

Ad-Hoc Commission for Human Rights in Cabinda

Cabinda 2003: A Year of Pain

***2nd Report on the Human Rights
Situation in Cabinda***

November 3, 2003

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This report is due to the courage of witnesses, victims, families, religious groups, and countless villagers who have denounced human rights abuses in Cabinda. By doing so, these people have put themselves in great personal danger. We admire their courage and sheer determination, without which this work would have not been possible.

Bearing in mind the political consequences, and the fact that many institutions responsible for addressing human rights abuses have preferred to remain largely silent on the issue of Cabinda, we present this report as individuals and take full responsibility for the investigations and information that are presented in the following pages.

We express our utmost gratitude to the Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa for providing the moral and material support that was vital to the completion of this project.

Foreword

I have spent 40 years working as a priest in Cabinda. In 1984, the region was established as a diocese and it has been 19 years since the Holy See appointed me to the pastoral care of Cabinda. I witnessed firsthand the start of the anticolonial war in Cabinda and in Alto Mayombe, where I was stationed as a missionary. I witnessed the guerrilla activities carried out by the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA). Despite the intensity of the guerrilla attacks and the active complicity of the people, I do not have a single memory of reprisals or war crimes against civilians by the Portuguese colonial army.

Ever since the disastrous process of decolonisation in 1975, Cabinda has been racked by a conflict that has been longer, fiercer, and claimed more victims than the 14-year anticolonial war. The conflict has spread suffering throughout Cabinda and many people have left, en masse, to exile in neighboring countries. Most of the priests of Cabinda went with them. Only two of us priests remained and over the years we witnessed executions, banishments (to Bentiaba and Quibala) and the arbitrary detention of supposed Front for the Liberation of the Cabinda Enclave (FLEC) activists.

When I assumed pastoral duties in this diocese in 1984 there was rising hope that exiles would be able to return. The Holy See had made it incumbent upon me to bring back Cabinda's exiled priests and seminarians, since they were no longer in danger. Despite challenges and scepticism, I accomplished this task.

Unfortunately, the political situation in Cabinda has deteriorated over the last few years. The logic of war dominates the quest for a solution of the "matter of Cabinda." To those whom I care for as a priest, I have often spoken out in favor of a peaceful solution to the problem, based on frank and open dialogue. I have made representations to Angolan political authorities at the highest levels, as well as to the leaders of FLEC. I have been even handed in denouncing the madness of this war and the untold litany of suffering which it has imposed upon the people.

Yet all this effort has been undermined during the last year. On October 10, 2002, I watched with sorrow and disbelief as the government launched its military "cleansing operation" against FLEC guerrillas in Cabinda. The horrific results of this offensive, which this report documents, have been more than a year of systematic human rights violations and crimes against humanity.

In order that the world might know the truth, as a bishop and as a man of peace, I stand together with human rights activists and all people of good will in demanding justice for the innocent victims of this conflict. We stand as one in calling on the international community to use diplomatic and judicial means to

bring all human rights abusers to account and to put an end to the unabated violence and suffering that has marked Cabinda for far too long.

Paulino Fernandes Madeca
Bishop of Cabinda
October 15, 2003

Background

Cabinda is a small territory of 7,283 square kilometers in west central Africa with a population of about 300,000. It borders the Atlantic Ocean to the west, the Republic of Congo to the north, and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DR Congo) to the east and south. A narrow strip of DR Congo territory along the north bank of the Congo River separates Cabinda from the Angolan province of Zaire. Much of Cabinda is covered by rainforest. Most of the local population lives from subsistence agriculture and hunting or fishing. Timber cultivation is also a source of revenue for some.

The vast majority of the wealth produced in Cabinda, however, comes from petroleum. Adjacent to Cabinda's coast lie some of the world's richest oil fields. Cabinda currently produces 700,000 barrels of crude oil each day, generating some 60 percent of the revenue which Angola receives from the petroleum industry.

Cabinda was first recognised as a political entity by the 1885 Treaty of Simulambuco, signed between local traditional leaders and the Portuguese Crown. The treaty guaranteed Portuguese protection over the people of the region to counter colonial expansion in the Congo Basin carried out by Belgium's King Leopold II.

Portugal had already established colonial outposts along the coast between the Cunene and Congo Rivers. Following the Berlin Conference of 1885, these outposts were consolidated into the colony of Angola, which eventually grew to encompass the contiguous area that today makes up seventeen of Angola's eighteen provinces. Cabinda was initially administered separately from Angola, as a protectorate rather than as a colony.

In the 1930s, the Portuguese dictator António de Oliveira Salazar sought to exercise tighter control over the country's overseas possessions. Angola was declared a province of Portugal, and Cabinda was brought under the same administrative structure as Angola.

As other European colonial powers prepared to grant independence to their colonies in the 1960s, Portugal showed no willingness to relinquish control of its African territories. This gave rise to competing armed independence movements such as the National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA), the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA). While these groups competed for influence in the rest of Angola, the Front for the Liberation of the Cabinda Enclave (FLEC) sought independence for Cabinda.

When a change of regime in Lisbon prompted moves toward independence for the Portuguese colonies, the Portuguese government engaged in talks with the

FNLA, MPLA, and UNITA, but not with FLEC. The MPLA, which took power on November 11, 1975, soon extended its control to Cabinda.

Since then, Cabinda has been administered as a province of Angola, with government officials appointed directly from Angola's capital, Luanda. The current Angolan constitution does not allow for the election of officials at the provincial and local levels.

Since 1975, FLEC has fought for Cabindan independence, enjoying the support of Mobutu Sese Seko in what was then Zaire. At various times, FLEC has controlled substantial parts of the interior, while Cuban troops acting in alliance with the Angolan government guarded the coastal oil installations. In 1992, FLEC supported a boycott of Angola's first and only multiparty presidential and parliamentary elections, and most Cabindans stayed away from the polls.

Until the death of UNITA leader Jonas Savimbi in 2002, the Angolan government was primarily concerned with defeating UNITA's rebel army. Following Savimbi's death, the government and UNITA reached a peace agreement and an estimated 30,000 troops of the Angolan Armed Forces (FAA) who had been engaged in combat against Savimbi's forces in eastern Angola were transferred to Cabinda. Increased military presence and operations in the province unleashed the wave of human rights abuses first documented in the report "Terror in Cabinda," published in December 2002.

This follow up report indicates that the abuses have continued unabated in 2003. Although the FAA has destroyed much of FLEC's command structure, pockets of guerrilla resistance remain in the heavily forested regions of the province.

Talks between the government and the leaders of FLEC's various factions have so far been limited, clandestine, and without tangible results. There have been no attempts to initiate dialogue between the government and the Cabindan civilians who are the war's principal victims.

Introduction

It is eleven months since the Ad Hoc Committee for Human Rights in Cabinda issued "Terror in Cabinda," a detailed dossier of human rights abuses committed during the course of the war in the territory. These abuses took place against a background of escalating military conflict between the Angolan Armed Forces (FAA) and the Front for the Liberation of the Cabinda Enclave (FLEC), following the arrival of an estimated 30,000 FAA troops in the region in the latter half of 2002.

"Cabinda 2003: A Year of Pain," is the committee's second report and the examples of violence and abuse recorded on the following pages indicate that little has changed. The region remains under de facto military rule, with FAA encampments set up every two or three kilometers along the main roads throughout Cabinda. FAA Soldiers, dressed in civilian clothes but bearing automatic weapons, are a common sight along public roads. The FAA's ongoing military campaign, now more than a year old, has not achieved its stated aim of pacifying the territory. Despite the destruction of FLEC command structures and military assets, small, mobile bands of guerrillas remain active in Cabinda's densely forested areas.

Testimonies from Cabinda's inhabitants collected over the past year indicate that the warring parties continue to show little respect for human rights. Summary killings, rape, torture, and illegal detentions remain commonplace. Children are among those who have been subjected to physical and sexual abuse by soldiers. Villagers have been harassed by FAA soldiers while working in their fields, hunting in the forests or fishing in rivers. As a result, some Cabindans, especially those in rural areas, are afraid to pursue the livelihoods that ensure their existence. Growing numbers of villagers are suffering from hunger in a region that is rich in natural resources.

Another troubling issue elicited by these testimonies is the FAA's use of civilians as "guides." These individuals are typically held captive and ordered to show FAA soldiers where FLEC bases are located. In addition to violating the rights of civilians who deny having any links to FLEC, this tactic sows division among local communities by creating the impression that the individuals forced to be "guides" are FAA collaborators.

The majority of the abuses documented in this report were committed by FAA soldiers. This reflects the current balance of military forces in Cabinda, with FLEC's military capacity considerably diminished. Nevertheless, the war continues and civilians are its principal victims. The experience of the past year demonstrates the futility of trying to force a military solution upon Cabinda. Both parties to the conflict must not only stop attacking civilians immediately, but also

cease all hostilities and begin working toward an inclusive and peaceful political solution.

Recommendations

Angolan Armed Forces (FAA)

- The FAA must immediately desist from all actions that violate the rights of civilians, including: killing; torture and beatings; sexual assaults; forced “marriage” against the woman's will and, in the case of minors, against the will of the parents; extra-judicial detention; theft of money, goods or property; prevention of civilians from engaging in activities essential to survival, such as farming, fishing, and hunting; and the forcible conscription of civilians to be used as “guides” in the course of military activity.
- The FAA must immediately release all civilians currently held in illegal captivity, or hand them over to the civilian authorities for trial by due legal process.
- The FAA must ensure that troops are dressed in appropriate uniform when bearing arms.
- The FAA must initiate an internal inquiry into abuses of human rights by its soldiers and take decisive punitive action against officers and troops found responsible for such abuses.

Government of the Republic of Angola

- The Government of Angola must order an immediate ceasefire in Cabinda in order to create a climate conducive to meaningful dialogue.
- The Government of Angola must engage in meaningful and transparent dialogue with the leadership of FLEC and with civic leaders in Cabinda.
- The Government of Angola must compel and support efforts by the FAA and by the National Assembly to investigate abuses of human rights in Cabinda.

National Assembly of the Republic of Angola

- The National Assembly must initiate a public inquiry into human rights abuses in Cabinda, allowing the participation of acknowledged independent investigators.

Front for the Liberation of the Cabinda Enclave (FLEC)

- FLEC leaders must order an immediate ceasefire in Cabinda so as to create a climate conducive to meaningful dialogue.
- FLEC leaders must engage in meaningful and transparent dialogue with the Angolan government and with civic leaders in Cabinda.
- FLEC leaders must respect the Cabindan people's desire for peace.

The international community

- The international community must support the establishment of an independent inquiry into human rights violations in Cabinda.
- The international community must end its silence on the continuation of the conflict in Cabinda, and on the consequent systematic abuses of human rights.

