

Your Excellency;

I am writing this to express my grave concern for 3 high school students, Afonso S. Muatchipuculo (22), Antonio J. Fernando (18) and Justino H. Valente (21), who are currently serving prison sentences in a prison 50km away from Malange city.

The three were arrested, on April 4, for allegedly throwing stones at the Vice-President's convoy in Malange. However, they were not present at the scene of the protest when the stones were allegedly thrown by demonstrators at the Vice-President's convoy as Vice-President got to the Malange City Pavilion.

The police chief claimed to have identified them as being among the protestors who threw stones at the Vice-President's convoy by the colour of their shirts. The students were tried and sentenced to seven months in prison on the same day on April 9 without a lawyer present. The prosecution did not produce any witnesses to provide testimony. The defendants were not given the opportunity to challenge the evidence presented against them, cross-examine the police chief and even call witnesses. The trial and imprisonment of the 3 students was clearly unfair, unjust and in clear violation of domestic and international law.

Therefore, I call on you to release Afonso S. Muatchipuculo (22), Antonio J. Fernando (18) and Justino H. Valente immediately and unconditionally.

I also call on you to respect the rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly.

Thank you for your prompt attention to the above.

Sincerely yours,