



## Institute for Justice & Democracy in Haiti

### Half-Hour for Haiti Action Alert: Help Haitian Women Fight Against Rape April 21, 2010



### Be Part of the Solution for Haiti: Make a Difference in Half an Hour a Week

#### Update

##### Haitian Lawyers Overcome Obstacles to Fight for Human Rights

Lawyers at the Bureau des Avocats Internationaux (BAI) have continued to fight for the human rights of Haitian jails. Last month, through our Health and Human Rights in the Prisons Project (HRRP), BAI lawyers brought charges against a woman who killed her husband in self defense during a particularly brutal attack. This demonstrates the importance of our medical-legal collaboration with [Partners in Health](#) as well as how Haitian lawyers, despite all odds, can work for the poor if pushed. We will continue to fight so that men and women who deserve and return to their families who are suffering more than ever.

#### Take Action: Help Haitian Women Fight Against Rape

##### Sign Petition to Demand an Adequate Response\*

##### [Watch short video and sign petition by clicking here.](#)

"The way you saw the earth shake, that's how our bodies are shaking now" described one woman of a crisis facing the women and girls of Haiti.

As Haiti's earthquake toppled buildings, it also toppled social structures that provided Haitian women some protection from sexual violence. Rape was widespread before January 12, but the hundreds of thousands of women now in displacement camps, often without their family and neighborhood networks, are more vulnerable than ever. As of March 2010, outreach workers had [tracked\[i\]](#) 230 cases of rape in 15 camps, over 15 incidents per camp, in a partial and no comprehensive survey and, sadly, UNIFEM's database for collecting data on sexual violence was [degraded\[ii\]](#) by the earthquake. But, with over 500 camps in Port-au-Prince alone, it is clear that sexual violence is widespread.

There have been some efforts by Haitian officials and the international community to provide protection for women, but these efforts have fallen short. This is unacceptable. Numerous international [standards\[iii\]](#) and [guidelines\[iv\]](#) have heightened levels of gender-based violence in the wake of disaster and provide recommendations for effective care and legal recourse. Contrary to the recommendations, Haitian women have been [systematically excluded\[v\]](#) from these efforts.

underrepresented in earthquake response decisions. Women's repeated [requests\[vi\]](#) for [inclusion\[vii\]](#) in Assessment (PDNA[viii]) process and the [UN Donor meetings\[ix\]](#) on March 31 went unanswered. By leaving themselves out of the discussion, so too were their needs.

On her visit to Haiti last weekend, UN Deputy Secretary-General Asha Rose Migiro [listened to women's](#) assaulted or beaten. She also noted the critical conditions people are living in (see [a video on condition petition](#) demanding improved aid distribution[xi]). The UN Independent Expert on Human Rights in Haiti [this week\[xii\]](#) where he too will reportedly listen to women and other at risk populations.

The UN has taken the first step by listening to women. Action must follow. To call on the UN, and more Council, MINUSTAH, UN Member states and the Government of Haiti, to take the next step, sign the pe

## **Text of Petition**

### **Take Strong Actions Now to Stop Gender-Based Violence in Haiti**

\* Generated by the [Institute for Justice & Democracy in Haiti](#); [Digital Democracy](#); [Human Rights Clinic](#); [Law School](#); [MADRE](#); [New-Media Advocacy Project](#); [Partners in Health](#); [University of Virginia School of Law Program](#)

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### **Targeting**

Yukio Takasu, President UN Security Council  
Michel Forst, UN Independent Expert on Human Rights in Haiti  
Rashida Manjoo, UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women  
Asha-Rose Migiro, UN Deputy Secretary General  
Edmond Mulet, UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General  
Force Commander Major General Luiz Paul Cruz, MINUSTAH  
Major General Gerardo Christian Chaumont, UNPol, MINUSTAH

I sign this petition to express my concern about the inadequate response to the rampant sexual violence face daily. I applaud the three-day visit of UN Deputy Secretary-General Asha Rose Migiro to listen to the time of crisis and her attention given to these issues. More can and should be done. Independent Expert on the work of Deputy Migiro. When the Security Council meets on April 28, 2010, to discuss implement mandate, gender-based violence issues should be at the top of the agenda.

