

generic certificates, which stated that their relatives were dead but did not specify the date or cause of death, as a precondition for claiming compensation. The security forces dispersed demonstrations organized by families of the disappeared.

Freedom of religion or belief

Christians, including converts, continued to face prosecution for unauthorized religious activity under Ordinance 06-03 regulating faiths other than the state religion, Islam. Under the legislation, Christians continued to face hindrances building or maintaining churches. In May, the governor of the north-east province of Béjaïa ordered the closure of all churches on the basis of the law. The order was countermanded by the Minister of Interior.

■ On 25 May, a court in Cité Jamal in the city of Oran sentenced Abdelkarim Siaghi, a Christian convert, to five years' imprisonment and a heavy fine for "offending the Prophet Mohamed" after what was reported to be an unfair trial in which his lawyers were not permitted to cross-examine witnesses. He remained at liberty at the end of the year, awaiting the outcome of an appeal.

Death penalty

Courts continued to hand down death sentences, mostly against people tried in their absence for terrorism-related offences. The last execution took place in 1993.

Amnesty International visits/reports

🚗 Amnesty International delegates visited Algeria from February to March.

ANGOLA

REPUBLIC OF ANGOLA

Head of state and government:	José Eduardo dos Santos
Death penalty:	abolitionist for all crimes
Population:	19.6 million
Life expectancy:	51.1 years
Under-5 mortality:	160.5 per 1,000
Adult literacy:	70 per cent

The authorities curtailed freedom of assembly through excessive use of force, arbitrary arrests and detentions, and criminal charges. Police used excessive force resulting in deaths. Journalists faced increased restrictions. Two journalists were tried and convicted of defamation for writing critical articles. There were further forced evictions and the government failed to honour its promise to rehouse 450 families who had been previously evicted. Human rights violations continued against Congolese people expelled from Angola.

Background

A bill to criminalize cybercrime, which was criticized by civil society as a risk to freedom of expression and information, was withdrawn in May. Concerns remained that the bill would be reintroduced or its provisions incorporated into the Penal Code under revision.

Anti-government demonstrations took place throughout the year calling for the resignation of the President. A protest in September became violent after suspected members of the State Information and Security Services infiltrated the crowds and reportedly vandalized property and beat individuals, including journalists. A number of demonstrators were arrested.

In September the Provincial Government of Luanda issued a by-law indicating the areas that could be used for assemblies and demonstrations. It excluded Independence Square, where the majority of anti-government demonstrations had taken place during the year.

In June, parliament approved a law against domestic violence.

In July the President inaugurated the first phase of the City of Kilamba project comprising 20,000 new apartments, 14 schools, a hospital and 12 health posts. Other plans to build social housing in various parts of the country were announced throughout the year.

In August, immigration authorities at Luanda's international airport refused entry into Angola to delegates of various civil society organizations who were to attend the Civil Society Forum of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), planned around the SADC Heads of State Summit. Arrangements had been made for them to receive visas upon arrival at the airport. Two Mozambican journalists who were to cover the Summit were also refused entry, despite having valid visas.

In November, opposition party parliamentarians walked out of a parliamentary debate on the new Electoral Legislative package for the 2012 general elections. The National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (União Nacional para Independência Total de Angola, UNITA) stated that the package contained unconstitutional provisions. In December, the Organic Law for the National Electoral Commission was approved.

Forced evictions

Forced evictions continued, although on a smaller scale than previous years, and thousands of people remained at risk of being forcibly evicted. Some planned evictions were suspended. Thousands of families forcibly evicted in the past remained without compensation.

In June the government announced that over 450 families in Luanda whose homes were demolished between 2004 and 2006 were to be rehoused from September. This had not begun by the end of the year.

Planned demolitions in the Arco Íris neighbourhood of Lubango city centre were cancelled by the Huíla Provincial Governor in August because of inadequate conditions where approximately 750 families were to be resettled. The families had been given a month to leave their homes in June, which was extended for a further month, and were offered land in an isolated area 14km from the city.

■ In August, according to reports, municipal officials protected by armed national and military police forcibly evicted 40 families in the Km 30 neighbourhood of Viana in Luanda after the land was apparently sold to a private company. According to the local housing rights organization SOS-Habitat, the officials demolished the houses of any who were not present, destroying their belongings. Firmino João Rosário was reportedly shot dead by police when he attempted to stop the demolitions. Another resident, Santos António, was reportedly shot in the hand.

■ In October, members of the Lubango municipal administration community services, protected by National Police, demolished 25 homes belonging to families in the Tchavola area of Lubango, Huíla Province. The evictions were accompanied by arbitrary arrests and excessive use of force by the police. All those arrested were released the same day. The homes demolished belonged to families who had been relocated to the area after being forcibly evicted from March 2010 to make way for railway upgrades in Lubango.

