

Having trouble viewing this email? [Click here](#)



Service Women's Action Network

June 2011



**The Service Women's Action Network (SWAN) welcomes report by U.N. Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women, urges continued focus on ending the epidemic of violence against women in the US Military.**

NEW YORK - This week, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women (UNSRVAW), Rashida Manjoo, released her report on the situation of violence against women in the United States at a United Nations Human Rights Council session in Geneva. The report, which was based in part on fact-finding Ms. Manjoo did in New York, was welcomed by the Service Women's Action Network (SWAN) along with a national network of women's and human rights organizations who applauded the Special Rapporteur for the breadth of her inquiry and recommendations.

Anu Bhagwati, executive director of SWAN and a former Marine Corps Captain, said the report is an important step in ensuring the protection of basic human rights for women in the United States, particularly for servicewomen and women veterans:

"Ms. Manjoo's report will assist us in discussions with lawmakers about the need for further action to prevent violent and discriminatory treatment of our servicewomen and women veterans. The report highlights ongoing issues that servicewomen face every day, and contains common sense recommendations that the Department of Defense needs to implement immediately to stem the epidemic of sexual and domestic violence in the military."

At the invitation of the United States government, Ms. Manjoo visited the United States from January 24 to February 7, 2011. Her objective was a broad examination of the situation of violence against women, including issues such as violence in custodial

To read the report delivered by Rashida Manjoo, the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women, please click [here](#).

settings, domestic violence, violence against women in the military and violence against women who face multiple, intersecting forms of discrimination, particularly Native American, immigrant and African American women. Ms. Manjoo visited Minnesota, Washington, D.C., North Carolina, Florida, California and New York during her trip to the United States.

SWAN hosted Ms. Manjoo's visit to New York City on February 4th and held a stakeholder roundtable at the UN where she heard from survivors, advocates and other organizations on the issue of military sexual violence and domestic abuse.

Ms. Manjoo recommended that all cases of military sexual assault be investigated fully by an independent authority, that servicemembers be allowed to bring claims in court against the military when damages arise out of negligent or wrongful acts and that the authority of victims advocates be strengthened and expanded beyond their current advisory role. In cases of veterans disability claims arising from sexual trauma, the Special Rapporteur recommends that the VA extend evidentiary relief to victims claiming in-service sexual assault and accept their testimony as main proof to support a diagnosis of PTSD. She also recommended thorough gender-based training for all VA hospital employees.

Bhagwati added, "Legislation has already been introduced to address some of the Special Rapporteur's recommendations. H.R. 930, H.R. 1517 (the Holley Lynn James Act) and H.R. 1709 (the Force Protection and Readiness Act) are a few of the bills that tackle the issues of military sexual violence. SWAN fully supports these and other pending legislative efforts and urges Congress to pass these into law."

## Donate Now



SWAN is a 501(c)3 organization that urgently needs your financial support. Your tax deductible donation will help SWAN ensure equality, fairness, and justice for women in the military and dramatically improve resources for women veterans.

## About Us

*SWAN is a human rights organization founded and led by women veterans. SWAN's vision is to transform military culture by securing equal opportunity and the freedom to serve in uniform without threat of harassment, discrimination, intimidation or assault. SWAN also seeks to reform veterans' services on a national scale to guarantee equal access to quality health care, benefits and resources for women veterans and their families. You can find the Service Women's Action Network on our [homepage](#), on [Twitter](#), or on [Facebook](#).*

To read SWAN's Factsheet on military rape, sexual assault and sexual harassment, please click [here](#).

[Forward email](#)



This email was sent to info@servicewomen.org by [info@servicewomen.org](mailto:info@servicewomen.org) | [Update Profile/Email Address](#) | Instant removal with [SafeUnsubscribe™](#) | [Privacy Policy](#).

Service Women's Action Network | po box 1758 | New York | NY | 10156