



PALM CENTER

BLUEPRINTS FOR SOUND PUBLIC POLICY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Monday, October 13th, 2014
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**** MEDIA ADVISORY ****

Transgender Troops from Foreign Militaries Convene in Washington, DC to Discuss Inclusive Service

Palm Center and ACLU to Host Conference Focusing on Lessons Learned from Transgender Service in Foreign Militaries

WASHINGTON, DC – For the first-time ever, transgender military personnel from around the globe will convene on U.S. soil to share lessons learned and best practices for open and inclusive military service. The Palm Center and the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) will host a daylong conference, *Perspectives on Transgender Military Service from Around the Globe*, on Monday, October 20th, 2014.

Currently serving transgender service members, as well as policy experts and ministry officials from the United Kingdom, Canada, New Zealand, Australia, and Sweden will gather to discuss the experiences of 18 foreign militaries – including some of America’s closest allies – that allow transgender individuals to serve. The 18 confirmed cases are Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bolivia, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Israel, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom.

In the final session of the day, American service members and veterans including former Navy SEAL Kristin Beck, twenty-year veteran and subject of the CNN documentary film, [LADY VALOR](#), will discuss whether the US Military could apply foreign lessons and best practices for open service.

An estimated 15,500 transgender personnel serve in the US military, but current policy requires their separation if they are discovered.

Click here to view the complete agenda for the October 20th conference, including panel discussions and participants

WHAT: *Perspectives on Transgender Military Service from Around the Globe*, hosted by the Palm Center and the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU)

- **9:15 to 10:45 am (ET): Lessons Learned and Best Practices**

Graeme Field, New Zealand Defence Force
Helena Hoffman, Swedish Armed Forces
Lieutenant-Commander Nicole Lassaline CD, Canadian Forces
Squadron Leader Sarah Maskell, Royal Air Force, UK

- **11:00 am to 12:30 pm (ET): Foreign Military Experiences: Transgender Troops Tell Their Stories****

Major Donna Harding, Royal Australian Army Nursing Corps
Major Alexandra Larsson, Swedish Armed Forces
Sergeant Lucy Jordan, Royal New Zealand Air Force
Corporal Natalie Murray CD, Canadian Forces

****PHOTO OPP: Military service members will be in uniform during this panel****

- **12:30 pm to 1:30 pm (ET) Working Lunch on Military Diversity**

Dr. Alan Okros, Canadian Forces College
Joshua Polchar, The Hague Centre for Strategic Studies
Wing Commander Mark Abrahams MBE MA, Royal Air Force, UK
Squadron Leader Vince Chong, Australian Defense Force

- **1:45 to 3:15 pm (ET): Deployment in Austere Conditions: Stories from Combat Zones**

Squadron Leader Catherine Humphries, Royal Australian Air Force
Flight Lieutenant Caroline R. Paige, Royal Air Force, United Kingdom
Petty Officer Landon Wilson, US Navy Veteran

- **3:30 to 5:00 pm (ET): Next Steps for America: Applying Allied Lessons in the US Military**

Senior Chief Kristin Beck, US Navy SEAL (Ret.); Founder, The Military Freedom Coalition (100,000 members and growing)
Captain Jacob Eleazer, US Army National Guard
Captain Sage Fox, US Army Reserve
Paula M. Neira, RN, CEN, Esq. (LT, USN/USNR 1985-1991)

WHEN: Monday, October 20th from 9:30am – 5:00pm ET

WHERE: *ACLU Washington Legislative Office*
8th Floor Conference Room
915 15th St, NW

PHONE: For out-of-area media interested in participating, please RSVP to make arrangements for interviews and coverage.

The Palm Center recently released its study, [“Report of the Planning Commission on Transgender Military Service.”](#) which found that allowing transgender personnel to serve in the military “is administratively feasible and will not be burdensome or complicated,” and provides a detailed roadmap for the policy change. The report shows that

implementation could proceed immediately and will be successful in its execution. It also suggests the change is inevitable, noting the US will “likely” join the 18 other countries that already permit transgender service.

MEDIA RSVP:

Press interested in attending the conference or scheduling interviews with participants should contact Kristofer Eisenla, kristofer@lunaeisenlamedia.com or 202-670-5747 (mobile)

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About The Palm Center

The Palm Center, a research initiative of the Department of Political Science at San Francisco State University, is committed to sponsoring state-of-the-art scholarship to enhance the quality of public dialogue about critical and controversial issues of the day.

For the past decade, the Palm Center's research on sexual minorities in the military has been published in leading social scientific journals. The Palm Center seeks to be a resource for university-affiliated as well as independent scholars, students, journalists, opinion leaders, and members of the public. For more information, see www.palmcenter.org

About the ACLU

For nearly 100 years, the ACLU has been our nation's guardian of liberty, working in courts, legislatures, and communities to defend and preserve the individual rights and liberties that the Constitution and the laws of the United States guarantee everyone in this country. Whether it's achieving full equality for the LGBT community, establishing new privacy protections for our digital age, ending mass incarceration, or preserving the right to vote or the right to have an abortion, the ACLU takes up the toughest civil liberties cases and issues to defend all people from government abuse and overreach. With more than a million members, activists, and supporters, the ACLU is a nationwide organization that fights tirelessly in all 50 states, Puerto Rico, and Washington, D.C., for the principle that every individual's rights must be protected equally under the law, regardless of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or national origin.