



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**LIGHT REPRIMAND AND FINE OF GENERAL FOR SEXUAL ASSUALT
SENDS WRONG MESSAGE**

*Violence against women should be treated as a crime, not as a
“mistake”*

NEW YORK — Mallika Dutt, president and CEO of global human rights organization Breakthrough, which seeks to make violence against women unacceptable, issued the following statement in response to the sentencing of [Brig. Gen. Jeffrey A. Sinclair](#). Sinclair was reprimanded and fined \$20,000 after having inappropriate relationships with three junior officers. The fine breaks down to \$4,000 a month for four months; Sinclair’s salary is about \$12,000 a month.

“Sexual assault in any form is a crime. In this case, multiple women under the general’s command were sexually assaulted multiple times. The slap on the wrist he received sends the wrong message about violence against women, which remains the most prevalent -- and socially accepted — human rights abuse of our time.

“We look to our military to, at very least, uphold their own values of honor, integrity, respect, and more. It is deeply disappointing when instead they are seen to uphold the cultural norms that say women are less-than, inferior, dispensable. This is the very culture that allows discrimination and violence against women and girls to continue. We need to do so much better.

“The good news is that calls for change are coming, from both outside and within the military. One soldier connected with Breakthrough to let us know he’ll be calling out friends and associates who make disrespectful comments about women. This is the kind of everyday – yet bold and norm-changing -- leadership we need. I hope that military leadership soon catches up.”

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Breakthrough is a global human rights organization

working to make violence against women and girls unacceptable. Our mission is to prevent violence against women and girls by transforming the norms and cultures that enable it. We carry out this mission by building a critical mass of change agents worldwide — the Breakthrough Generation — whose bold collective action will deliver irreversible impact on the issue of our time. Working out of



centers in India and the U.S., we create innovative, relevant multimedia campaigns, tools, and programs that reach individuals and institutions where they are, inspiring and equipping them to build a world in which all people live with dignity, equality, and justice. With programs challenging early marriage, gender-biased sex selection, sexual harassment, and more, our work enables a critical mass of change-makers to stand for human rights in their own spheres and beyond.

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