Summary Executions and Murders

October 3, 2003 – FAA soldiers killed two citizens of the DR Congo who were fishing in the Chiloango River on the Angola-DR Congo border, on the outskirts of the village of Massamba, 70 km east of the town of Belize. The two Congolese were in their canoes when the soldiers ordered them over to the riverbank. According to local witnesses, the soldiers tried to interrogate the Congolese, but failed because of the language barrier. Villagers say that the soldiers then shot each man in the head and pushed the canoes back into the river where they drifted with the two bodies.

August 24, 2003 – Joel Bumba, 80, and Joana Maiandi, 77, killed by an FAA corporal, in the village of Maluango-Zau, commune of Quissoki, municipality of Belize.

The corporal returned to his unit drunk on “kaporroto,” a homemade drink. He grabbed a weapon and began to fire into the air. A colleague disarmed him, but several hours after the incident, the corporal grabbed the weapon again, and went into the village. He found Bumba and Maiandi seated around a small fire talking. The corporal approached the elderly couple and, without saying word, began shooting at them. On returning to the unit, the corporal told witnesses that he had killed the couple because he thought they were witches.

August 23, 2003 - Faustino Nvindo, 36, a father of six, and Mateus Nsaco, 31 years old, a father of three, shot and killed by FLEC guerrillas.

The two men worked as tractor operators and were clearing trails and secondary roads in the village of Caio-Lintene, Necuto commune, when FLEC guerrillas attacked them. The guerrillas shot Nvindo in the back as he fled into the bush. Nsaco was killed sitting on his tractor. FLEC has been trying to interrupt government projects to open trails and grade tertiary roads by attacking civilian workers.

In response to the shootings, FAA soldiers raided the area and detained Pascoal Ngoma, 27, and João Codia, 19. The soldiers accused the two men of masterminding the attack, and tortured them by placing heavy beams of timber on their chests as punishment. Ngoma and Codia were released several hours later. The men reported the incident to the area coordinator, and after three days Codia died of injuries resulting from the abuse he received from the soldiers.

July 31, 2003 – FLEC Guerrilla fighters indiscriminately attacked a group of civilians, and shot and killed a woman and two children in the Caio-Guembo–Alto Sundi section, between Vaku I and Luango Kimbama. Mavungo, 25, a resident of Luali, Belize, and Daniel Mabiala, 40, a Congolese citizen, were wounded as a result of this action.

July 16, 2003 – Paulo Mambo João, 40, a coordinator of Micuma I village, was killed by FAA soldiers. Joao and most of the men from his village were hunting

for food when, according to a report from a former FLEC soldier and participant in the FAA's "cleansing operations" in Micuma I, the military ambushed the victim at dawn as he returned from the hunt. The guide for the operation, "Decidido," a former FLEC officer, recognised Joao and thought leaving him alive might lead to accusations of treason and bring shame upon his family. According to the same witness, João was tied to a tree, interrogated by "Decidido" and, at approximately 05:30, killed with two shots to the chest by the former FLEC officer. The victim was found six days later, tied to the tree and rotting, according to the testimony of one witness. The family identified Joao's body from the clothes and a rosary around his neck. João's mother, Ruth Tombo, died from cardiac arrest at the Central Hospital of Cabinda on July 24, 2003 after receiving confirmation of her son's death.

July 16, 2003 – Nicolau Nkula Macumbo, 40, and Artur Kinangi were found dead and beaten close to Rio Luali, Belize, three days after their detention at the Iona Commando base.

Witnesses said the two victims, both from the Democratic Republic of Congo, met at the river to talk. A soldier, known as "Chorão," overheard the conversation and sought reinforcements to arrest them. Macumbo and Kinangi spent two days at the Iona base. Their bodies were found on the third day and a village chaplain presided over their burial. The two had lived in Iona village since 1999.

July 14, 2003 – FLEC killed three woodcutters and one child and injured two others, in Vaku, Belize municipality. Maria Nkulukua, 39, whose jaw and teeth were shattered by a bullet, continues to be fed by a tube.

The victims were cutting timber when several shots surprised them at around 10:00. One woodcutter was hit in the chest and saw his two colleagues next to him die instantly. The wounded child, a girl about 12 years old, recognised one of the guerrilla fighters and spoke to him in Ibinda (the Cabindan indigenous language). The guerrilla fighter fired at her head.

The harvesting and exploitation of timber is a source of great conflict in the area. FLEC demands payment of a "revolutionary tax" from the woodcutters, while members of the military in areas controlled by government forces often exploit the timber resources for their own businesses and personal gain.

June 17, 2003 – Sebastião Lelo, 60, and Teresa Nzati, 47, were killed by FAA soldiers in the village of Bucu-Cango around 02:00 during a search operation conducted in some residences.

The military began the search at 20:00 to find guerrillas presumed to be hiding in the village.

The victims resisted the soldiers' efforts to search their residence, accusing them of being saboteurs. Confronted by a number of villagers angered by the search, the soldiers withdrew and returned at 02:00. For an hour, soldiers continuously fired their weapons and terrorized the village. During this time, they

took Lelo and Nzati from their houses and killed them a few meters outside the village.

At daybreak, Nzati's husband, André Mabiála, found his wife dead, lying in her torn clothes with two shots in the chest. Lelo's body lay a few steps beyond, with a shot to the head.

At approximately 08:00, an FAA officer, identified as Major Tomás of the 115th Battalion, ordered the detention of André Mabiála, José Nhimi, and Marcelino Baquissi, coordinator of Buco Cango, because they had presented a complaint to the town administrator about the deaths of Sebastião Lelo and Teresa Nzati. After a long interrogation they were released. At about 11:00 the three men were authorized by officers identified as Lieutenant Colonel Estanilau da Conceição "Lacrau" and Major Tomás to remove and bury the bodies.

June 05, 2003 – Afonso Buló, 20, a native of Ncoi, served as a guide for FAA soldiers who massacred several families taking refuge in the forests during a "cleansing operation." Buló recounted seeing helicopters flying over the area weeks before. On June 1, people displaced from other villages travelled through Ncoi on their way to the border. They described the impact of "cleansing operations" on their villages and advised Ncoi residents to take refuge in the Congo.

On June 4, the residents of Ncoi also decided to leave the village. Buló said the villagers walked about 6 km to a nearby village and intended to continue the march early the next morning. Buló decided to return to the village and on the way was stopped by the FAA. They interrogated him and forced him to indicate the whereabouts of the people who had abandoned the village. Once Buló had guided the FAA to the villagers, soldiers tied him to a tree.

Although Buló had repeatedly told the soldiers that the villagers were civilians, the FAA troops surrounded them and fired indiscriminately at the group, which consisted of about 14 families. Buló managed to escape when one of his captors was distracted by the gunfire and the arrival of army helicopters. Buló is wracked by guilt because he was forced to disclose the villagers' location and hopes that the remains of his lost friends and neighbors will eventually be recovered and properly buried.

May 17, 2003 – Cornélio Albino Macosso, 41, son of Cornélio Macosso and Cecília Malonda, born in Conde-Bumba, Buco-Zau, was found dead on the path between his house and the River Chiloango, in the administrative centre of Necuto commune. The victim had been detained at the 115th Battalion headquarters, on suspicion of supplying fuel to FLEC. Villagers found his body three days after his detention.

May 10, 2003 – Joaquim Machienga, coordinator of the village of Buco-Cango, was killed in his home for supposedly disobeying the orders of FAA soldiers. During a "cleansing operation" in the area, FAA soldiers used various catechists and village coordinators as guides.

On May 7, FAA soldiers detained Machienga, also known as “Velho (Old) Kim,” in his field and forced him to identify people supposedly linked to FLEC. When Machienga did not return home, his family notified the traditional village authorities and were informed by the civil education official at the 115th Battalion that Machienga had been detained and would be released soon. The next day, Machienga came home without any physical injuries. Witnesses said Machienga had been ordered to report to the battalion on May 9, but did not do so.

On May 10, a sergeant went to Machienga's home and informed his wife that a commanding officer had ordered Machienga to report to the base by 17:00. His wife said she told her husband to follow the officer's order. At about 18:45, several soldiers surrounded the house, ordered anyone inside to come out, and then started shooting in all directions. When the family returned home later, they found Machienga alive but lying on the floor with bullet wounds in his back. He died shortly afterwards.

May 2, 2003 – Samuel Bumba, 60, son of Samuel Bumba and Pelágia Conde, born in Cungo Butuno, Necuto, was shot dead by FAA soldiers while working his land.

April 25, 2003 – Inácio José Joreca, 38, son of Sebastião Batche and Maria Pola, born in Tando-Caio, Necuto, was accused by FAA soldiers of belonging to FLEC-FAC and summarily executed.

April 20, 2003 – Martinho Buange, 50, son of André Massanga and Cecília Simba, was shot dead by an FAA soldier because he refused to accept his daughter's relationship with the soldier.

April 19, 2003 – David Macaia, 54, son of Abraão Quionga and Ruth Bumba, born in the commune of Miconje, was shot dead in his home in the presence of his family by FAA soldiers at 06:00 on suspicion of having links to guerrillas.

April 5, 2003 – Luís Massanga, 44, son of Bernardo Batsimba and Pascoalina Cumba, born in the village of Buco-Cango, Necuto, was shot dead by an FAA soldier in the early hours of the morning after an argument between them.

April 4, 2003 – Lourenço Gomes Pitra came across a group of 18 civilian prisoners, including an elderly man, being transported from Zala-Ngó to Talibeca, Cabinda.

Pitra testified that the prisoners had been taken out of several pits located in the military base for questioning. He identified a citizen of the Democratic Republic of Congo in the group who did not know how to speak Portuguese. According to Pitra's account, an officer identified as Major Nelo from the 124th Commando Battalion, said he was not prepared “to keep Zairians,” tied the foreigner's arms, and ordered him to run. According to Pitra, the man ran several meters and then the officer discharged a burst from his automatic rifle, which hit

the man directly. The man took a few steps and collapsed into the tall grass where his body was left to rot.

April 3, 2003 – Vicente Ngoma, born in Mongo-Conde, Belize, and his son-in-law, Filipe Maiúlo, of Pângala, were picked up by FAA soldiers and tortured while traveling from Ngoma's village to the neighboring village of Sindi. After being beaten, Ngoma was stabbed and his corpse abandoned. The soldiers also tortured Maiulo, but spared his life.

April 3, 2003 – Fredyck Ntoma, 40, a male nurse, was killed by FAA soldiers in Alto-Sundi. Ntoma had lived in the village for five years and was the only nurse in the district.

