



For Immediate Release

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PRESS ADVISORY

Fighting Crime in the U.S. and Internationally: Is the Death Penalty Necessary? *A Unique Conversation Between U.S. and European Law Enforcement*

(Washington, D.C.) At a time when the death penalty is in the news, including a halt to executions in California and the first execution of a woman in 100 years in Virginia, law enforcement officers from the U.S. and Europe will engage in the first public discussion about whether the death penalty helps or hurts in keeping citizens safe, healing victims, and using crime-fighting resources efficiently. The discussion with Q and A will be held at the National Press Club in the Lisagor Room, on October 13, 2010 from 9:30 to 11:00 a.m. A light breakfast will be served.

Richard Dieter, Executive Director of Death Penalty Information Center, will moderate this unique, frank discussion. Members of the media will be invited to ask questions of the law enforcement officers after their opening discussion. The speakers are

- **Police Detective Robert Alvarez**, a 17 year veteran of the Edinburg, **Texas**, Police Department. Det. Alvarez, once a strong supporter of the death penalty, now believes that “Texas is the biggest serial killer of all.” A critical event in changing his views was a case where a defendant with a minor role in a crime was sentenced to death, while the shooters were allowed to live. Det. Alvarez is coming out publicly against the death penalty for the first time at this event.
- **Police Chief James Abbott** of West Orange, **New Jersey**. Chief Abbott was a strong supporter of the death penalty before studying it for six months as a member of the New Jersey Death Penalty Study Commission. He still believes in the death penalty in theory, but in practice, “no state has found a way to carry out the death penalty quickly and cheaply and also accurately.”
- Former **Detective Superintendent Bob Denmark** of Lancashire Constabulary, **England**. Det. Supt. Denmark investigated more than 100 homicides in the U.K. and genocide in Africa on behalf of the United Nations. His remarks will include cases where he felt certain that a defendant was guilty, but was later proven to be wrong. Det. Supt. Denmark is the author of “Ethical Investigation: A Practical Guide for Police Officers,” a training manual which guards against forced confessions, torture or other human rights violations.
- **António Cluny**, Senior Portuguese Public Prosecutor. Prosecutor Cluny will discuss how **Portugal** has prosecuted terrorism without the death penalty or life without parole, including after a turbulent revolution in 1974 and continuing until today. He was the President of the Portuguese Association of the Prosecutors at the time of Madeleine McCann's disappearance.

Who: U.S. and European Police Officers and Law Enforcement

What: First Public International Discussion with Q and A about the Death Penalty among Police Officers and Law Enforcement Professionals. A light breakfast will be served.

When: October 13, 2010, 9:30 to 11:00 a.m.

Where: National Press Club, Lisagor Room, 529 14th Street, NW, 13th Floor, WDC

This event is sponsored by **World Coalition Steering Committee member Death Penalty Focus**, Death Penalty Information Center and Equal Justice USA, national nonprofit organizations with a common goal of exploring alternatives to the death penalty.