

INTERVENTION OF LISA DAVIS

Delivered to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights

During a Hearing on Precautionary Measure 340-10
Women and Girls in Camps for Forcibly Displaced Persons in Haiti

March 25, 2011

Dear distinguished Commission Members:

The Commission's decision echoes international human rights jurisprudence and practical strategies for addressing the immediate needs of displaced Haitian women and girls. However there are two main barriers to implementation of the Commission's recommendations. First, the exclusion of grassroots groups from meaningful participation within the UN GBV Sub-Cluster as Ms. Villard Appolon has discussed. And secondly, the lack of the Government of Haiti's capacity to fund and coordinate needed activities.

In response to the Commission's Decision, the Haitian Minister of Women's Affairs, demanded in a written communication, that the Sub-Cluster Coordinator, include participation by grassroots women's groups and consult the Ministry on its activities. However, the Coordinator still refuses to do so.

This is not only in direct violation of Haiti's State Sovereignty, but also violates international law, calling for meaningful grassroots participation post-disaster. As further evidence of this, in December, the Sub-Cluster released its 2011 strategies for combating gender-based violence in Haiti, with no mention of including grassroots women's groups.

In order to fully implement the Commission's recommendations, the Government of Haiti needs adequate resources. Yet, most of the funding released for Haiti by Donor States has gone to international aid agencies—not to Haitian organizations or government.

The Commission's 2009 and 2010 recommendations, serve as a blueprint for addressing and preventing sexual violence in Haiti. For this reason, Petitioners seek to work with key government and civil society actors, to draft a Plan of Action that would implement the Commission's recommendations and increase government capacity. We hope to present this plan to Donor States at the UN Human Rights Council's review of Haiti in October.

Thank you.