On April 3, six soldiers from a detachment of the 709th Battalion, operating in Alto-Sundi, Miconje commune (municipality of Belize) came to Ntoma's clinic. Ntoma's assistant, Palmira Bungo, 27, witnessed the event. She said some soldiers engaged her in conversation, while others entered Ntoma's one room clinic. They found Ntoma and dragged him into the yard, ordered him to take off his shirt and interrogated him about why he had provided first aid to a FLEC guerrilla fighter. Ntoma admitted attending to the wounded person in the course of his "professional duty." One soldier told the others not to waste time with the "Zairian" and fired at his right thigh. Another fired a lethal shot to Ntoma's chest and the soldiers quickly left the area.

April 2, 2003 – Anselmo Bonge II, 35, son of Anselmo Bonge I of Pelágia Keuque, from the village of Buco-Cango, Necuto commune, was shot down by FAA soldiers while he was hunting in the forest, between the Litis and Buco-Cango.

March 31, 2003 – Estêvão Puna, 47 years old, son of Paulo Puna and Rebeca Yelo, born in Cungo Xionzo, Necuto commune, was killed in the village of Buco-Cango by FAA soldiers from the 115th Battalion who were operating in the area.

Puna was one of the dozens of local people who had previously sought refuge in the bush during intense military operations but later heeded calls by local officials for people to return to their areas of origin. After returning, Puna was frequently summoned to the battalion command and interrogated. On March 31, he tried to run away from the village. FAA soldiers found him and arrested him on suspicion of belonging to FLEC-FAC. The soldiers bound Puna up in front of his wife and took him away. His body was later found about 9 km from the village.

March 17, 2003 – António Félix, 45, son of António Félix and Mónica Ndumba, born in the village of Cungo Butunu, Necuto commune, was shot dead at midday by the FAA while cultivating his land in Buco-Cango.

March 15, 2003 – Valério Pereira, 33, and João Maria “Diata- Bau”, 36, were found dead in the village of Ncungutadi, after a week of detention in the “Dragoons” unit of the FAA battalion stationed in Caio-Guembo.

FAA soldiers arrested the two in their residence, after finding a hunting gun without a license. Helena Malonda, 55, discovered the victims' bodies, with weapons beside each one. She informed the village coordinator who contacted the local military command. The military said that Pereira and Diata-Bau had escaped from the military jail and probably died during the army's efforts to recapture them.

March 11, 2003 – Jorge Macaia, a.k.a. “Mais Velho Chikoti,” 70, born in Caio-Poba, municipality of Buco-Zau, was decapitated by FLEC.

Macaia, a retail merchant, was regarded with suspicion by FLEC because of his possible business relations with soldiers and elements of the MPLA. After **an FAA** operation, FLEC accused Macaia of being an informer and kidnapped him from his business at about 10:00. The following day, the villagers found his headless body in the bush.

March 08, 2003 – João Félix Mavungo, 36, of the village of Dinge, was abducted from his property by four soldiers at approximately 17:00. The soldiers accused him of violating legal restrictions concerning work on the land, beat him in front of his wife, Maria Simba, and then took him away. Simba alerted the traditional authorities who pressured the Military Command to release Mavungo. In response to this pressure, the military returned Mavungo's body to his family. Army officials claimed he had died from illness, but his corpse showed clear signs of torture and beating. In addition to his wife, Mavungo left behind three children.

February 2, 2003 – Joaquim Bonifácio, 60, also known as “João Mibali,” was killed by the FAA in the village of Buco-Cango during a military “cleansing operation” there. He was trying to escape along with a group of villagers when the soldiers shot him in the back. His cousin Afonso Vidal witnessed the shooting, and said that he himself was lucky to have escaped.

January 31, 2003 – Gervásio Ngulu, 40, was killed by FAA commandos while hunting with several residents of Keba Diela, Belize municipal district. Commando fighters stationed nearby had trailed the group as they hunted on the

outskirts of the village, on the right bank of the River Lufu, which divides the village of Belize. The commandos fired several bursts and the group dispersed. After some time, the other hunters returned to the area of the shooting and found Ngulu's bullet-riddled body. They informed local authorities about the incident, but received no response.

December 8, 2002 – André Mavungo, 12, and his brother Joaquim Mavungo, 10, children of Rafael Mavungo and Suzana Buanga, were shot dead by an FAA patrol in the village of Micuma III while they harvested fruit from the papaya trees in their mother's plantation. It appears that the soldiers used the children for target practice.

The head of the MPLA Parliamentary Bench, Bornito de Sousa, happened to be stopping over at the main town in the district for an MPLA anniversary event on December 10. The State Security and the National Police prevented the parents of the dead children from presenting their bodies to the visiting official.

December 2, 2002 – Erdionia Meno, 14, and Delfina Mbuiti, 16, daughters of André Baza and Rebeca Bilala, residents in Mongo Mbuku, were killed by a Special Forces corporal, identified as Michel Guga.

Guga was part of a group of soldiers who were billeted in the residence of church worker André Baza. It is a practice in several regions of Cabinda to billet soldiers in villagers' residences against their wishes.

Guga appears to have been enraged by Mbuiti's rejection of his advances. After noticing Mbuiti and Meno heading toward the village to shop, Guga followed them and set up an ambush in the area between Mongo Mbuku and Penekakata. Three women working in the fields nearby fled as he approached, but Guga managed to catch and rape a woman known as Dona Teresa, who had remained in the area. He then waited for the two girls to arrive at his ambush point and led them off the main path. Once out of view, Guga killed Meno by shooting her in the arm and stomach.

He grabbed Delfina, who had tried to flee, and raped her and then shot her to death. Guga finished his spree of cruelty and violence by hiding the bodies under some leaves and calmly returning to the girls' home. Because of the trauma suffered by Dona Teresa, she did not identify the location of the incident, and the bodies were only recovered on December 5 by a hunter.

According to the girls' father, the FAA has only acknowledged the extent of its responsibility by flying in two coffins from the city of Cabinda. (see Disappearances, Arbitrary Detentions and Torture, September, 3 2003, André Baza)

Perpetrators Unidentified

December 3, 2002 – Six people were found in the area of Buco-Cango, Cata-Massela and Vemba Siala in Necuto commune. Four of the bodies were buried

up to the neck while two other bodies were half-buried. All showed signs of having been shot.

November 26, 2002 – Four bodies were found in the village of Buco-Cango and Quicuango at approximately 05:00. Filomela Munto, 12, discovered the weighted down bodies in the Missengui River as she was doing her laundry. When she took hold of what looked like a piece of abandoned cloth, she spotted a corpse. Frightened, she told adults in the village who then recovered the decomposing bodies of two men and two women.

Victims of Sexual Abuse

August 11, 2003 – Catarina Colo, 15, the daughter of Fernando Ntove and Maria Luengo was forced into becoming the mistress of Captain Félix Valentino, who commands an FAA detachment in Cata-Buanga, Buco-Zau.

On August 11, Luengo sent her daughter out to find bananas. When her daughter failed to return, Luengo searched for her for several hours and then informed the traditional authorities who contacted the military. On the third day of Colo's disappearance, they learned that Colo was being held by the Cata-Buanga detachment. Colo's family contacted the commanding officer who refused to free Catarina. Instead, Valentino demanded a family meeting in the presence of the traditional authorities.

According to the family, Valentino said he wished to marry their daughter, acknowledged that he had already violated her, and that he now wanted her to stay with him. Colo's family demanded that they be allowed to take their daughter home. Valentino accused the family of being sympathetic toward the FLEC, offered them a dowry, and concluded by threatening their lives and the life of their daughter. Although she has repeatedly demanded her freedom, Colo remains Valentino's mistress.

August 10, 2003 – Alice Nzuzi, 18. Nzuzi, the wife of a teacher, was raped by a corporal known as "Caiongo," of the 704th Battalion stationed in Buco-Zau.

Caiongo found Nzuzi washing clothes in the Luali River and asked her some questions of an intimate nature, which she refused to answer. Caiongo ordered his men to leave the area. Suspicious of the move, Nzuzi tried to escape. Caiongo caught her, threw her into the water and attempted to drown her. He then dragged her to the bank and asked his friends to help and take part in raping her. One villager, Dona Rosa, called other villagers to help Nzuzi. The soldiers fired several shots to drive away the villagers and then fled.

June 23, 2003 – Catarina Pemba, 16, was raped by four soldiers from the 115th Battalion. Pemba was coming out of the Catholic Mission Parish School when she was confronted by soldiers who were responding to an earlier FLEC guerrilla attack outside the village. The soldiers accused Pemba of being related to a FLEC member.

One soldier quickly loaded his gun and threatened to kill her if she did not admit to the accusation. Terrified, Pemba was forced to admit that she was related to a FLEC guerrilla. According to Pemba, another soldier offered her freedom in exchange for sex. She refused and received a violent blow to the head. When she recovered consciousness, the soldiers were raping her. They left her naked and bleeding. Pemba still suffers pain and occasionally finds blood in her urine.

May 31, 2003 – Alice Matsuela, 11, daughter of Gabriel Muanda and Zorzete de Fátima, was raped by FAA soldiers near the village of Panga Mongo. She continues to suffer after the attack and her physical and mental health require careful monitoring.

May 26, 2003 – Odília Muanda, 12, daughter of João Muanda and Marta Teresa, was raped, along with her mother, Marta Teresa, by FAA soldiers in the municipality of Buco-Zau.

May 25, 2003 – Teresa Simba, 10, daughter of João Mateus Puati and Maria Pemba, was raped by an FAA officer, identified as Captain Mário in the village of Conde-Malonda, Buco-Zau.

May 14, 2003 – Marta Pedro, 11, daughter of Pedro Paca and Verónica Sassa, was raped by an army officer, identified as Commandant Tomás.

May 07, 2003 – Maria Lourdes Mataia, 12, daughter of Alberto Matoco and Lourdes Mataia, was raped by an FAA soldier in the municipality of Buco-Zau.

April 24, 2003 – Lúcia Puati, 13, daughter of Mateus Puati and Maria Pemba, was gang-raped by FAA soldiers in the municipality of Buco-Zau.

March 15, 2003 – Angelina de Maio, 12, daughter of Carlos Tomé and Margarida Bumba, was raped by FAA soldiers in the village of Caio Nguala, Buco-Zau.

February 20, 2003 – Maria de Fátima Lelo Kuaku, 16, daughter of Bernardo Kuaku and Helena Masanga; Susana Kibinga, 13, daughter of Rafael Télika and Rosa Mvumbi; Joana Kibinga Marcos, 12, daughter of Marcos Pólo and Rosa Kibinda; Inês Buanga, 11, daughter of Jorge Macaia and Isabel Matuba.

