

Oral Intervention of Malya Villard-Apollon

1. Council Members, thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today.
2. My name is Malya Villard-Apollon. I am a leader of KOFAVIV, a grassroots women's organization that works with victims of sexual violence. I, myself, was a victim of rape in 1992 and again in 2003. We work with several partners including MADRE, the Institute for Justice & Democracy in Haiti and the law firm Morrison & Foerster.
3. Conditions in the displacement camps, following the January 12 earthquake, have exacerbated women's vulnerability to rape. Women and girls live in constant fear for their safety.
4. I live in a tent in a camp. I have witnessed violence against women and girls. And, I have also witnessed the completely inadequate government response. KOFAVIV has recorded at least 242 cases of rape since the earthquake. But, we have yet to see a case prosecuted.
5. The violence is occurring in the camps because:
 - a. There is no education around sexuality and women's rights,
 - b. Security is inadequate;
 - c. There is a lack of secure housing;
 - d. And, aid distribution is ineffective and aid agencies fail to consult grassroots groups, which deepens poverty and fosters violence.
6. Although violence against women is common, rape survivors like myself refuse to believe that it cannot be stopped and neither should the members of the Council.
7. I respectfully urge the Council recommend that the International Community work with the Government of Haiti to do the following:
 - a. Provide human rights education, including gender sensitivity training for men and police, and know your rights trainings for women;
 - b. Immediately provide security and lighting in the camps;
 - c. Remind donors that the 'UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement' implore governments to consult with Haitian women and ensure their participation in decisions that impact their lives;
 - d. And, finally, all member States should condition funding on meeting these basic requirements to uphold women's rights.
8. Voices like mine are often not heard in forums like these, thank you again for your attention.