



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

CONTACT: Stephanie Küng, MADRE (212) 627-0444, skung@madre.org;  
Annie Gell, BAI Port-au-Prince, Haiti +509-3610-2882, annie@ijdh.org

## New Report on Sexual Violence in Haiti One Year After the Earthquake

**January 10, 2011-New York, NY-** Today, MADRE, the Institute for Justice & Democracy in Haiti (IJDH), the Bureau des Avocats Internationaux (BAI) and the IWHR Clinic of CUNY School of Law released a report on sexual violence in Haiti one year after the earthquake, entitled *Our Bodies Are Still Trembling: Haitian Women Continue to Fight Against Rape*.

The catastrophic January 12, 2010 earthquake took the lives of some 200,000 people and left approximately 1.5 million Haitians homeless. Forced to live in overcrowded displacement camps without adequate lighting or security, women and girls have faced an epidemic of sexual violence. Despite tireless efforts by Haitian women in the camps, incidents of rape continue to rise. Over the year, deteriorating conditions in the camps, a deadly cholera outbreak, political upheaval and persistent impunity for rape have actually increased insecurity and the risk of sexual violence for women. Moreover, the Haitian government's recently issued plan for transitional housing may take years to implement. Quite simply, there is no end in sight for the dangerous conditions in which Haitian women and girls live.

On December 22, 2010, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) granted a legal request submitted by a group of advocates and attorneys, including the authors of the report, requesting that the Haitian government and the international community take immediate measures to prevent violence against women and girls in Haiti. This decision is legally binding, and represents a firm step towards ensuring the safety and security of women and girls in Haiti.

Lisa Davis, MADRE's Human Rights Advocacy Director and co-author of the report, said today, "Unfortunately, the only difference between six months ago and today is that sexual violence in displacement camps is only now being recognized as an issue, but still not much is being done. Grassroots women's organizations in Haiti remain committed to bringing this issue to light, and they have been working relentlessly to combat the epidemic of sexual violence. It is time for the international community to join with these women to find a solution to the women's rights crisis in Haiti."

“One year after the earthquake in Haiti, sexual violence against women and girls continues to occur at shocking levels,” said Annie Gell, the BAI’s Rape Accountability and Prevention Project Coordinator. “Haitian grassroots groups and their partners have been working tirelessly and at great personal risk to protect and empower women and girls. However, the international community has largely failed to do its part despite its vast resources. We call on all actors in Haiti to work together to end gender-based violence in the country.”

Erica Richards, an attorney with Morrison & Foerster LLP, said today, “The recent and very gratifying decision issued by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights recognizes that sexual violence occurring in post-earthquake Haiti continues to pose imminent danger to women and children. It also serves as a reminder to the international community that much remains to be done to protect and assist Haiti’s most vulnerable populations.”

To read the full report, [click here](#).

*Available for interviews:*

**Lisa Davis, Esq.** (MADRE and the International Women’s Human Rights Clinic at CUNY School of Law) was a co-author of the report and currently serves as the Coordinator for the Lawyers' Earthquake Response Network (LERN) Gender Working Group. She is a member of the New York City Bar Association’s International Human Rights Committee and the National Lawyers’ Guild Haiti Subcommittee. Lisa is an Adjunct Professor of Law for the International Women's Human Rights Clinic at CUNY Law School.  
(Contact: Stephanie Küng 212-627-0444)

**Annie Gell, Esq.** (Legal Fellow at the Bureau des Avocats Internationaux) is a human rights attorney and the Rape Accountability and Prevention Project (RAPP) coordinator at the BAI in Port-au-Prince, Haiti.  
(Contact: Annie Gell +509-3610-2882, [annie@ijdh.org](mailto:annie@ijdh.org))

###