The four girls were returning from the municipal capital of Buco-Zau to the village of Muanza when they were questioned at approximately 15:00 by four FAA soldiers from the Kata Buanga barracks. The soldiers stole the girls' money and the items they had acquired in Buco-Zau. After this, three of the soldiers, one of whom was identified as Tony, each chose a girl. The fourth soldier refused to touch Buanga since she was so young and too thin. The other three soldiers tore the three older girls' clothes off and gagged and raped them.

January 24, 2003 – 1st Sergeant João António Garcia, from the 118th Battalion, 2nd Company, 3rd Platoon, head of the 1st Section (stationed in Tando-Zinze) filed a written report that his 13-year old daughter, Ana, had been sexually abused by his battalion commander, Lieutenant Colonel Ricardo Elias Pitra Petróleo.

Garcia sent the report to the commander of the 2nd Military Area, General Luís Mendes. According to Garcia, Petroleo came and asked him to give him custody of his daughter so he could “educate her and make her study.” Garcia refused and Petroleo took the girl on July 4, 2002, and forced her to spend nights with him. Petroleo kept her for about 20 days until she healed from the injuries caused by the loss of her virginity.

On November 10, 2002, Garcia and his wife discovered that Ana was pregnant and they requested a meeting with the commandant. Petroleo repeatedly told the Garcias that he could “neither admit nor deny” responsibility for the girl’s pregnancy.

According to Garcia, Petróleo mentioned the possibility of the child being born with his features but that the baby’s inability to communicate would absolve him of responsibility and legal penalties.

A week after the meeting, Petroleo, ordered the construction of a small house in the battalion’s recreation area and had his guards bring Ana to live with him.

On December 29, Garcia demanded a meeting at Petroleo’s home. In response, Petróleo insisted that Garcia address the matter to him in writing, because he did not want to directly deal with “lice” like Garcia.

Garcia concluded his account of Petroleo’s actions with the following question: “Worthy sirs, this happened to my daughter ...But what if I were to impregnate his (the commandant’s) underage daughter, what would happen to me?”

In May 2003, Ana gave birth to a deformed stillborn baby (without cranium), in the Central Hospital of Cabinda. The local press focused on the unusual birth of a child without a cranium, without mentioning the circumstances in which the child had been conceived.

As of the publication of this report, the family continues to wait for justice, while Commandant Petróleo enjoys all the privileges of a high ranking officer.

January 2, 2003 – An elderly woman, Maria Verónica, received an early morning visit at her home in Terra Nova, Necuto commune from soldiers, identified as belonging to the 115th Battalion. The visit seemed to be part of a routine operation and involved various residences. However, after the operation concluded, Veronica, who lived alone, was found close to death, and showed signs of having been raped.

According to witnesses, two soldiers entered Veronica’s house and remained there for more than an hour without arousing any suspicions. At around

¹ cc: Rep. of Military Security, Rep. of Justice and Discipline, Military Tribunal, Military Attorney’s Office, Judiciary Police, Ministry for Promotion of Women and the Family, Attorney General’s Office of the Republic in Cabinda.

16:30, the victim's neighbor, Dona Rosalinda, realised she had not seen Veronica all day. Rosalinda went over to her neighbor's house and found her lying naked on the floor in blood-soaked sheets. According to the neighbours, the old woman told them she had been raped by the soldiers. Veronica's neighbors' efforts to get her medical assistance were in vain and she died the following week.

December 28, 2002 – Maria Pemba was among the many people who started to return to their villages in Buco-Zau with the conclusion of military operations in the area. When Pemba returned to her home, Lieutenant Colonel Santos Mainga, commandant of the 704th Battalion, accused her of being involved with FLEC, and had her taken for interrogation at the battalion command, where she was used as a sexual "slave." Pemba was released three days later. Military officials warned her that she would be dead if she told the traditional authorities anything about what had happened to her.

Nonetheless, news of Pemba's abduction spread and many women who had taken refuge in the forests refused to return to their villages, for fear of being raped.

December 7, 2002– Pirska, 29, an Angolan refugee from the Republic of Congo, was raped by a group of FAA soldiers in the Mananga area on the border between Ponta-Negra, Republic of Congo, and Cabinda, Angola. Pirska was seven months pregnant. The soldiers took turns raping Pirska in the presence of her husband. The soldiers also took 120,000 CFA francs (about \$120) from Pirska's husband. Shortly after the attack, Pirska went into premature labor, and the baby died at birth. Pirska was part of a group that had volunteered to work with government authorities in an effort to return to their country. Pirska and her husband were held by the military for 15 days. They rarely saw each other and Pirska was forced to work as a cook and laundress. Pirska was also forced to sleep with the group leader, known by the nom de guerre of Violência. Pirska and her husband are just two of the many citizens in the area who have been abused by the military because they were suspected of belonging to the troops of the deposed Congolese leader Pascal Lissouba and supporting FLEC.

December 24, 2002 – Inês Cadi, 50, the ex-wife of FLEC-FAC's military adviser, "Trator," was sexually abused by military personnel belonging to the Luvege Unit. A group of 15 FAA soldiers, accompanied by a civilian named Mayeye, detained Cadi, in her residence in the village of Micuma II, Buco-Zau. The soldiers took her 8 km away to an officer in charge of the Luvege Unit. Cadi was questioned about the whereabouts of "Trator." Cadi told her interrogators that she had been separated from her husband for three years. Then, Cadi said, the commander raped her, followed by several soldiers who guarded her during the six days she was detained at the unit.

Disappearances, Arbitrary Detentions and Torture

October 7, 2003 – FAA soldiers travelling in two trucks arrived before dawn in the village of Tandu-Bulazi and began a manhunt.

The deputy coordinator of the village, Januário Ngola, 49, son of Afonso Futi and Isabel Chibumba, suffered the most during the manhunt operation. Soldiers entered his house and beat him and his wife, Elize Mavungo, 45.

According to her testimony, the soldiers kicked Ngola in the area of an existing intestinal hernia and ordered Mavungo to prepare a change of clothing for her husband. The soldiers also seized all the agricultural tools they could find, stole 10, 000 CFA francs (U.S. \$10), and threw the family out of the house, while continuing to beat Ngola. His older sister, Virgínia Bumba, was also beaten by the soldiers.

Ngola was not protected by his status as an active member in the MPLA (he joined the party on December 13, 1997). The soldiers took him away with other villagers, and his whereabouts remain unknown at the time of publication.

Soldiers also entered the house of Ivo Cubola, 25, and beat him, his mother, Charlotte Macosso, and her younger daughter, Mataia Macosso, 7. Macosso tried to protect her daughter, but said that she and her daughter were held so a soldier could slap both of them. She also said her son was tied up and thrown to the floor and then taken by the soldiers to an unknown place. The soldiers took Cubola's official documents and all the farming tools they could find.

António Gimbi, 60, and António Camilo, who neighbors say was at least 50, were also taken away after soldiers beat them and various family members.

After the manhunt, the remaining men in the village feared for their lives and left their families in the village to take refuge in the city of Cabinda.

October 7, 2003 – Ivo Cubola, 25, son of Jacinto Macosso and Charlotte Macosso, born in Piandinge, was accused of being the son of a high-ranking officer in FLEC-FAC and tortured for 12 days by an army officer identified as “Lacrau,”

Cubola was tied up in the “rabbit position” (elbows behind the back and tied to the heels, and knees to the chest). He described three pits at the 708th Battalion's base, for three categories of prisoners: one for the “least criminal” suspects – those accused of collaborating or sympathising with FLEC; another for “criminal” suspects – former FLEC soldiers who had given up guerrilla warfare but continue to live in villages without notifying authorities and are suspected of providing logistical support to the guerrillas); and a third pit for suspects considered “highly criminal” – those captured in combat as well as known activists and other individuals involved in the armed movement. The depth of the hole and the treatment meted out to the captives varies according to their status.

Cubola said he was part of the “least criminal” group and of the 13 individuals rounded up that morning, six were in the same pit as Cubola. He endured three sessions of interrogation and beatings before convincing the soldiers that he was not the son of a guerrilla commander. Three other men from Cubola's pit were released on the same day he was.

October 7, 2003 – FAA soldiers attacked the village of Tandu-Macuco, Necuto commune, Buco-Zau, in an operation in which women and children suffered the worst of the soldiers' violence.

Alexandre Maluvo managed to escape despite the soldiers laying siege to his house. As a result, his daughter Sofia Landu, 30, received a blow with a rifle butt to her left side which knocked her to the ground, while his two wives, Albertina Futi and Maria Mbumba were repeatedly punched by the soldiers.

Rafael Puati, 37, son of Alice Pena and André Puati, was absent from the village during the attack. Soldiers used their hands, feet, and rifle butts to beat his wives, Inês Landu and Magarida Baza. Puati's son, Joaquim Puati, 8, was also beaten.

The soldiers found, beat and detained Jerónimo Conde and Adriano Pedro Suami. Suami's wife Maria Landu, 22, was also beaten by the soldiers.

Soldiers entered the house of Catarina Nvulu and asked for her husband. She told the soldiers she was not married. The soldiers beat her and seized all the money in her possession, 1, 600 kwanzas (U.S. \$20).

October 5, 2003 – Following a landmine attack on a military truck between the villages of Talicuma and Talibeca, government soldiers from the battalion stationed at Chinguinguli captured Lourenço Gomes Tibúrcio, 27, son of Joaquim Tibúrcio and Beatriz Lando; António Francisco Tati Tomás, 33, João Batumba, 30, António Willy, 25 (born in Mazengo, Tando-Zinze commune) and José Capita, 28, born in Talibeca (Subantando traditional authority). The soldiers threatened the men with death and used them for five days as guides during military operations. According to the men, the soldiers fed them only salted biscuits. They were not allowed to show any signs of fatigue during the operation, on pain of death. There were no military confrontations during the patrols and the soldiers released the men once the operations ended.

October 3, 2003 – At approximately 01:00, soldiers surrounded the village of Panga-Mongo, Necuto commune and made their way to the homes of half-brothers José Massiala Ngoma, 23, André Simão Luemba, 27, and Bernardo António Yambi, 30, the sons of Helena Simba with, respectively, José Massiala, João Khondi and Marcos Afonso. The soldiers alternately beat the three men and hit them with rifle butts in the presence of their families, and then took them to the military command in Necuto, a few kilometers away. On the same day, some of the villagers found out that their neighbors were at the military command. Since then, villagers and the relatives of the detainees have had no information of their whereabouts and fear the worst.

According to the few men who decided to remain in the village after the soldiers' activities, the soldiers acted according to a list containing the names of villagers to be beaten and detained.

