarian regime.” (ibid)

In September 2013 *Reuters* points out that:

“Though small in number, the Angolan Revolutionary Movement has survived a police clampdown and attacks by pro-government groups.” (Reuters (18 September 2013) *Angolan police vow to clamp down on planned protest*)

In September 2013 a report published by *Human Rights Watch* states:

“A youth group known as the Angolan Revolutionary Movement said it had formally informed the authorities, in accordance with the law, in advance of the planned

protest on September 19. The protest sought to highlight concerns over corruption, social justice, police violence against street traders, forced evictions, and the enforced disappearance of two protest organizers in 2012. A police spokesman publicly warned on September 18 that the protest would be met with force. Witnesses in Luanda said that there was a heavy deployment of law enforcement the next day, including helicopters, military police, and units with dogs. Ten of the 22 protesters arrested on September 19 were released without charge the same day. Another eight were released by court order on September 20, along with a detained member of the opposition Bloco Democrático party.” (Human Rights Watch (23 September 2013) *Angola: New Crackdown on Peaceful Dissent*)

An article issued in May 2013 by *Front Line Defenders* includes the following description of:

“...the youth group called Movimento Revolucionário (Revolutionary Movement), which peacefully advocates for human rights, democracy and accountability in Angola.” (Front Line Defenders (29 May 2013) *Angola: Arrests and violence at a vigil to mark one year since the disappearance of two human rights defenders*)

## References

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This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

### **Sources Consulted**

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