Police and security forces

Police carried out their functions in a partisan manner, especially during some of the anti-government demonstrations. They used excessive force to disperse demonstrators, including live ammunition, dogs and an irritant spray to the eyes, and carried out arbitrary arrests and detentions.

■ In September, police officers used live ammunition during a protest by motorcycle taxi drivers in Kuito city, Bie province. Two protesters died after being shot in the head and the back, and six others were injured. The drivers were protesting against the abuse of power by police, whom they accused of confiscating the motorcycles of those who were lawfully operating in the province, as well as arbitrarily arresting and ill-treating several motorcycle taxi drivers during an operation to control their activities. No officer appeared to have been brought to justice for the excessive force and unlawful killings.

In a number of cases, off-duty police officers were accused of shooting and killing individuals. In most cases the officers had not been brought to justice by the end of the year.

■ On 12 November an off-duty police officer reportedly shot dead Francisco dos Santos with a police-issue firearm after he intervened to stop two children fighting in the Rangel neighbourhood of Luanda. According to eyewitnesses, one of the children called his father, a police officer, who arrived and started shooting before running away. Two shots hit Francisco dos Santos in the back and he died in hospital later that day. The police officer remained at large and no arrests had been made by the end of the year.

Freedom of expression – journalists

Journalists faced increased restrictions. Several were briefly detained or beaten by police or suspected members of the security services, and had their

property confiscated or destroyed while covering anti-government demonstrations. Two were sentenced to imprisonment for alleged defamation.

■ In March, Voice of America correspondent Armando Chicoca was convicted of defamation and sentenced to one year's imprisonment. The charges related to two articles he had written concerning allegations of sexual harassment and corruption by the President of the Namibe Provincial Court. Armando Chicoca was conditionally released on bail in April pending an appeal.

■ In October, William Tonet, director and owner of the newspaper *Folha 8*, was convicted of defamation against three army generals in 2007. He was reportedly sentenced to one year's imprisonment suspended for two years and a fine of 10 million kwanzas (over US\$100,000). William Tonet lodged an appeal but no decision had been made by the end of the year.

Freedom of assembly

Freedom of assembly was curtailed throughout the country. Police used excessive force in some instances, including dogs and firearms, to quell demonstrations and arbitrarily arrested protesters and journalists. Some were released without charge after hours or days; scores of others were tried for disobedience and resisting authority.

■ During a demonstration in March, police arrested three journalists and 20 demonstrators, saying that these were precautions to "prevent incalculable consequences". They were released without charge after a few hours. Other demonstrators were arrested in May, September and October. On 9 September police used dogs to disperse hundreds of people gathered outside a court, where 21 people were being tried in connection with a demonstration six days earlier. A further 27 people were arrested and charged with attacking security forces; the case was dismissed by a court on 19 September for lack of evidence. However, 18 of the 21 were convicted of disobedience, resistance and assault on 12 September. All 18 had their convictions overturned by the Supreme Court on 14 October and were released.

Prisoners of conscience and possible prisoners of conscience

Thirty-three members of the Commission of the Legal Sociological Manifesto of the Lunda Tchokwe Protectorate remained in prison without trial until

the Supreme Court ordered their release in March, despite the repeal in December 2010 of the law under which they had been charged. They were not awarded any compensation for their unlawful detention.

Two other Commission members, Mário Muamuene and Domingos Capenda, detained in October 2010, were sentenced to one year's imprisonment for rebellion in March. They remained in prison although the sentence expired in October. They and five other prisoners – Sérgio Augusto, Sebastião Lumani, José Muteba, António Malendeca and Domingos Henrique Samujaja – went on hunger strike in May and again in October to protest against their continuing detention and poor prison conditions.

Migrants' rights

According to the International Committee for the Development of Peoples (Comitato Internazionale per lo Sviluppo dei Popoli, CISP), at least 55,000 nationals of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) were expelled from Angola during the year. At least 6,000 of these reported suffering sexual violence. No one was held responsible for human rights abuses during the expulsions of Congolese migrants from Angola in past years. Following a visit to Angola in March, the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict expressed concern over the continued reports of sexual violence against Congolese migrants by Angolan armed forces during expulsions.

The Angolan Minister of Foreign Affairs denied the allegations. In November the Special Representative called on the governments of Angola and the DRC to investigate these reports and bring the perpetrators to justice. In December, the Minister of Foreign Affairs stated that the government would co-ordinate with the UN to expel foreign nationals from the country.

Amnesty International visits/reports

✉ Despite continued statements by the authorities that Amnesty International had never been denied visas to Angola, applications submitted in October 2008, October 2009 and November 2010 had still not been granted.

📄 Angola to forcibly evict hundreds of families (PRE01/414/2011)