October 2, 2003 – Bernardo António, 30, António Simão, 29, and José Massiala, 23, the sons of Marcos Afonso and Helena Simba, born in Panga-Mongo, in the

traditional authority of Panga-Mongo, Necuto commune, were rounded up by the FAA at 02:00 at their parents' home, tortured and taken to the 708th Battalion base. There they were accused of being former FLEC-FAC combatants. They were questioned by a military security official who had come from the city of Cabinda, and before whom they had appeared seven times. They were then cross-examined by General Luís Mendes who had travelled by helicopter from the city of Cabinda to the pits at Necuto. They were released on October 17.

While in detention, they met 17 other captives. Based on their experience Antonio and Simao have confirmed testimony about the 708th Battalion provided by another detainee, Ivo Cubola.

October 2, 2003 – Unknown numbers of FAA soldiers surrounded the village of Tandu-Macuco, Necuto commune. They detained and beat Alfredo Mbuemba, Kembo Lelo (a citizen of DR Congo) and Alexandre Tati. The soldiers carried off their families' meager belongings. It is still unknown where the three men were taken.

The soldiers grabbed Mbeua Tati, the two year old daughter of Tati's wife, Maria Ndele, 22, and threw the child to the floor where they kicked and slapped her. Her mother however, said that the child was not seriously injured.

Pedro António, 8, was also thrown to the ground by a soldier. The soldiers did not find his father, also called Pedro António, 40, at home. His wife, Matilde Builo, 40, said the soldiers stole two sheets from the house. She also described daily attacks by soldiers looking for money, chickens or food.

The soldiers also assaulted Nataniel Gimbi, 50, a small man who was in bed with his wife when the soldiers arrived. They dragged him out of the house, beat him, and then left him.

In the village of Sevo da Buala, Necuto commune, soldiers went looking for Felipe Manuelino at his house. They did not find him home and proceeded to beat his wife, Maria Pedro, 33, with their rifle butts. They also stole whatever money they could find, about 600 kwanzas (U.S. \$7).

September 28, 2003 – During the night, FAA soldiers carried out an operation in the village of Panga-Mongo, brutally beating and imprisoning villagers João Duda, 30, Buange Dunge, 23, and a DR Congo citizen known only as Duda. The detainees were accused of supporting FLEC. Since the incident, men and women from the village have stopped going to their fields. According to an elderly man, anyone found in the fields is accused of being the enemy, an accusation that carries serious consequences. The villagers have suffered from hunger as a result.

September 24, 2003 – José Buimi II, 45, was captured by FAA soldiers in the village of Vite Nove, Buco-Zau while on his way to the fields. Soldiers used Buimi for one week as a guide during military operations in the area. He returned home safely once the operations concluded.

September 11, 2003 – Paulo Bilundo, 18, 6th grade pupil, born in Chivula, was forced to eat chilli peppers to the point where he could no longer breathe.

Around 09:00 he was confronted by soldiers on the road **between Necuto and the village of Necuto**, while gathering palm fruit to eat. The soldiers suspected he was on a mission for FLEC, and that his explanation about collecting palm fruit was an alibi for carrying out guerrilla activity. They forced Bilundo to go with them. When they arrived at a field where chilli peppers were being grown, they forced the youth to eat all the peppers he could find, threatening to kill him if he stopped. The young man continued eating until the strength of the chilli started to affect his breathing, at which point the soldiers gave him a green banana to try and neutralise the effect. He was left to “recover” in a pit, and remains in detention at the time of writing.

September 3, 2003 – André Baza, 38, was beaten by police from the municipal command of Bucu-Zau.

Baza was returning from the dowry ceremony of his daughter when he was picked up by a sergeant known as “Kito”. Kito interrogated Baza about the hunting rifle he was carrying. Kito was unsatisfied with Baza’s explanation and transferred him to the village of Bucu-Zau, where an sergeant named Mateus received him and gave him a beating. Mateus then had Baza tied up and began firing into the ground near him. Baza, whose two daughters were raped and killed by an FAA commando in December, begged them to kill him, due to his indescribable suffering. Sergeant Mateus promised to mete out the same treatment reserved for Baza’s “FLEC brothers” but was disarmed by his fellow soldiers who pointed out that the witnesses to Baza’s detention might cause problems he was killed.

A parish priest, Father Andre, secured Baza’s release by begging the soldiers and describing all the pain and suffering he had endured due to the murder of his daughters. Baza’s life continues to be in danger because he has outspokenly attributed his daughters’ deaths to Corporal Michel Guga.

September 2, 2003 – João Paulo Paiado, a 34-year old father of nine, was beaten in the village of Pove by soldiers from Zala-Ngó.

A group of about 20 commandos, guided by a former FLEC guerrilla fighter known as “Manuelino,” went to Paiado’s residence at dawn. They knocked on the door and then broke it down. The soldiers dragged him in his underwear outside the house, and beat him in front of his family. Later, the soldiers took Paiado in a truck to a field, where they accused him of having contacts with FLEC.

The soldiers conducted a “summary judgement” and dug a grave to bury Paiado. However, due to lack of “incriminating evidence,” the military tied up João Paulo Paiado with wire and kept him like that for two days.

Paiado’s father and brother, Paulo, 58, and Lourenço Mambuco Paulo, 23, were tortured by FAA soldiers after they attempted to defend Paiado.

Ngoma Gabriel, a citizen of the Democratic Republic of Congo working on João Paiado's farm, received five bayonet wounds from Corporal Pedro Piedoso.

Gabriel was suspected as being a FLEC collaborator. Two soldiers, known as Baptista and Zé António, from the battalion in Chinguinguil, intervened and prevented Piedoso from stabbing Gabriel to death.

August 30, 2003 – Paulo Macuaco, 19, son of Enoque Macuaco and Alice Lilendo was beaten and stabbed in the abdomen at 14:30 in Binga-Pequeno, municipality of Buco-Zau. Macuaco was bathing in the River Luali, in an area reserved exclusively for men, when a girl known as Alice appeared. Paulo demanded she leave. After an exchange of words, three soldiers from the Alzira da Fonseca unit arrived and ordered the girl to leave. Sergeant Mateus Buio, without asking what happened, pointed his AKM weapon at the youth and threatened to kill him. Another soldier broke Macuaco's hunting rifle by beating it against his naked body. Because the youth Macuaco continued to resist and the **sergeant** interrupted the beating session and began to stab Macuaco to avoid the sound of gunfire. Eventually, a number of Macuaco's friends who witnessed the attack were able to help him. The soldiers' unit commander ordered first aid for Macuaco, but it was insufficient relative to the seriousness of his wounds. The sergeant continues to freely walk around Buco-Zau, indicating that no disciplinary measures have been taken against him.

August 28, 2003 – Alberto Bungo, 36, was detained and stabbed with a bayonet by junior FAA officer, known as "Rasgado." FAA soldiers from the BIQ-708 Battalion had detained Bungo after raiding the village of Conde-Lintene, Necuto, in response to an attack by FLEC. According to Bungo, "Rasgado" interrogated and threatened him with a bayonet in an effort to make Bungo confess to participating in the FLEC attack. During the interrogation, "Rasgado" stabbed Bungo in the foot and the back. "Rasgado" then ordered medical personnel to administer first aid to Bungo and detain him until further notice. Three days later, Alberto Bungo was freed and he returned home.

August 28, 2003 – Afonso Vidal Paca, 41, married with seven children, was tied up and beaten with a piece of timber and with a rifle butt by FAA soldiers in the village of Caio-Lintene, Buco-Zau. In response to a call from the government, he had recently returned to Caio-Lintene after living in the bush. The soldiers accused him of being a FLEC collaborator and beat him in their attempt to extract a confession.

August 24, 2003 – Alberto Nhimi, 31, son of Benjamim Alfredo and Maria da Conceição, born in Necuto, was detained and held for five days in a pit at the Necuto military base during FAA reprisals after an FLEC attack.

Soldiers stationed in the village of Cata Chivava began rounding people up in an effort to find anyone who might have been involved in the attack. In the village of Caio-Contene, they detained Nhimi, who was found on the road leading to the location of the attack. He was accused of being a FLEC spy, beaten, and taken to the military base for interrogation by an officer identified as Lieutenant Colonel "Lacrau." Nhimi's Portuguese is limited, and several times he responded

“yes” to questions when he meant “no”. The commander ordered Nhimi to be placed in a pit, where he remained for five days. Nhimi said he was only let out of the pit twice to drink water. He slept in the pit as well as performed his bodily functions there, until the commander released him after five days. During his captivity, Nhimi was beaten and stabbed with a bayonet and received no medical treatment. The conditions for his release were not specified.

José Kumbo, also known as “Willy”, son of Alberto Mango and Josefina Bumba and born in Bembica, was also detained during the FAA reprisal. Like Nhimi, Kumbo was also abused and put into a pit by soldiers apparently acting on the orders from “Lacrau.” Kumbo was tied up with his elbows bound together behind his back, his hands in front, and his knees bound to his chest. He remained tied up like this for several days, and almost lost his limbs as a result.

August 23, 2003 – Lúcia Mbéua, 45, tried to prevent the abuse of her son by the FAA following a FLEC attack on the FAA base at Necuto, which resulted in the death of a civilian and a soldier.

Tired of seeing youths being tortured with no response from the traditional or local authorities, Mbeua decided to save her son, Lourenço Barnabé, 22, and several other who were being held by the FAA. Upon witnessing her son being maltreated by a soldier known as “Rasta,” the mother hit the soldier over the head with a bamboo cane. The soldier reacted by reaching for his knife and striking Mbeua on the head, knocking her to the ground. Soaked with blood, she was helped by local people who were passing by. She said she would sooner die at the hands of the soldiers than see youths being tortured in her presence.

Due to her intervention, her son managed to escape and survive, unlike his friend who did not. She advised her son to leave the village and go to the city until the local FAA commanding officer, Lieutenant Colonel “Lacrau,” was transferred.

August 23, 2003 – Berta Umbelina Estanislau, 23, a primary school teacher in Bata-Sosso, was beaten with a machete along with a number of her colleagues, by FAA soliders.

Civilians in the area said that a group of FLEC guerrillas attacked an FAA position in the village of Bata-Lembe, around 07:30. The FAA soldiers then surrounded Bata-Lembe and the neighboring village of Bata-Sosso. Teachers and pupils, hearing gunfire, tried to leave the area. The soldiers accused them of being complicit in the attack. They forced the teachers and pupils to undress and lie down, and then beat them.

August 20, 2003 – Manuel Gomes, 22, and Alfredo Buza, 20, both born in Caio-Poba, and the sons, respectively, of Manuel Gomes and Eliona Laura, and of Pedro Simão and Maria, were beaten by FAA soldiers who also stole a number of their possessions.

In an attempt to protect their possessions from looting by the FAA, Gomes and Buza hid them in the bush, where FAA soldiers found them and collected them during their operations.

