

19 December 2017

Human rights defender Scovia Arinaitwe hospitalised, beaten while in detention

On 16 December 2017, human rights defender **Scovia Arinaitwe** was arrested and detained in Nagalama in Mukono District, Uganda, during which time she was beaten by police officers. The human rights defender is currently in hospital due to her injuries.

[Scovia Arinaitwe](#) is a human rights defender, trainer and Rapid Response Coordinator for **Solidarity Uganda**. Solidarity Uganda is a NGO focused on nonviolent strategy, movement building and social change, which works with vulnerable communities to build their capacity to achieve peace and justice, including working with communities to protect their land rights. As a trainer for Solidarity Uganda, Scovia Arinaitwe conducts training partnered with Rhize, a global network that trains, coaches and partners with leaders of social movements to help them deepen and scale up their impact.

At approximately 2:30 pm on 16 December 2017, while conducting a training session on behalf of Rhize, Scovia Arinaitwe was arrested by a Ugandan police unit known as the "Flying Squad" along with fifteen participants in the training. Scovia Arinaitwe was beaten by members of the police unit and pushed down the stairs, leaving the human rights defender with serious injuries requiring medical assistance. Following her arrest, Scovia Arinaitwe was subjected to five hours of interrogation by police officers. On 18 December 2017, the human rights defender was taken to hospital due to her medical condition, although she is still under arrest. She remains in hospital and has not yet been informed of the charges against her.

Front Line Defenders expresses serious concern at the detention and beating of Scovia Arinaitwe and urges the Ugandan authorities to ensure her safety and security.

Front Line Defenders urges the authorities in Uganda to:

1. Strongly and immediately condemn the detention and beating of Scovia Arinaitwe;
2. Provide all necessary medical attention to Scovia Arinaitwe, release her and cease all further forms of harassment of the human rights defender;
3. Carry out an immediate, thorough and impartial investigation into the beating of Scovia Arinaitwe, with a view to publishing the results and bringing those responsible to justice in accordance with international standards;
4. Cease targeting all human rights defenders in Uganda and guarantee in all circumstances that they are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions including judicial harassment.