



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA

**Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade
Human Rights Sub-Committee**

MEDIA RELEASE
Issued: 1 September 2014

*Chair: Mr Luke Simpkins MP
Deputy: Senator Anne McEwen*

Defence leader to give evidence on violence against women and girls in conflict zones

Sexual violence directed against women and girls is a common feature of war and conflict and will be discussed as part of a public hearing in the parliamentary inquiry considering human rights issues confronting women and girls in the Indian Ocean – Asia Pacific region.

Lieutenant General David Morrison AO, Chief of Army will be a witness at the Human Rights Sub-Committee of the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade hearing on Tuesday.

Sub-Committee Chair Luke Simpkins MP says human rights abuse in conflict zones is an important aspect of the inquiry.

“Rape and sexual violence directed against women and girls are common features of war and conflict in many parts of the world.”

“Women and girls all too often bear the brunt of armed conflict and addressing their human rights is critical to efforts to build peace, create social stability and economic security in these countries.”

Mr Simpkins says the Sub-Committee has already heard evidence that highlighted human rights abuses against women and girls in conflict zones such as Afghanistan.

“The Australian Defence Force has experience in operating in conflict zones where human rights violations are persistent.”

“The Sub-Committee looks forward to hearing the Defence Force’s perspective on these challenging issues.”

Lieutenant General Morrison is well known for a video address to Army personnel during a sexual abuse scandal last year, in which he told sexist members of the armed forces to “get out”.

He was also a prominent speaker at a four-day Global Summit to End Sexual Violence, held in London earlier this year, arguing that militaries that “revel in their separateness from civil society, that value the male over the female ... who celebrate the violence that is integral to my profession rather than seeking ways to contain it — they do nothing to distinguish the soldier from the brute.”

When: Tuesday 2 September 2014 at 12:45pm
Where: Committee room 1R4

Further information on the inquiry is available on the Committee’s website at www.apf.gov.au/house/committee/jfadt.

The proceedings will be audio webcast live on:
<http://www.apf.gov.au/News> and Events/Watch Parliament

For media comment: contact the Sub-Committee Chair, Mr Luke Simpkins MP, on (02) 6277 4009 or via Mr Bill Coghlan on the same number. For all other inquiries, contact the Inquiry Secretary, on 02 6277 4318 or visit the committee website at www.apf.gov.au/house/committee/jfadt