The two young men went to the Caio-Poba military base to try and claim their possessions. They were suspected of being FLEC soldiers because they had hidden their goods in a place that the FAA thought was a FLEC hideout. The two young men were tied up and beaten and then sent home without their possessions.

August 18, 2003 – Two FAA soldiers belonging to the Buco-Cango Unit went to the home of village coordinator João Matoco in Cata-Liti, Buco-Zau and demanded that he allow them to date his daughter Maria Conceição, 15, and his niece Mónica Matoco, 15.

Matoco rejected the soldiers request and asked them to get out of his house. One of the soldiers threatened Matoco. Three days after the encounter, the girls went to school and never returned.

August 14, 2003 – Maria de Fátima, a widow in her forties, daughter of Simão da Costa and Julieta Simba, born in Chivata I in the traditional authority of Caio-Contene, Necuto commune, was suspected of having two sons in FLEC and was detained at about 20:00 by a group of soldiers from the 708th Battalion who were patrolling near Yema Lintene, 3 km from Caio Contene. The soldiers took her to their base, where she was interrogated by an officer believed to be Lieutenant Colonel “Lacrau,” who accused her children of being FLEC soldiers, and of organising various meetings at her house. Fatima still bears scars from when “Lacrau” hit her during the interrogation. Fatima remained at the base awaiting further interrogation from General Luís Mendes. When Mendes arrived he decided that Fatima was innocent and ordered her release on August 15, 2003, on condition that she persuade her relatives who might be fighting with FLEC to give up the guerrilla war and hand themselves over to the FAA.

The village coordinator of Yema Lintene, who witnessed what happened, condemned it and expressed regret that the commune administrator had not spoken out against “Lacrau.”

August 4, 2003 – Luís Capita, 60, also known as Cento e Cinquenta (“One Hundred and Fifty”), son of Capita Chibundo and Celina Futy, native of Chivata I in the traditional authority of Caio-Contene, was tied up and beaten by soldiers from the 708th Battalion, based in the commune of Necuto.

FLEC guerrillas had attacked an FAA position in the village of Chivata, injuring several soldiers earlier in the day and Capita was suspected by the FAA of being involved in the attack. Capita, one of the few people who still inhabited his village, was dragged from his home by soldiers and kicked and hit with rifle butts during the 8 km journey to the military base. At the base, soldiers were ordered to tie Capita up in the “rabbit position” – an excruciatingly painful and potentially fatal punishment technique in which the person is tied up with the elbows and heels bound together behind the back, while the knees are pulled up to the chest. The soldiers also beat Capita.

An officer identified as Lieutenant Colonel “Lacrau” pronounced summary judgement on Capita and he remained tied up for five hours, before being released for lack of evidence of his involvement in the FLEC attacks.

July 27, 2003 – João Paulo Mavungo, 75, was hit in the leg by shots from an FAA soldier just before midnight in the village of Mbundo, municipality of Belize.

Mavungo heard his chickens cackling loudly and looked out his door and found a soldier known as Mário with two chickens in his hand. The apparent thief threw Mavungo to the ground and fired several shots toward his leg and in the air. The Mbundo coordinator took Mavungo to the hospital shortly after the incident.

July 24, 2003 – Joaquim Mibinda (age unknown), José Ngoma, 77, and Tomás Macaia, 72, residents of the village of Micuma II, were ambushed by an FAA patrol close to the village and forced to walk for two days with the FAA patrol in search of FLEC guerrilla hideouts. The soldiers intimidated the men by placing them before a firing squad and interrogating them about the locations of FLEC hiding places. The men were released in the village of Pângala, Ganda-Cango, municipality of Belize, after local authorities intervened and convinced the soldiers to let the men go.

July 4, 2003 – João Kumbo, 24, son of Alberto Tomás and Helena Buanga, born in Bembica, was kept prisoner for one day in a pit at the 708th Battalion base in Necuto, for being a relative of César Pemba, a man wanted by the FAA who had moved to the city of Cabinda.

Kumbo was captured by soldiers from the 708th Battalion who wanted information about Pemba's whereabouts. Kumbo had not seen Pemba for more than a year and was unable to provide enough information to the soldiers who beat him until he lost consciousness and put him in the pit for almost 24 hours. He was released on condition that he was expected to supply the FAA with any information about Pemba and FLEC activities.

June 16, 2003 – Hilário Kinahimbo, 33, was beaten by FAA soldiers in the village of Mbombo-Pene while working as a driver for the administrator of Belize municipality,

Kinahimbo was driving a white Ford vehicle, registration number CBA-44-42, from the municipality of Bucu-Zau to Belize. Three soldiers belonging to the special unit of the Belize 2nd Battalion stopped him to ask for a ride. Kinahimbo told them he could not take them because the vehicle was fully loaded and it would be dangerous to mix civilians and soldiers in the same vehicle. One of the soldiers asked him if the separation between military and civilians was a guideline from "his FLEC bosses." The soldiers then pulled Kinahimbo out of the vehicle and beat him mercilessly with their rifle butts. One blow hit him in the head and required 12 stitches.

May 22, 2003 – Lando Muaca, 36, and Josefate Luemba, 67 years, were found by a group of FAA soldiers on Muaca's land in the village of Conde Lintene.

Muaca and Luemba were inspecting palm trees that were being used to produce palm wine. The men were stopped because they were on the land at 17:20, in violation of the Army's 16:00 curfew.

The soldiers beat the farmers, undressed them, and forced Muaca to tie up Luemba.

While drinking *manjenvo* (palm wine), the soldiers humiliated Luemba by “playing” with his genitals. The soldiers released Luemba after four hours but brought Muanca to the Necuto Battalion for four days of forced labor carrying water, washing uniforms, and cooking.

May 14, 2003 – Carlos Luís Dunge, 31, also known as Edó, was beaten by six FAA military stationed in the village of Necuto. Dunge was involved in a number of business ventures in Buco-Zau.

Soldiers approached Dunge as he was unloading merchandise into his mother-in-law's house in the village of Caio Contena. The soldiers' commanding officer, Commandant Lacrado, ordered them to confiscate Dunge's goods, claiming that they were used to feed the FLEC guerrilla fighters. The soldiers then proceed to beat Dunge.

After the beating, the soldiers tied up Dunge and his teenage assistant and took them to the Necuto Battalion Command, where they placed Dunge and his assistant into a hole covered by a military tarpaulin. They ate, slept, and defecated in the hole for 15 days and were briefly removed only three times for interrogation. On May 23, the military freed Dunge and his assistant, but kept the confiscated goods.

May 6, 2003 – Ana Maria Chilanda Bula, 16, was beaten by a corporal identified as Fernando from the 708th Battalion (the *comandos caçadores*). According to Bula, she went to the soldiers to collect money the corporal owed for cigarettes and wine he had purchased from her. The Fernando denied ever incurring such a debt. When Bula explained she needed the payment to cover her household expenses, Fernando began to beat her. He warned that anyone who tried to intervene in the matter would be shot. The corporal stopped beating Bula after he hit her in the head with his rifle butt and knocked her unconscious.

May 5, 2003 -- Ernesto Dumbi, 27, Vicente Sunda, 31, Dinis Simba (age unknown), and a citizen of the Democratic Republic of Congo known as Kakoko, went missing after they were taken in by soldiers of the Belize 709th Battalion.

The young men were travelling from the village of Quissoqui, went to Caio-Guembo, with a few kilograms of bean, rice, sugar, salt and a few litres of cooking oil. During the trip they were stopped and interrogated by soldiers who suspected they might be supplying the guerrillas.

An old man who knew the men well and lived in the same village as they did, tried to intervene and win the men's release. The soldiers told him that the men would be escorted to the Ganda-Cango military detachment for investigation

and then released. The men have not been seen since and their relatives have presented a complaint to the local administrator and to the local authorities in an effort to obtain information about their loved ones.

May 3, 2003 – FAA Corporal Lázaro Canhongo, 24, shot by a colonel named Nzau Toco “Encomence,” in charge of the troops stationed in the Miconje commune.

Canhongo tried to desert and to return to his home in Benguela province in southern Angola. The corporal had arrived in Cabinda on September 20, 2002, under the impression that he would wind up in Luanda, a reward promised to his unit by their commander to celebrate the end of the war against UNITA. After receiving three months wages late, Canhongo and two colleagues bought civilian clothes and tried to desert. The military police captured them in the municipality of Buco-Zau. They made the return trip tied up with electric wire. As punishment, they had to weed large tracts of land. One day, Toco took out his pistol and, to set an example of his authority, shot Canhongo in the calf. Canhongo was last described as walking on crutches living in fearing because of his disobedience in trying to return home. His current whereabouts are unknown.

April 14, 2003 – At approximately 17:00, an officer identified as Lieutenant Colonel Santos, of the 704th Battalion, used his rifle butt to violently beat Corporal Frederico Canganjo of the Kissamano garrison, because Santos found him chatting with a young girl from the Buco-Zau municipal administrative center. After beating him, Santos, in full view of several witnesses, tied Canganjo to his vehicle and dragged him across the asphalt to the barracks, several meters away. According to his colleagues, Canganjo was sent to the Military Hospital in Cabinda. They have since lost track of him.

April 21, 2003– Marcos Macosso, 60, was kidnapped at 17:00 from his children's residence in the Tchiweca district near the Cabinda Airport by eight FAA soldiers, including a major and a captain from the military police's regional command in Cabinda.

Macosso had been in the city for two days, after arriving from the war-torn Mayombe Forest, Buco-Zau, where he lived. Macosso would travel to the municipal centre to sell his agricultural products and stay with his children. Macosso's eldest daughter, Carolina Macosso, 36, reported the kidnapping to Cabinda Commercial Radio some hours after it happened. She described how soldiers had beaten her and her five siblings and she said the leader of the military operation had assured her that her father would be returned soon. According to Macosso, the operation leader told her that her father was only going to be interrogated about people in his village and nothing else. Macosso filed a complaint with the Police Command who told her that the case was “a problem for the Regional Military Headquarters.”

April 15, 2003 - Tomás Lelo, a former FAA soldier, said he acted as a guide for FAA commandos deployed in Belize to locate a supposed FLEC hideout in the

traditional authority of Alto-Sundi, South of the Miconge commune. According to Lelo, the hiding place turned out to be occupied by civilians who offered no armed resistance to the commandos' operations. Nevertheless, after securing control over the area at approximately 07:00, soldiers fired on one of the area's 37 settlements for nearly two hours. Lelo said that about 50 civilians were killed or wounded. Several villagers were arrested and forced to dig holes to bury the dead as well as some villagers who were seriously injured but still alive. After the operation, the military blamed the survivors for bringing the carnage upon themselves because they had supposedly given refuge to FLEC guerrilla fighters. Lelo could not account for a number of the wounded because they were removed from the area in helicopters.

