



Deep Concern over incident involving lawyer Zola Ferreira Bambi in Angola

Lawyers for Lawyers, the International Observatory for Lawyers at Risk, the Law Society of England and Wales, the International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute, the Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe and the European Association of Lawyers for Democracy & Human Rights are deeply concerned about the latest reports involving Angolan human rights lawyer Zola Ferreira Bambi, following the discovery of a firearm bullet lodged in the windshield of his vehicle. The circumstances surrounding the case remain unclear, raising serious concerns about public safety and the protection of lawyers in the country.

Zola Ferreira Bambi is a human rights lawyer committed to advocating for the rights of human rights activists and vulnerable communities in Angola. Since the early 2000s, he has been at the forefront of documenting and challenging the persecution and judicial harassment of human rights defenders. He has represented activists and journalists in high-profile cases, advocating for freedom of expression and access to justice. Over the past decade, he has also documented and denounced numerous cases of corruption, impunity, abuse of power, forced displacement and police violence. In April 2025, Mr. Bambi's dedication was internationally recognised when he received the [Lawyers for Lawyers Award](#).

On 26 August 2025, Mr. Bambi discovered a bullet impact on the windshield of his vehicle as he was leaving for work. He cannot confirm exactly when the incident occurred, though it may have taken place while returning from a conference the previous evening. Mr. Bambi immediately reported the matter to the Provincial Criminal Investigation Service.

This alarming incident comes amid a severe social and political crisis in Angola. Since 28 July 2025, widespread civil protests in Luanda have been met with a heavy security response, reportedly resulting in 40 deaths and more than 2500 arrests. During this period, Mr. Bambi has actively defended individuals detained and harmed during the demonstrations. We are concerned that this most recent incident is not an isolated act but may represent a deliberate and escalating threat to Mr. Bambi's safety, potentially signaling the risk of more serious attacks linked to his professional activities.

This is not the first time Mr. Bambi has been targeted. Often involved in sensitive and high-profile cases, he has faced numerous threats and acts of retaliation due to his work. In January 2024, he was subjected to house arrest by the police and forcibly taken to a police

station, reportedly to prevent him from attending a hearing where he was scheduled to defend an activist detained under unlawful circumstances.¹

Under the United Nations Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers, States must ensure that lawyers are able to perform all of their professional functions without intimidation, hindrance, harassment or improper interference (Principle 16), and where lawyers are threatened as a result of their work, authorities must provide adequate protection (Principle 17).

In the light of the above, the undersigned organisations stand in solidarity with Mr. Bambi and call on Angolan authorities to:

- Conduct a prompt, independent, thorough and transparent investigation into this incident.
- Take all necessary measures to guarantee Mr. Bambi's security.
- Ensure that all lawyers are able to carry out their professional duties free from intimidation, obstruction, harassment, or undue interference, in full compliance with the UN Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers, and safeguard the independence and security of the legal profession.

We remain committed to supporting the work of Zola Ferreira Bambi and the Angolan human rights community, and will be monitoring the situation closely.

Lawyers for Lawyers

International Observatory for Lawyers at Risk

The Law Society of England and Wales

International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute

Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe

European Association of Lawyers for Democracy & Human Rights

¹ International Observatory for Lawyers in Danger. (2024, February 28). *Zola Ferreira Bambi*. Available at: <https://protect-lawyers.org/en/case/zola-ferreira-bambi/>