



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Pan-American Colibrí Swim to alleviate suffering on the US-Mexico border**

*"I alone cannot change the world, but I can cast a stone across the waters to create many ripples"*  
*Mother Theresa*

**SAN DIEGO – May 5, 2017** --- The Pan-American Colibrí Swimmers (PACS) will cast their stone across the waters when they will be doing a cross-border swim in the sea from the USA to Mexico to raise awareness and money for the Colibrí Center for Human Rights. This organisation serves to alleviate the suffering of individuals whose family members have died while crossing the USA-Mexican border.

The expected legacy of the swim is to enable the Colibrí Center to continue its work on a larger scale and to inspire swimmers from all walks of life to understand, appreciate and attempt to resolve political, cultural and social differences that may separate them from others.

The Pan-American Colibrí Crossing team includes 12 people from New Zealand, South Africa, Israel, Mexico and the USA. Among them, they have completed a number of cross-border swims (England-France, Scotland-Northern Ireland, Israel-Jordan, Cyprus-Israel, USA-Canada, Spain-Morocco), swum across many of the world's major channels, and have achieved the Oceans Seven, Triple Crown of Open Water Swimming, and the highest swim in the world during their myriad aquatic acts.

The team is set to make waves as they attempt the 10km swim from Imperial Beach south of San Diego, California, across the USA - Mexican maritime border in the Pacific Ocean, to Tijuana, Mexico. They will depart from Imperial Beach at 08h30, unfurl a banner at the US-Mexico border (in the sea) and aim to arrive on the shores of Playas de Tijuana, Mexico at 12h30, where they expect to be received by Mexican authorities and members of the community.

"We hope to bring people from various countries together as ambassadors of goodwill to express our deepest concern in a way we know best – swimming. Ignoring human suffering is something that those of us in privileged societies should not allow." PACS

**Enquiries:**

[www.panamericancolibriswim.com](http://www.panamericancolibriswim.com)

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## FACT SHEET

### Why:

The Pan-American Colibrí Swim aims to raise awareness and money for the Colibri Center for Human Rights (see <http://www.colibricenter.org>) that serves to alleviate the suffering of individuals whose family members have died while crossing the USA-Mexican border.

### What:

The Pan-American Colibrí Swim is an international cross-border ocean swim by a group of accomplished swimmers from five nations.

### Where:

From Imperial Beach south of San Diego, California, across the USA - Mexican maritime border in the Pacific Ocean, to Tijuana, Mexico.

### When:

Start at 8:30 am on Friday, 5 May 2017. Expected finish in Tijuana at 12:30 pm.

### Who:

Swimmers: Kim Chambers (New Zealand), Oded Rahav (Israel), Jean Craven (South Africa), Antonio Argüelles (Mexico), Rene Martínex Saenz (Mexico), Ryan Nelson (USA), Melissa King (USA), Neil Macaskill (South Africa), Nora Toledano (Mexico), Mariel Hawley (Mexico), Steven Munatones (USA), Ben Enosh (USA /Israel)

The swimmers have completed a number of cross-border swims (England-France, Scotland-Northern Ireland, Israel-Jordan, Cyprus-Israel, USA-Canada, Spain-Morocco), swum across many of the world's major channels, and have achieved the Oceans Seven, Triple Crown of Open Water Swimming, and the highest swim in the world during their myriad aquatic acts of Speedo diplomacy.

### How:

Swimmers will enter on the south side of the Imperial Beach Pier, swim out past the surf, and head south guided by escort boats and kayakers until they reach shore in Tijuana, Mexico south of the USA-Mexican border.

### Is this an example of Speedo Diplomacy?

Yes, athletes in various sports have repeatedly demonstrated fundamental friendships among citizens from countries with existing diplomatic differences. Sports can be used for a greater good as people come together with mutual respect in the hopes of resolving issues where they may differ. The Pacific ocean is a great venue to demonstrate how water can unite people from all walks of life despite different beliefs and perspectives.

### Is this a protest against the proposed American wall?

No, above anything else, the swimmers want to raise money for the Colibri Center for Human Rights and help alleviate the suffering of individuals whose family members have died in the desert that exists between northern Mexico and the American Southwest.



**Who are the ambassadors?**

**Kim Chambers** is a native of New Zealand now living in San Francisco who graduated from the University of California Berkeley. She is the 6<sup>th</sup> person to complete the Oceans Seven, the world's most difficult aquatic challenge and is the first woman to swim 30 miles from the Farallon Islands to San Francisco. In 2016 she completed the Dead Sea Swim, an unprecedented cross-border swim as her latest act of Speedo diplomacy.

**Antonio Argüelles** is a native of Mexico who graduated from Stanford University. He is a highly successful bilingual entrepreneur from Mexico City who has achieved wide-ranging success in the fields of education, technology and aquatics. He has completed multiple triathlons, marathon runs, and the Triple Crown of Open Water Swimming (English Channel + Catalina Channel + Manhattan Island Marathon Swim) twice.

**What is the expected legacy for the swim?**

To enable the Colibrí Center for Human Rights to continue its work on a larger scale and to inspire swimmers from all walks of life to understand, appreciate and attempt to resolve political, cultural, social differences that may separate them from others.

**Who is the support team for the swim?**

Kayakers: Dan Simonelli (USA), Billy Carlson (USA), Matt Donoghue (USA), Haden Ware (USA), Anna Lopez and the Out of the Boat Team (Mexico), Kala Sherman-Presser (USA), Tom Hecker (USA), Kevin Eslinger (USA).

**How to donate:**

To donate or volunteer for the Colibrí Center for Human Rights:

<http://www.colibricenter.org/donate-to-the-colibri-center-for-human-rights/>