

# Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/angola-joint-call-for-end-to-criminal-09-12-2014,47353.html>

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Africa - Angola

Abusive proceedings

## Joint call for end to criminal libel prosecution of journalist

9 December 2014

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**Writer and journalist Rafael Marques de Morais is to appear in court in Luanda on criminal defamation charges on 15 December in connection with his 2011 book about human rights violations in Angola's diamond mining industry, entitled "Blood Diamonds: Corruption and Torture in Angola."**

**In a joint letter to the UN and African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights special rapporteurs for freedom of expression and the situation of human rights defenders, Reporters Without Borders and 16 other human rights and free speech NGOs have urged them to press the Angolan government to end this prosecution.**

**The letter argues that the proceedings constitute a violation of this journalist's right to freedom of expression, a right guaranteed by several international conventions to which Angola is party. To read the letter, click [here](#).**

This is not the first time that Marques has been the target of judicial harassment in connection with his reporting. Even since the late 1990s, he has been the victim of arbitrary arrests, prolonged judicial proceedings and bans on travel abroad – all aimed at silencing one of this wealthy African country's last independent journalists. Ruled with an iron hand for the past 35 years by President José Eduardo dos Santos, [Angola is ranked 124th out of 180 countries](#) in the 2014 Reporters Without Borders press freedom index.

Photo: Investigative journalist Rafael Marques de Morais

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