April 9, 2003 – Carolina Mataia, 29, Marta Tchelika, 41, Essingo Goma, 36, Paula Mambuco, 40, Valéria Maia, 33, Ariete Jorge, Maria Quitexe, and Maria Pólo, 39, were attacked in the village of Tando-Zinze by members of the Fiscal Police. The women were travelling in a truck carrying wood and charcoal that they had acquired for resale. Inspectors at a control point demanded 500 kwanzas (about U.S. \$7) from each passenger in order for them to proceed and avoid confiscation of their goods. As the group was negotiating their payment, one of the inspectors dragged Pólo from the truck and tried to rape her several meters away. Polo resisted and the inspector fired several shots, tore her clothes, and beat her. Pólo's resistance infuriated the other inspectors who drew their guns, forced the women to lie down on the ground, and beat them with clubs.

April 3, 2003 – José Vindo, also known as Tudo Passa, a former FLEC guerrilla turned FAA soldier, moved from Sinde to Muanza, in the municipal district of Buco-Zau, with his two wives and his children. In Muanza, FAA commandos accused him of still belonging to FLEC and beat him in front of his family.

April 1, 2003 – Filipe Dembe Jesus, 23, and Samuel Cando, 43, both teachers, were on their way from Buco-Zau to their workplace in the village of Muanza when, in the Sinde-Muanza area, they were stopped by “red beret” Special Forces. The commandos accused the men of belonging to FLEC and beat them severely. Jesus and Cando said that the commandos do not recognise authorities in the municipal district, and only obey orders from their commander in Cabinda. Thus, there are virtually no constraints on their use of violence and abuse of human rights.

March 29, 2003 – Following internal pressures, the FAA released about 260 civilians held captive for three months in a warehouse in the municipality of Buco-Zau. Most of the detainees were women and children who had returned from the forests during the FAA offensive against FLEC-FAC military bases.

March 27, 2003 – Alexandre Bula Victor, 43, a father of 18, was taken at midnight from his house in the village of Caio Contene, Necuto by a group of FAA soldiers.

The soldiers arrested Victor in front of his wife and children and took him to the Vitrina barracks, near the Catholic church and the rectory. At the barracks, the soldiers showed Vitor a sketch of FLEC base locations and asked him to guide them to FLEC-FAC hideouts. At 02:00, the military tried to force Víctor to dress in an FAA uniform for the search operation. He refused and proposed that they take him to the house to dress in civilian clothes for the operation. The soldiers agreed and, over the next couple of days, made several incursions into Tando-Caio and other difficult to access areas of the Mayombe forest. After three days of fruitless campaigns, the military beat Víctor and then released him. As a consequence, he abandoned his family to seek refuge and safety in Cabinda.

March 24, 2003 – Paulo Tati, was detained by an officer known as Captain Cambinda, in the village of Isúsu, about 20 km from the municipal district capital of Cabinda. Tati was accused by FAA soldiers of being a FLEC-Renovada informant. The army first took him to the Sintu Makanda barracks. From there, they led Tati on foot to the Nzala-Ngó camp for political prisoners, located a few kilometres from the Democratic Republic of Congo border. On March 25, one of the military chiefs beat Tati. He was also forced to work cutting and transporting wood with the other prisoners, at the army's private lumber business. After his release Tati returned to Isúsu. Cambinda went to Tati's house several times to insult him and his wife and threaten them with a pistol. Tati has taken refuge in the center of Cabinda town and has, so far unsuccessfully, appealed to General Luís Mendes to resolve his case.

March 24, 2003 – Vicente Matias Mbuiti, 37, a teacher from Cata-Chivava, Necuto – Buco-Zau, Caio Contene, was arrested and tied up by soldiers in front of his students at school while teaching. Mbuiti was subjected to this humiliating and degrading treatment because he is the nephew of Alexandre Bachi (aka "Stick"), ex-Chief of Staff of FLEC-FAC. The military accused Mbuiti of maintaining contacts with his uncle.

After soldiers took Mbuiti prisoner, his students spread the news of his arrest, which eventually reached the administrator of the commune and the commander of the Border Police, who were already aware that Mbuiti had been targeted for persecution. According to local witnesses, the police commander reacted quickly, obtained Mbuiti's release, and took him to his unit. For safety reasons, the commander kept him there for two days, after which he assured Mbuiti that the situation had passed and he could carry on with his normal activities.

On the day of his release, Mbuiti was interviewed by an official of the FAA counter-intelligence who reminded him of his relationship with Stick and demanded that he collaborate with the special services. Fearing for his safety, Mbuiti abandoned the commune and took refuge in the city. His wife, who remained in the commune, has been harassed by the military.

March 16, 2003 – Januário Dembe, 55, administrator of Bembe Mbote, village of Caio-Contene, Necuto commune, was driving to the UNECA saw mill, when he was stopped by an FAA soldier who demanded a ride in the opposite direction of where Dembe was going. When Dembe objected to changing his route, the soldier ordered Dembe and his two children to get out of the vehicle. The soldier then began to discharge his AK-47, point blank at Dembe, hitting him in the ankle and damaging his vehicle. The soldier also fired at the victim's children but they escaped unhurt. The soldier only stopped firing when he had emptied the ammunition clip.

March 3, 2003 – Feliciano Conde, 21, son of José Duca and Marta Pambo, and grandson of Chief Conde Abiniel Malonda of Chienzi-Liti, was beaten at a military base at Cata-Buanga. According to Conde, a first corporal, whom he knew only as Mário, contacted him and asked him to direct him to a witchdoctor with the power to protect him from bullets. Conde was reluctant to get involved in such matters, but nonetheless tried to locate a witchdoctor who could protect the corporal. When Conde failed to find a witchdoctor, he was taken to the base where he was kept in a pit for three days and beaten and forced to dig ditches.

March 2, 2003 - Joana Macaia, 55, from the village of Ntsaca, was beaten and imprisoned in a pit for three days at the military's special Belize unit.

The military accused Macaia, a well-known healer, of performing prayers for the FLEC. Macaia acknowledged that she had two brothers who were guerrillas and, did pray for their safety. The military placed Macaia in a deep pit, for three days, without any break. During this time, Macaia prayed aloud continuously in Ibinda (the Cabindan native language). On the fourth day of her captivity, soldiers removed her from the pit and forced her to dress in an FAA uniform to serve as a guide to lead the army to her brothers. Macaia refused to guide the soldiers and an officer punished her by slapping her 80 times on the hand with the side of a machete. A short time later, a priest, Gabriel Nzau, successfully appealed to the soldiers to release Macaia.

February 26, 2003 – André Quibindo, 26, employed at the Serrano service station in the city of Cabinda, had arrived at work early in the morning before the start of the business day. The provincial prosecutor, Pascoal Joaquim, arrived to fill up his vehicle. Although the station was not yet open, Quibindo made an exception for Joaquim and filled up his vehicle. Joaquim paid for the gas but Quibindo said that did not have the 10 kwanzas (less than U.S. \$0.15) owed as change, because he had not served anybody beforehand. The prosecutor's bodyguard and his two nephews who were in the vehicle, asked Quibindo if he knew with whom he was dealing. He answered that he did not care whether he was Eduardo dos Santos (Angola's president) or anybody else.

With this reply, the bodyguard and nephews began to beat Quibindo. One of his colleagues tried to help him, but was set upon in turn. The station

supervisor asked the bodyguard and nephews to release his colleagues and they told him they would do so only if they kissed the prosecutor's feet.

None of the men agreed to this and Quibindo was taken to the Municipal Police Command and placed in an isolation cell where he spent five days without food and without visitation rights.

February 18, 2003 - Gabriel Buku, 46, a father of eight, was travelling on a bus from São Pedro, Povo Grande, a municipal market in Cabinda. Some soldiers were on the bus as well and before they reached their destination, the soldiers made threatening and offensive gestures to the passengers in the front of the bus. Buku, asked the passengers to remain calm and wait for the bus stop so they could get off. Sergeant Sete Vidas was one of several soldiers who then attacked Buku. The soldiers took his identity card and driver's licence. Buku filed a complaint with the Ntó Battalion, where his attackers were stationed, but has yet to receive a response.

January 21, 2003 – FAA sergeants Sebastião Matange Luemba and José Guima Franque, after performing military service in the south of the country, went to Tando-Zinze to visit their relatives. The soldiers had not seen their relatives for three years and were warmly greeted upon their return. Their colleagues, stationed in the area, however, immediately accused the sergeants of sympathizing with FLEC, beat them, and then placed each of them in a 200 liter drum of water, where they stayed for two days before an officer known as Petróleo ordered their release.

January 20, 2003 – Ivo Macaia, 44, son of Estanislau Baxi Codo and Matilde Yoca, born in Ganda Cango in Belize municipality, was released after being arrested at his home in the city of Cabinda on November 30, 2002 by FAA soldiers. Macaia's arrest was documented in the Terror in Cabinda human rights report published on December 10, 2002, at which time his whereabouts were unknown. After his release in January 2003, Macaia was accused of being the secret, local representative for the FLEC-Renovada guerrilla group.

After his arrest, Macaia was taken to the regional military headquarters in Cabinda, where he stayed for three days. He was then taken by helicopter to a military base in the village of Prata, to the south of the city, where he stayed for 15 days. On his second day there, he was visited by General Luís Mendes, the regional commander for Cabinda, who wanted to see whether the detainee was being kept “in conditions that would take him to Hell.”

The next day, another senior officer, Lieutenant Colonel Delfim, seemed to contradict Mendes and told Macaia not to panic and that no one was going to kill him.

During the entire period of detention, Macaia was kept in a pit, along with insects and a scorpion that stung him. He said that after five days of rain, the water in the pit came up to his neck.

He was later taken back to the regional military headquarters where he remained another 20 days. On January 8, the Attorney General of the Republic ordered Macaia to court and the provincial prosecutor sent him to the police's Criminal Investigation Department. Macaia then went to a civilian prison, where he received his release order after more than seven weeks' detention. He later returned to his job with ChevronTexaco.

January 6, 2003 – Twenty three FAA soldiers were beaten, with some wounded by gunshot from their colleagues, when they supposedly tried to desert by sea.

Two vehicles containing military police surprised the alleged deserters at about 09:45 on the quays of Cabinda. As soon as they arrived at the quay, the soldiers started firing causing panic among the workers and civilian on the quay. After several minutes, 23 alleged deserters were arrested, with two lying on the ground with gunshot wounds to the legs. A captain reassured quayside workers telling them that the arrested soldiers were “deserters who betrayed the homeland and will be executed, but relax, carry on working, everything is under control.” A young deserter, about 22 years old, tried to escape, but soldiers caught him and thrust his head under the water. He struggled for about 15 minutes, but eventually stopped moving. The soldiers took him out of the water and straight to the police vehicle. The wounded soldiers lying on the ground were kicked in the head, beaten with rifle butts and clubs, and tied with their own shoelaces.

