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ANGOLA TEACHERS' UNION LEADERS RECEIVE DEATH THREATS

On February 27, the National Union of Higher Education Teachers (SINPES) in Angola started a strike demanding better working conditions and fulfilment of the promises made by the government. Since the beginning of the strike, union leaders - including general secretary Eduardo Peres Alberto- and their relatives have been the target of death threats.

On April 25, Eduardo Peres Alberto's daughter was attacked on the street by unidentified men. They threw a canister of toxic chemicals at her causing serious health complications that led to her being hospitalized for 17 days.

The Angolan authorities must promptly, thoroughly, impartially, independently, transparently, and effectively investigate both the attack and death threats and ensure the Union leaders' right to unionize and strike is protected.

Write to the Minister of Justice and Human Rights urging him to:

- Carry out an effective investigation into the attack against Maria Peres Alberto and the death threats against her, Eduardo Peres Alberto, and other SINPES leaders, ensuring the suspected perpetrators are brought to justice in fair trials.
- Immediately take all necessary steps to guarantee the protection and safety of all SINPES leaders and their families.

Write to:

Minister of Justice and Human Rights
Marcy Cláudio Lopes
Casarão da Justiça, Rua 17 de Setembro
Gombota, Luanda, LU, Angola
E-mail: dndh.mjdh.angola@gmail.com
Salutation: Dear Minister Marcy Lopes,

And copy:

Embassy of the Republic of Angola
2100-2108 16th Street, NW
Washington, D.C., DC 20009
United States of America
Tel: (202) 785-1156/7/8 Fax: (202) 822-9049
Email: info@angola.org

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Eduardo Peres Alberto has been general secretary of the National Union of Higher Education Teachers (SINPES) since 2012. He holds a master's degree in history and bachelor's in political science. He is one of the most prominent faces of the higher education teachers' strike that started on February 27.

SINPES first went on strike in November 2021 culminating in the signing of a "Memorandum of Understanding" between the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Technology, Innovation, henceforth (MESCTI), and the National Union of Higher Education Teachers' (SINPES).

As the government did not fulfill the promises made, by deliberation of its general assembly, the higher education teachers' union decided to resume the strike in January 2022, which lasted 3 months. The same strike was interrupted and resumed a few times during the year, in shorter periods lasting a few days, in April, October and November 2022. During this period, there were negotiations with the government that apparently did not bring any solution to the challenges presented by the union, which led to the resumption of the strike on February 27, 2023, now marking 3 months of strike and stoppage of classes in public higher education institutions.

On March 28, Eduardo Peres Alberto received a text message - *"You're going too far with the strike, then don't say you weren't warned."* On the same day, his eldest daughter, Maria Peres Alberto, received a message warning her to *"Tell [her] father to stop the strike otherwise we will attack"*. The next day, she received another message demanding she explain to her father and the union that *"if he doesn't stop the strike, we will attack"*. After that, the same numbers sent other messages also promising to kill other union leaders of the strike.

On April 3, an envelope was left at Eduardo Peres Alberto's house in Luanda, Angola's capital, containing a photo of Maria Peres Alberto with a black cross. A week later, on April 10, unidentified men broke the window of Eduardo Peres Alberto's house and sent a message to his daughter: *"Did you see the scare? Next time we will kill."* SINPES' secretary for information reported that he saw unidentified men surrounding his house for two days; on May 1, they unsuccessfully attempted to break into the house.

The break-ins and all the threats were reported to the police, however, to date, no investigation has been launched, nor measures put in place to protect the union leaders, members and their relatives.

The higher education teachers strike has resulted in public higher education students, led by the student movement (MEA), to organize demonstrations against school fees and also demanding the government to solve the impasses with of college teachers so they can return to school. Some of these demonstrations have been repressed by the police.

Peaceful demonstrations and other forms of protest are repressed in Angola, often leading to arbitrary arrests, torture, and threats and intimidation of dissidents.