

ANGOLA**Prisoner of Conscience : The case of João Zaba**

João Zaba, a former employee of the World Bank in Cabinda, was arrested in May 2001 after publishing an opinion piece on the Internet expressing his support for the independence of Cabinda. Cabinda is an Angolan enclave separated by a strip of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Factions of the *Frente para a Libertação do Enclave de Cabinda*, Front for the Liberation of the Cabinda Enclave, are fighting for independence from Angola.

João Zaba was convicted on 12 July of undermining the security of the state and incitement to violence and sentenced to nine months imprisonment. AI considers him a prisoner of conscience imprisoned solely for peacefully exercising his right to freedom of expression, which is guaranteed by the Angolan Constitution as well as the international human rights treaties Angola has agreed to abide by.

At the trial by the Cabinda Regional Court his defence lawyer called for his acquittal on the basis that the charges against him were not criminal but political and that other people from Cabinda often expressed similar views in national news- papers without being arrested or charged. He is currently being held at Yabi prison, about 14 km from Cabinda city.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Please write calling for **João Zaba's** immediate and unconditional release, saying that AI considers him a prisoner of conscience imprisoned solely for peacefully expressing his political opinions.

Please distribute the case of João Zaba as widely as possible among human rights groups and others, asking them to call for the release of João Zaba

Send appeals, preferably in Portuguese, to: His Excellency President José Eduardo dos Santos, Presidente da República, Gabinete do Presidente da República, Palácio do Povo, Luanda, República de Angola and to: His Excellency José Amaro Tati, Governador Provincial, Palácio do Governo Provincial, Cabinda, República de Angola.

Send a copy to the Angolan diplomatic representative in your country