The UN, tasked with security and protection, must provide for the protection and promotion of women's immediately. At the same time, the UN must be looking towards long-term solutions outlined in the recommendations including incorporating women's voices and assuring justice for victims of sexual violence. A women's policy avoid recovery policies that inadvertently reproduce discrimination against women and leave them vulnerable to violence. Such actions would comply with the principles outlined in key humanitarian documents, including Principles on Internally Displaced Persons and the UN Gender in Humanitarian Response Working Group Mainstreaming.

I urgently request that the UN and more specifically the Security Council, MINUSTAH and UN Member states efficiently and effectively to Haiti's earthquake. This includes measures aimed at prevention, protection and

- Strengthen security in displacement camps, with specific attention to protecting women from gender-based violence. At this end, secure safe spaces for women to meet and organize and encourage, duplicate and fund women's groups, such as citizen camp surveillance committees.
- Consult with and include Haitian political, non-governmental and grassroots women leaders in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of relief and reconstruction programs.

- Urge police-contributing Member States to answer the call of the UN Department of Peacekeeping deploy to Haiti more female UN police officers trained as sexual and gender-based violence specialists
- Work with the Bangladesh Government to dispatch, in a timely fashion, the promised all-women police units
- Provide the means for victims to report incidents of sexual violence, and emergency health services and psychological support.
- Ensure the effective collection of evidence for accountability and prosecution.
- At the Security Council meeting on April 28, urge members to take strong measures and actions to address gender-based violence, especially in the Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps in Haiti.
- Urge the Government of Haiti to draft a National Plan of Action to implement UN Security Council resolutions 1612 (2005), 1820 (2008), 1882 (2009), 1888 (2009), and 1889 (2009) with an appropriate time frame

[i] [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/beverly-bell/our-bodies-are-shaking-no\\_b\\_511397.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/beverly-bell/our-bodies-are-shaking-no_b_511397.html)

[ii] [http://www.unifem.org/gender\\_issues/voices\\_from\\_the\\_field/story.php?StoryID=1028](http://www.unifem.org/gender_issues/voices_from_the_field/story.php?StoryID=1028)

[iii] <http://www.idpguidingprinciples.org/>

[iv] <http://www.humanitarianinfo.org/IASC/downloaddoc.aspx?docID=4402>

[v] <http://www.speroforum.com/site/article.asp?id=30194&t=Haiti%3A+++Women+demand+role+in+reconstruction>

[vi] <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=88662>

[vii] [http://org2.democracyinaction.org/o/5095/p/dia/action/public/?action\\_KEY=2402](http://org2.democracyinaction.org/o/5095/p/dia/action/public/?action_KEY=2402)

[viii] <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/db900sid/SNAA-83U9LW?OpenDocument>

[ix]

<http://www.madre.org/index/press-room-4/press-releases-34/news/press-conference-on-haiti-reconstruction-featuring-edwidge-c>

[x] <http://www.unmultimedia.org/radio/english/detail/93828.html>

[xi] [http://www.change.org/haitijustice/petitions/view/we\\_can\\_do\\_better\\_for\\_haiti\\_demand\\_transparency\\_and\\_improved\\_aid\\_dis](http://www.change.org/haitijustice/petitions/view/we_can_do_better_for_haiti_demand_transparency_and_improved_aid_dis)

[xii] [http://www.unog.ch/80256EDD006B9C2E/%28httpNewsByYear\\_en%29/EB00C4B1F539B02CC12577050055B495?OpenDocu](http://www.unog.ch/80256EDD006B9C2E/%28httpNewsByYear_en%29/EB00C4B1F539B02CC12577050055B495?OpenDocu)

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