

## **SOS Habitat condemns forced evictions in Angola**

31<sup>st</sup> July 2009

SOS Habitat, an Angolan non-governmental organisation that focuses on housing, has reported that approximately three thousand houses were demolished last week in the Kilamba Kiaxi municipality of Luanda. According to a press release of July 27 by the Angolan NGO, the estimated number of people forcibly evicted from their homes is approximately fifteen thousand.

SOS Habitat has criticised the government's policy on several occasions, claiming that evictions take place without regard for ownership or tenure claims and in the absence of legal grounds for removal. Luiz Araujo, director of SOS Habitat, stated that "the government never formally or legally expropriated the land people occupied or gave them a chance to claim their rights to the land."

According to SOS Habitat the victims of this latest eviction operation, were not re-housed and went back to their neighbourhood to rescue what was left of their belongings and possessions from the demolished houses. SOS Habitat, which was prevented from entering the neighbourhood while the demolitions were taking place, said this operation was a violation of the norms that guarantee the respect for housing-related human rights and carried out with the help of a considerable number of military and police personnel.

SOS Habitat urges the Angola government to cease this kind of action immediately, "eliminating once and for all the practice of forced evictions", and calls for representatives of foreign countries and international organisations operating in Angola to visit the forcibly evicted community.