



Federica Mogherini

High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and  
Vice-President of the European Commission

Madam High Representative,

Dear Federica,

Rafael Marques de Morais, an Angolan journalist, is currently facing trial in Angola, stemming from a criminal defamation suit filed against him by several generals following the release of his book, "Blood Diamonds: Torture and Corruption in Angola". Published in Portugal in 2011, the book documents allegations of murders, torture, forced displacement of civilian settlements, and intimidation of inhabitants of the diamond-mining areas of the Lundas region of Angola. The book also claims that guards from a private security firm and members of the Angolan military are responsible for the torture and killings, according to news reports.

On March 24, Mr. Marques went to court for his scheduled hearing on charges of criminal defamation, and he was told that 15 additional charges of criminal defamation had been filed against him. His trial was postponed until April 23.

Marques de Morais told the Committee to Protect Journalists that the initial charges of defamation carry up to nine years in prison and each of the 15 new charges carry up to four months in prison. He faces up to 14 years in prison, if convicted of all the charges.

I have already expressed concern over the harassment of Mr. Marques de Morais in previous letters and requested that the EU does not remain silent on the issue.

In light of the upcoming trial, I hereby urge you to ensure that:

- the operational provisions of the EU Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders are fully applied to this case;
- the human rights focal point within the EU Delegation in Luanda has regular contact with Mr. Marques de Morais;



- the EU Delegation contacts national authorities to enquire as to the charges against Mr. Marques de Morais and the legal procedures to be followed;
- the EU Delegation participates as observer in any judicial hearing concerning his case;
- the EU addresses this case in its highest political dialogue with the Angolan government.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Ana Gomes", is centered on a light blue rectangular background.

Ana Gomes  
Member of the European Parliament