

National Human Rights Defense Network
(RNDDH)

**RNDDH condemns the involvement of
MINUSTAH agents in *yet another*
violation of human rights**

December 16th, 2011

I. Introduction

On December 14th, 2011, the *National Human Rights Defense Network* (RNDDH) received a complaint in its office, alleging an incident in which *three* (3) Haitian citizens were brutally beaten by officers of *the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti* (MINUSTAH).

Given the gravity of the facts given by the above individuals and the many different injuries and bruises seen on their bodies, RNDDH decided to immediately undertake an investigation in order to learn more about the incident. RNDDH also proposes to share with everyone interested in the issue, the findings of its investigations.

II. Methodology

As part of this investigation, RNDDH, after obtaining the first information of individuals abused, visited the scene and spoke with:

- Members of the population;
- Witnesses of a portion of the incident;
- The Justice of the Peace Court of Peace of *Cite Soleil*, Léonel MARCELUS;
- A MINUSTAH patrol.

III. The facts

On December 13th, 2011, in the afternoon, Joseph GILBERT, and Abel JOSEPH, aged respectively *twenty-nine* (29) years, and *twenty* (20) years were situated near the water delivery truck registered **ZA 08937**. GILBERT and JOSEPH came to ensure water delivery in *Cité Soleil*, in an area known as *Ancien Fort Dimanche*, when the truck broke down.

At dusk, and after many attempts to repair the truck, they realized they had to leave the car there. They decided to stay on site in order to secure the truck and the equipment contained within. Armos BAZILE aged nineteen (19), whose uncle is a client of GILBERT, joined them at approximately ten o'clock, to spend the night guarding the truck.



Figure 1 - The truck driven by Joseph GILBERT

It was around *three* (3) in the morning when agents of the Brazilian contingent of MINUSTAH, on a routine patrol, passed by the truck. After passing the patrol stopped its' vehicle and the soldiers walked back up to the individuals listed above. The soldiers arrested them without any explanation. They forced them to empty their pockets, relieving them of the sum of *four thousand five hundred* (4500) gourds; representing the amount of *three* (3) trucks of water delivered during the day and a telephone 39350529 belonging to Joseph GILBERT.

MINUSTAH officers also seized the license of **GILBERT** and the national identification cards of his *two* (2) companions before taking them to the courtyard of the *Institution Mixte Educative de La Saline*, a school whose courtyard is used by the inhabitants of the area to dry clay.



Figure 2 - Photo of one of the victims

With numerous kicks and punches, Joseph GILBERT, Abel JOSEPH, and Armos BAZILE were beaten in the courtyard of the school.

The victim's bodies, still bear the visible signs of this physical abuse. They were beaten to the point where they can not sit.

Witnesses, after hearing the cries for help of the victims, went out into the school courtyard.

They claimed that the *three* (3) MINUSTAH officers that were viciously beating these individuals, are regulars in the area, and known to all.

Offended by this intervention and to prevent similar intrusions, the MINUSTAH agents forced the victims back into their vehicle, and took them out on Route 9, to the site of a plantain field, not far from *Brant* well. According to members of the population met at the scene, the vehicle of MINUSTAH involved in this incident is registered under the license plate **UN 24775**, and according to others, **UN 24757**.

After arriving at the site off of Route 9, UN officials stripped victims naked and continued to violently abuse them. This time, in addition



Figure 3 - Location of the fire lit by MINUSTAH where the victim's clothes were burned

to kicks, staff of MINUSTAH, beat the victims with a machete. They used their clothes to make a fire before deciding to abandon them altogether.

IV. Comments and Recommendations

This incident which occurred on Route 9, on the night of 13th to the 14th of December 2011, shows the contempt of MINUSTAH officials who, since their arrival in Haiti, have shown in their true colors, and are capable of committing barbaric and violent acts, in total disrespect for human rights.

Indeed, MINUSTAH agents continue to be involved in such reprehensible acts as theft, rape, gang rape, physical abuse, sexual exploitation, murder, beatings, etc.. Despite the fact that many victims have come forward with complaints, they never find neither justice nor reparations.

Consequently, today, MINUSTAH appears to be a force above the law, which benefits from the passivity and permissiveness of the **Organization of the United Nations** (UN). It is shocking that despite the growing hostility of the population vis-à-vis the UN Mission, MINUSTAH officials continue to engage in acts of flagrant violations of human rights, instead of trying to regain the confidence of Haitian people.

Moreover, no provision has been made by the **Security Council of the United Nations** to require the authorities of contributing countries of the UN force to severely punish their implicated nationals, and to repair the harm done to victims by UN officers.

Haiti's population does not want to continue bandaging wounds, and counting bodies, as it tries to restore the confidence of the boys and girls, the men and women who have suffered rape by officials of MINUSTAH.

Faced with this cascade of human rights violations, RNDDH recommends that the **High Commissioner for Human Rights** (OHCHR) and officials of MINUSTAH:

- Conduct an investigation to shed light on all incidents involving staff of MINUSTAH;
- Take appropriate sanctions against any MINUSTAH agents involved in acts of violation of human rights;
- Make every effort to regain control of MINUSTAH troops;