

4 February 2008

Situation of human rights defenders and journalists in Angola

In July, in response to a letter from international NGOs raising concerns about threats and accusations made against Angolan human rights defenders (HRDs), the EU Presidency stated that it was 'deeply concerned' and would follow the case closely. Since July, further acts of intimidation, including alleged human rights violations, have occurred against both HRDs and independent journalists. In addition to the intimidation of Angolan activists and journalists, charges are still pending against the international anti-corruption activist Sarah Wykes, whose arrest in February 2007 was referred to by Commissioner Louis Michel as a 'setback' for democratic development and respect for human rights in Angola.

In light of the above events, which are of particular concern in the context of an upcoming election, could the Council say:

1. What is its current assessment of the level of risk to HRDs in Angola;
2. In the light of that assessment, what practical steps the Presidency has taken to support and protect Angolan HRDs at risk, in conformity with the EU Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders adopted by the Council in June 2004;
3. What concrete steps the Presidency has taken to express to the Angolan authorities its concern regarding ongoing intimidation and violations against Angolan and international HRDs and independent media?

Answer:

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2008-0439&language=EN>