December 15, 2002 – The inhabitants of the village of Ncaca, Tando-Zinze commune, were returning to their homes after having fled to the bush, when soldiers surrounded the village at about 23:00, made the villagers sit on the ground outside their houses, and interrogated them about FLEC.

The soldiers arrested Francisco António Brás Taty, 52, and Rafael Ngaca Gomes, 37. The soldiers told the district administrator that they would take him with the two men and would release them as soon as they finished questioning them. The soldiers put the men in military trucks and departed. FAA soldiers also arrested Verónica Ntoto, 33, and demanded that she explain where her husband was. She answered that her husband had moved to the city of Cabinda. Ntoto was taken to the FAA unit, where she was questioned about her husband's possible connection with FLEC. Ntoto remained at the barracks and was separated from her three young children for three days. When she was released, soldiers forbade her from communicating with anyone.

The following day at 20:00, Ntoto was taken by soldiers to a waiting helicopter, which transported her to the city of Cabinda, where she remained for two days in the Military Police Unit. Again, she was interrogated about her husband's whereabouts and told them that she did not know where he was in the city. The police also took Ntoto to a jail pit to see if she recognised any people who had visited her husband. The police released Ntoto two days later.

December 14, 2002 – At approximately 02:00, FAA soldiers arbitrarily detained the village coordinator, the village secretary, and eight youths from the village of

Seva, commune of Nekutu. Soldiers tied the coordinator and the secretary with ropes and tortured them in an effort to confirm accusations that they belonged to FLEC. Meanwhile, the eight youths were transported by helicopter to the Tafi barracks, in the city of Cabinda for interrogation. The army released the coordinator and the secretary after their interrogation. According to the youths, General Luís Mendes ordered their release and they were flown back to the village by two military helicopters.

December 12, 2002– António Custódio, 34, Francisco Sardinha, 39, José Bento, 32, Paulo Sassa, 29, and Papi Samba, 22, were captured by the FAA, in the Champuto-Rico forests, a timber production zone. The FAA accused them of being FLEC collaborators and helping exploit timber resources to benefit the guerrillas.

The accused were bound and gagged and transported by helicopter to the Prata zone, an area used by the military as a large detention camp. Sassa managed to escape from the Prata zone and said he had witnessed the shooting of 12 young men aged between 20 and 35. According to Sassa, the youths were prisoners in one of the many pits that had been dug there for the detainees' captivity. Sassa recounted seeing officers using women prisoners as cooks and laundresses. Sassa said he had escaped when the military took him to the village of Nkaka, to show them the house of Verónica Ntoto's husband, whom the military presumed to be a FLEC guerrilla fighter. Soldiers began shooting at villagers and Sassa said he escaped in the ensuing panic and confusion. Sassa continues to live underground out of fear of being detained again and possibly killed.

December 6, 2002 – José Simarro 28, disappeared, and Gabriel Malonda, 32 years, was mutilated when the two men were detained by five soldiers from the Alzira Unit, 704th Battalion, Buco-Zau.

The army suspected the two men of being FLEC collaborators and soldiers apprehended the two men in their residences in the village of Conde-Liti. The soldiers beat the two suspects to the point where Simarro lost control of his bowels. The soldiers focused on Simarro because they thought he knew the location of the FLEC bases in the area. Based on Simarro's information, the army went to Nsoquimina the next day but found no indications of FLEC activity in the area. The army then ordered Malonda to return to the village as an informant and told him they would kill Simarro if Malonda fled or provided incorrect information. After eight days, Malonda had not provided any information and he was rearrested and mutilated by a gunshot wound to his foot.

November 23, 2002 – Sebastião Lembe, 71, was beaten violently by FAA soldiers in the village of Mbata Bungo, Buco-Zau for not knowing how to speak Portuguese. The incident started when soldiers noticed that a mattress had disappeared from the area where they stored items they had plundered from the local population. They suspected Lembe and began interrogating him in Portuguese, which Lembe does not speak, and the soldiers became frustrated

with his inability to answer their questions. They bound him to the column of a hut and beat him. The soldiers then untied him and left him lying unconscious in the dirt.

November 19, 2002 – Maria Rosa, 26, was shot in the left leg during an FAA attack against the village of Mbata-Bungo. The intensity of the attack drove Rosa's relatives into the forest and she was left wounded with her one year old son Sebastião for five days without medical help.

November 18, 2002 – During operations in the village of Ncaca, FAA soldiers captured Francisco Liberal, 31. At approximately 19:30, government troops secretly entered the village and positioned themselves behind an elementary school. After several minutes, the soldiers opened fire on villagers who were out socializing and going about their daily business. Most of the villagers immediately fled to the neighboring village of Papela. The soldiers, accompanied by a civilian, then arrested Liberal, beat him, and took him to an unknown destination.

October 18, 2002 – Lourenço Gomes Pitra, 34, a father of five, was detained in the Military Unit of Matondo.

At approximately 12:00, three soldiers in civilian clothes approached Pitra's house, in the village of Mazengo, south of the city of Cabinda, where he was supervising bricklayers working on his home.

The soldiers engaged Pitra, who owns a small tavern and restaurant, under the pretense of trying to sell him a case of canned sardines for 1,500 kwanzas (U.S. \$20). Pitra agreed to the sale and the three soldiers asked him to accompany them to their place of business, in the Matondo Military Unit of the 118th Battalion (the *commandos-caçadores*) based near Nzala Ngo. At Matondo, Pitra was received by General Luís Mendes, who slapped him three times in the face. The soldiers then beat Pitra, tied him up, and threw him in a military vehicle. They took him to the Chinguinguili base, alternately interrogating and beating him on the way. A strong downpour interrupted the beating and the soldiers left Pitra tied to the truck, while they took shelter inside the base.

Once the rain stopped, the soldiers blindfolded Pitra and removed him from the truck. He was then interrogated about what he knew about a number of local priests, businessmen, and local officials..

According Pitra, Mendes conducted the interrogation and told him that if he did not talk he would "die like a dog, like so many others." Pitra told Mendes that he did not know what any of this was about and would be willing to die because he was no different from the others. Mendes became furious and ordered Pitra to be taken to the back of the unit to be executed. While the weapons were being loaded, another commander suspended the execution because he wanted to try other methods to make Pitra talk. Pitra was then lowered by a rope into a deep pit. The following day he was given an FAA uniform and sandals and was used as guide in a military operation in Caio-Caliado.

The operation was a failure and Mendes declared that it was Pitra's last day alive. Mendes had his men lay Pitra at his feet and then tie wooden splints to his head which were tightened as Pitra was interrogated, causing him extreme pain. Pitra said he eventually lost consciousness and does not remember the remainder of the interrogation.

At the end of the day, Mendes ordered Pitra to be thrown into a river from an army helicopter. During the flight, Mendes shoved Pitra's head out of the helicopter and interrogated him about FLEC members and base locations.

These methods failed to yield any valuable information and, instead of throwing Pitra from the helicopter, Mendes tried offering him a car, a house, and a job if he helped in forthcoming antiguerilla operations.

On April 23, 2003, Pitra managed to escape and is currently in hiding.

October 24, 2002 – Lourenço Pitra Gomes, an escaped army detainee, witnessed a particularly cruel execution. On October 24, Gomes saw FAA soldiers with a prisoner about 40 years old who was wearing shorts and had a head bandage. Gomes knew that the man – a FLEC guerrilla who had been involved in an attack against an FAA patrol – had been captured in the Mayombe forest and had been shot in the head. The prisoner did not speak Portuguese and Gomes was asked to act as an Ibinda² (Fiote) interpreter. General Luís Mendes was present and, according to Gomes, Mendes ordered Lieutenant Colonel Tussen to send the prisoner to hell. A soldier stabbed the prisoner several times, rubbed him with salt and “gindungo” (chilli peppers) and then buried him alive.

According to Gomes, the general reminded him that he faced a similar fate if he did not collaborate.

Landmine Victims

October 5, 2003 – An FAA truck was destroyed by a landmine while transporting water on a heavily used public road between the villages of Talicuma and Talibeca, about 20 km north of the city of Cabinda. The mine seriously injured the truck's occupants and is thought to have been detonated by remote control by FLEC-Renovada guerrillas.

January 3, 2003 – At approximately 9:00, Beatriz Bumba, 51, stepped on a mine laid in her farm land in the locality of Bitchequet, municipality of Cacongo. She lost her right leg and sustained serious wounds to her arms and to her other leg. Bumba is mother of 10 and a widow. Bumba said she had been on the land and used the nearby road the day before without any problems. Bumba was knocked unconscious by the blast and taken by relatives to the Central Hospital of Cabinda, where she regained consciousness.

² Translator's note: Native language of Cabinda

November 21, 2002 – José Gimbi Tati, 28, was killed by an antipersonnel mine, in the village of Pumbo Chionzo, Buco-Zau. At approximately 06:00, a neighbor told Tati that FAA soldiers on operation in the area were destroying his banana plantation. Tati and another villager went to investigate and found only one banana tree remained standing. When Tati approached the tree, he set off a mine and was blown to pieces. The other villager escaped unhurt. The soldiers picked up Tati's remains for his funeral.

Ghost Villages

As a consequence of military actions throughout the year, various villages have been totally destroyed or left empty, as happened at Khoyi, Miconje commune, municipality of Belize, where most of the villagers – about 40 people – were killed. In other cases, villagers abandoned their homes en masse to seek refuge in the bush, more secure areas further away, and even neighbouring Congo states.

Even in the worst affected areas of Cabinda, the evidence can be hard to see. This is because there are very few solid buildings in these villages; huts are built of wood, thatch, and mud, and the traces which they leave are soon washed away by the rain.

The following villages have been abandoned in the course of the past year:

Belize municipality:

Miconje Velho, Kicocolo, Kimbede, Seke Banza, Kimbama, Khoyi, Vako II (all part of the commune of Miconje) have disappeared.

In the village of Bombo Pena, the sub-villages of Mongolu, Khengue and Mbata-Banga disappeared.

In the village of Nsaka, the sub-villages of Mazinga, Kindamba and Nkandikila disappeared.

In the village of Luali, the sub-villages of Ntaca and Ditadi disappeared.

Buco-Zau municipality:

Tsaka, Viedi, Thando, Kissungo, Kingubi and Tsuka-Kingubi, all part of Necuto commune, have disappeared.