



[Home](#) » [Under Secretary for Democracy and Global Affairs](#) » [Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor](#) » [Releases](#) » [Human Rights Reports](#) » [2009 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices](#) » [Africa](#) » [Angola](#)

[Subscribe to Updates](#)

## 2009 Human Rights Report: Angola

BUREAU OF DEMOCRACY, HUMAN RIGHTS, AND LABOR

**2009 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices**

**March 11, 2010**

Angola is a constitutional republic with an estimated population of 16 million. The ruling Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), led by President Jose Eduardo dos Santos since 1979, has been in power since independence in 1975 and exercised tight, centralized control over government planning, policy making, and media outlets. In September 2008 the government held the first legislative elections since 1992. Domestic and international observers reported that polling throughout the country was peaceful and generally credible, despite a ruling party advantage due to state control of major media and other resources, and serious logistical failures that marred polling in the capital of Luanda. Civilian authorities generally maintained effective control of the security forces.

The government's human rights record remained poor, and there were numerous, serious problems. Human rights abuses included the abridgement of citizens' right to elect officials at all levels; unlawful killings by police, military, and private security forces; torture, beatings, and rape by security forces; harsh prison conditions; arbitrary arrest and detention; official corruption and impunity; judicial inefficiency and lack of independence; lengthy pretrial detention; lack of due process; restrictions on freedom of speech, press, assembly, and association; forced evictions without compensation; and discrimination, violence, and abuse perpetrated against women and children.

### RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Section 1 Respect for the Integrity of the Person, Including Freedom From:

#### a. Arbitrary or Unlawful Deprivation of Life

There were no reports that the government or its agents committed politically motivated killings; however, human rights activists and domestic media sources reported that security forces arbitrarily killed two persons during the year. In 2008 security forces arbitrarily killed 23 persons.

Impunity remained a problem, although the government prosecuted some human rights violators. Results of investigations into security force abuses were seldom released.

Domestic media and local human rights activists reported that police use of excessive force resulted in killings.

On September 12, police in Luanda tortured a male citizen charged with selling drugs. While he was under arrest, police denied him medical assistance. He later died in prison due to serious contusions and abuse. The provincial commander of police requested an investigation; however, there were no updates by year's end.

On September 22, police arrested a male citizen in Porto Amboim for a public argument and tortured him. He later died due to serious contusions and cuts. There was no investigation by year's end.

In 2008 there were multiple media reports in Luanda that police deliberately targeted and killed persons suspected of gang and other criminal activity.

In July 2008 five police officers shot and killed eight teenagers. While the officers claimed to be part of a special gang task force tasked with ridding neighborhoods of gang members, the national police denied the existence of the task force and relieved the police officers of duty. Prosecutors charged seven officers with murder, and they were undergoing trial at year's end.

Police continued to decline to prosecute several officers in connection with a 2007 police killing of two actors during filming of a movie in a high-crime area of Luanda. The national police stated they were unable to positively identify the officers allegedly involved in the killings.

In 2007 police shot and killed two vendors in an open-air market during a raid on vendors of pirated DVDs. The minister of interior and national police commander immediately suspended the officers in question and promised a swift investigation. The government was still considering criminal charges against the accused police officers at year's end.

The Memorandum of Understanding for Peace and Reconciliation for Cabinda Province, signed in 2006, largely brought an end to the insurgency in the province, although sporadic attacks by dissident factions of the Front for the Liberation of the Enclave of Cabinda (FLEC) and counterinsurgency operations by the Armed Forces of Angola (FAA) continued during the year.

On March 31, FLEC claimed responsibility for an attack on three foreign-operated trucks in Cabinda, resulting in the death of a foreign national.

The Office of Electronic Information, Bureau of Public Affairs, manages this site as a portal for information from the U.S. State Department.  
External links to other Internet sites should not be construed as an endorsement of the views or privacy policies contained therein.