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PRESS RELEASE

Urgent Concerns Over Continued Detention of Angolan Civic and Human Rights Activists

Luanda/Banjul – 1 April 2026:





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Luanda/Banjul – 1 April 2026: The [Institute for Human Rights and Development in Africa \(IHRDA\)](#) and [Pro Bono Angola](#) jointly express serious concern regarding the continued detention of three civic and human rights Angolan activists: Osvaldo Caholo, Serrote José de Oliveira (also known as “General Nila”), and André Miranda. These individuals have remained deprived of their liberty since mid-2025 in connection with demonstrations and civic mobilisation related to rising fuel prices and broader social protests in Angola.

The information received from civil society organisations, family members, activists, and independent observers indicates that the arrests occurred in July 2025 during peaceful civic activities, including demonstrations and the organisation of public protests. Their continued detention raises serious concerns regarding due process guarantees, access to legal representation, and conditions of detention.

Case Summaries

- **Osvaldo Caholo:** Arrested on 19 July 2025 after publicly criticising the Government during several media interviews linked to protests calling for a reduction in fuel prices. He was placed in preventive detention and transferred to Calomboloca District Prison in Icolo e Bengo. He remains in detention, with trial proceedings only commencing on 25 March 2026. A request for review of the preventive detention measure was reportedly not properly processed, raising due process concerns, while family members have also expressed concern for his health and safety.
- **André Miranda:** Arrested on 28 July 2025 while filming during a taxi drivers’ strike in Luanda concerning the sudden rise of fuel prices in Angola. He is reportedly detained in Viana and faces charges including disobedience of an order to disperse, endangering transport safety, property damage, and criminal association. To date, he has not been brought before a competent court for trial.
- **Serrote José de Oliveira (“General Nila”):** Arrested on 28 July 2025 during the taxi drivers’ strike. Reports indicate he was shot by a police officer during the incident before being detained and is currently held at Calomboloca District Prison. He is being held incommunicado, with his detention conditions severely

restricting access to medical care, legal representation, and contact with his family.

Witnesses and legal representatives report that the arrests of these individuals occurred without visible warrants, and lawyers have faced delays and obstacles in accessing detainees. Families indicate that visits have been restricted and information about detainees' health and detention conditions has been limited. Applications for conditional release or less restrictive measures have reportedly been made, but the court explicitly rejected these requests.

Key Concerns

IHRDA and Pro Bono Angola reiterate their commitment to objective, rights-based scrutiny of these cases. The protection of detainees' rights must be consistent with Angola's obligations under regional and international instruments, including the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). These instruments guarantee, among other things the rights to liberty and security of person; to be promptly informed of charges and brought before a judge; to a fair and public hearing by a competent, independent, and impartial tribunal; to effective legal representation and confidential communication with counsel; to humane detention conditions and necessary medical care; and to challenge the lawfulness of detention and obtain effective judicial protection.

IHRDA and Pro Bono Angola further recall the UN Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers, which require States to ensure that lawyers can perform their professional functions without intimidation, hindrance, harassment, or improper interference.

IHRDA and Pro Bono Angola call upon the Angolan authorities to:

1. Ensure immediate and unhindered access to legal counsel and medical care for the detainees.
2. Clarify the legal basis for detention and promptly inform detainees and families of charges and procedural steps.
3. Guarantee prompt, fair, and public judicial proceedings before competent courts.
4. Ensure humane detention conditions and regular family visitation, with transparent information on detainees' health.
5. Prevent intimidation, reprisals, or disproportionate use of force against organisers and participants in peaceful demonstrations.
6. Facilitate the independent exercise of the legal profession, ensuring lawyers can represent clients without obstruction.
7. Release detainees immediately where no lawful basis exists and provide remedies for violations of rights.

Context and Monitoring

These cases arise within a broader context of civic mobilisation and reported restrictions on demonstrations. A peaceful demonstration held on 28 March 2026 in Luanda by civil

society organisations and human rights defenders reportedly took place as a civic action, continuing public expression around ongoing concerns.

IHRDA and Pro Bono Angola also note that concerns regarding the treatment of activists in Angola have been raised at the international level. In particular, the [matter](#) of human rights defender Mr. Pedro Domingos André has been the subject of a [communication](#) by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders and the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, which highlighted allegations of persecution, restrictions on civic space, and concerns relating to due process and fundamental freedoms. These concerns reinforce the broader pattern of restrictions affecting human rights defenders and civic actors in the country.

IHRDA and Pro Bono Angola will continue to monitor developments closely, engage with national, regional, and international stakeholders, and support efforts to ensure that constitutional and legal guarantees are respected.

For further information

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