

URGENT ACTION

DROP CHARGES AGAINST SEVEN COMMUNITY MEMBERS

On November 23, 2024, seven members of the Vikolôngwa Mbútwa community in Huíla Province, Angola, were arrested and detained following a violent police intervention during a land dispute. Although all have since been released, they remain on trial on multiple charges. The trial began in November 2025, and a hearing to deliver the final verdict may be scheduled at any time. Angolan authorities must immediately drop any charges that are not supported by credible and lawfully obtained evidence and launch an effective and impartial investigation into the seven individuals' allegations of torture, ill treatment, and excessive use of force.

TAKE ACTION:

- Write a letter to the government official(s) listed. Use the sample letter below as a guide or use your own words.
- [Click here](#) to report your action(s) on **UA 30.26**. We share this number with the officials we are trying to persuade.

Prosecutor General of the Republic

Pedro Mendes de Carvalho

Rua 17 de Setembro

Cidade Alta, Luanda, Angola

Email: procuradoriageraldarepublica@pgr.ao

Send a copy of your letter to the address below

CC: Angolan Embassy in the United States

Ambassador Agostinho Van-Dúnem

2108 16th Street, NW

Washington, DC 20009

Email: info@angola.org

Dear Prosecutor General,

I am concerned for seven members of the Vikolôngwa Mbútwa community in Huíla Province, Angola: **Sapalo António Kakandi, Paulo Cambuta Kapaya, Mwetuyapula Francisco, Eduardo Mbambi Licino Kessongo, Eduardo Tchaima, Francisca Tuahuma, and Cecília Candumbo Mweyanavi.**

The Vikolôngwa Mbútwa community depend on the land for farming and livestock rearing. They had sought the intervention of the administrative and provincial authorities to support them in a land dispute and were waiting for a response. On November 23, 2024, the community members heard machinery operating on the land and believed the local administrator had arrived to communicate the authorities' decision. Instead, they were met by police officers who fired tear gas and rubber bullets at them, and who beat and violently arrested seven members of the community.

While five of the seven were released two days later, the other two remained in pretrial detention for 13 months. All seven were charged with criminal association, serious bodily harm, resistance against a public official, participation in a riot, unlawful use of weapons, threats, and disruption of public services. Their trial began on December 17, 2025. In March 2026, a hearing for the delivery of the judgment was due to take place, but it was postponed. The judgment is now expected at any time.

I urge you to immediately drop the baseless charges against the seven members and end their prosecution. I also urge you to ensure an effective investigation is conducted into the allegations of torture, ill treatment, and excessive use of force against the seven members of the Vikolôngwa Mbútwa community. Pending the dropping of the charges, I call on you to take all necessary measures to ensure that the rights of the defense and all fair trial guarantees are fully ensured.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Vikolôngwa Mbútwa is a rural community near Chibia, in Huíla Province, southern Angola, whose members depend on farming and livestock rearing for their livelihood. The community considers the disputed land to be ancestral community land and that the conflict started when a local landowner began excavation work around the area. This excavation involved a ditch approximately three meters wide and deep around the disputed land, creating safety risks for residents and animals and restricting access to grazing land and fertile fields used for cultivation. Community members report that they have since been unable to graze their animals or access land they previously farmed, forcing them to cultivate only in the yards around their homes. On August 14, 2024, three months before their arrests, the community had requested the intervention of the Municipal Administrator of Chibia. On September 23, 2024, they appealed to the Governor of Huíla and were still awaiting an official response when the police intervened on November 23, 2024.

On February 25, 2025, [UN Special Procedures](#) wrote to the Government of Angola regarding the case, raising concerns about the alleged violence, arbitrary detention, and treatment of the community members. **Sapalo António Kakandi** was reportedly struck in the abdomen by a rubber bullet, **Paulo Cambuta Kapaya** was hit on the forehead with the butt of a gun, and **Eduardo Mbambi Licino Kessongo** was beaten in custody until he lost consciousness and had no clothes for a week. **Francisca Tuhauma** and **Cecília Candumbo Mweyanavi**, both pregnant at the time, were reportedly subjected to degrading treatment at the Quihita police post where they were in custody. Over a year after their arrests, the seven community members have still not received medical care and continue to complain of persistent pain. Francisca Ernesto Bahumo reported that her baby was born ill after the violence she suffered while pregnant.

This case echoes wider concerns already documented by Amnesty International in 2021 in its “[The End Of Cattle's Paradise](#)” report, where it found that in Huíla and Cunene provinces, communities’ vulnerability has been intensified by the diversion of communal grazing land to commercial farmers, and that in Gambos, Huíla Province, the occupation of more fertile land by commercial farmers has undermined the economic and social resilience of pastoralist communities and worsened food insecurity. Amnesty International has also warned that the diversion of communal grazing land for commercial farming has eroded the livelihoods of rural communities already affected by drought.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: Portuguese or your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: September 14, 2026

NAME AND PRONOUN: Vikolôngwa Mbútwa community: Sapalo António Kakandi (he/him) Paulo Cambuta Kapaya (he/him), Mwetuyapula Francisco (he/him), Eduardo Mbambi Licino Kessongo (he/him), Eduardo Tchaima (he/him), Francisca Tuahuma (she/her), Cecília Candumbo Mweyanavi (she/her)