



Trump and Hegseth Announce the End of “Political Correctness” in the US Armed Forces: “Gender-Neutral” Physical Standards at Male Level

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Quantico (Virginia), September 30, 2025 — In front of hundreds of senior officers gathered at the Marine Corps Base in Quantico, the President of the United States Donald Trump and Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth declared the end of the “woke” culture in the Armed Forces, announcing a package of directives aimed at restoring a “warrior ethos” focused on discipline, lethality, and operational readiness. At the center of the measures: new unified and “gender-neutral” physical fitness standards set at the male level for combat roles.

The Political and Military Message

In his speech, Trump reiterated the doctrine of “peace through strength,” asserting that the United States must be “so strong that no nation will dare challenge us.” Hegseth, in turn, linked the reform to a return to meritocratic excellence, inviting those who do not share the new approach to “do the honorable thing and resign.”

What Will Change: The Main Directives

- **Unified physical standards (“male-level”)** for selection and maintenance in combat roles; potential impact on the access of some women to operational specialties, though without a formal ban.
- **Crackdown on DEI and identity programs:** reduction/elimination of initiatives considered non-essential to military readiness.
- **Review of bullying/hazing and “toxic leadership”:** easing of some protections and redefinition of disciplinary thresholds to “allow commanders to enforce standards” without fear of sanctions.
- **Periodic physical checks for top leaders** and announced further “adjustments” in the chain of command, following recent high-level changes.

Reactions and Controversies

Hegseth's statements on “male-level” standards sparked immediate controversy: associations and female veterans recall that unique criteria already exist in combat units, and that training is not “lowered” for qualified women. Reform supporters argue that the unification and tightening of physical thresholds clarify any ambiguity and strengthen readiness.

Particularly contested is also the intention to **loosen protections against bullying** and redefine “toxic leadership,” a sensitive issue following well-known cases that led to investigations and reforms in recent years. Critics and observers fear side effects on personnel cohesion and well-being; proponents of the crackdown argue that units need more disciplinary leeway to maintain standards.

Strategic Context

The Quantico speech comes at a time of heightened global security attention and follows months of **reshuffles at the top** of the Pentagon and a public agenda aimed at “refocusing”

the military machine on training, discipline, and combat capability. The event — a rare gathering of generals and admirals convened quickly — highlighted how **cultural wars** have entered, for better or worse, the top agenda of Defense.

News link: <https://it.euronews.com/2025/09/30/trump-e-hegseth-annunciano-la-fine-del-politicamente-corretto-nelle-forze-armate>