



Ministério dos Negócios Estrangeiros
Gabinete do Ministro de Estado e dos Negócios Estrangeiros

Lisbon, 24 August 2007

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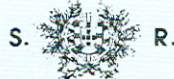
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The European Union is deeply concerned about the accusations made by Mr. Pedro Walipi Calenga, Director of the Angolan Government's Technical Unit for the Coordination of Humanitarian Aid (UTCAH) regarding National and International Non Governmental Organizations in Angola.



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As you have referred, the EU guidelines on Human Rights Defenders support the active work promoted by agents of civil society. Therefore, the EU missions in Luanda have been in contact with the United Nations Human Rights Office in Angola, and already met with the Angolan authorities to clarify these accusations and in order to be further documented on the Government's plans towards NGOs and the civil society.

It has been recognised, as you stated, that there are no grounds for the accusations of Mr. Calenga. In this context, both the Missions and the United Nations Human Rights Office in Angola have inquired about the legislation regarding NGOs, having the Human Rights Office offered to provide juridical counselling. In this meeting, Heads of Mission gave suggestions, such as the adoption of a new legal instrument to clarify the official requisites for the legalization of NGOs. This proposal was positively received by local authorities.

The Presidency will continue to follow this case closely and will appreciate any information Amnesty International can provide on further developments. We reiterate our support to Human Rights Defenders, NGOs and other civil society actors and acknowledge their importance in the construction of societies where Human Rights are enjoyed by all.

Please accept the assurance of my highest consideration

Head of Cabinet of the Minister of State and Foreign Affairs

(Francisco Ribeiro de Menezes)