

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Monday March 7th 2011
Robb Friedlander – 913/636-0099 (cell) or Robb@lunamedia.com

PENTAGON COMMISSION RECOMMENDS WOMEN SERVE IN COMBAT

The final report of the Military Leadership Diversity Commission identifies need to remove combat exclusion policy and other institutional barriers to increase diversity of military leadership.

NEW YORK - Today, the Military Leadership Diversity Commission (MLDC) released its report, "From Representation to Inclusion: Diversity Leadership for the 21st Century Military", proposing 20 recommendations designed to develop and maintain a qualified and demographically diverse leadership. Their recommendations included the elimination of the Combat Exclusion Policy, thereby allowing women to serve in ground combat units.

"Finally, the Department of Defense is realizing that the most effective military is one where women are fully integrated in all sectors of the fighting force," said Anu Bhagwati, former Marine Corps captain and executive director of the Service Women's Action Network (SWAN). "The disconnect between what the U.S. government and military says women are allowed to do and what they are *actually* doing is not only a blatant act of gender discrimination, it fosters a hostile work environment where women's capabilities are assumed rather than assessed."

"SWAN supports the findings of the Military Leadership Diversity Commission, and we encourage the Department of Defense to adopt these recommendations immediately."

SWAN is a national 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 follow Service Women's Action Network on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/servicewomen>, or on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/servicewomen>.

###