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Ministry of Defence

Directorat of Communication

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## PRESS RELEASE

### PRESS INVITATION: OPENING OF INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS FOR MILITARY OMBUDSMEN

On Monday 3 October, the Netherlands Minister of Defence and the Netherlands Ombudsman for Veterans will open a conference for military ombudsmen from all over the world. The conference theme for this year is the role of Ombudsman Institutions before, during and after international missions. The aim of the congress is to strengthen cooperation and share good practices among independent institutions in order to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms within and by the armed forces.

Members of the media are welcome to attend the opening speeches of the conference, to be given by the Minister of Defence, the Ombudsman for Veterans and the Director of the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF).

Monday 3 October from 09.00 hrs to 10.00 hrs.

Carlton Hotel, Vijzelstraat 4

1017 HK Amsterdam, Amsterdam

Please register your attendance via the MoD's Directorate of Communication on: [persvoorlichting@defensie.nl](mailto:persvoorlichting@defensie.nl)

Jointly hosted by , the Inspector-General of the Armed Forces, Bart Hoitink, the Ombudsman for Veterans, Reinier van Zutphen and the Director of the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF), Thomas Guerber, the 8th ICOAF will take place in Amsterdam on 2-5 October 2016. Ombudsmen and Inspectors-General from 29 countries across the world will take part in the

conference. These annual conferences are made possible by, among other organisations, DCAF, a centre for security, development and the rule of law.

International missions have become increasingly common and expanded in time and scope. Today, 118,792 personnel are currently serving in ongoing United Nations peacekeeping operations, along with numerous regional missions led by the African Union, the European Union, and NATO. We recognise that international missions constitute an important contribution to international peace and security. Because of the international command structure, military personnel can be subject to different and sometimes contradictory procedures. Good cooperation between the ombuds institutions, monitoring the well being of military personnel before, during and after missions, is therefore essential.

Note for editors:

For more information, please contact the Netherlands Ministry of Defence, Klaas Meijer tel. no. +31 622 44 60 54 or the Ombudsman for Veterans, Sandra Loois, tel. no. +31 653 768 966.

You can find more news, background information and the conference programme on the conference website: [www.ICAOF/8ICAOF](http://www.ICAOF/8ICAOF)