



December Message to the DoD Team

As we ring in the New Year, I'd like to acknowledge some of the Department's hard-earned accomplishments in 2017, as well as set expectations for 2018. Reflecting back, it's readily apparent that our success in 2017 is a direct reflection of the truly exceptional dedication of the men and women in the Department.

In 2017, DoD made significant inroads on Secretary Mattis' second line of effort -- *expanding and strengthening our alliances and partnerships*. The Department spearheaded two critical national security accomplishments: success against ISIS in Iraq and Syria, and increased burden sharing by our partners and allies to support collective security.

This year, the U.S.-led Defeat-ISIS Coalition eliminated ISIS' physical caliphate, retaking 97% of territory once held by the group while liberating more than seven million people. The coalition has also grown to include 70 nations and four international organizations dedicated to fighting extremism around the world. We also released a new South Asia Strategy, and nearly all of the 39 nations that comprise the NATO-led Resolute Support Mission increased their military contributions. More broadly, our NATO Allies are in the process of increasing their defense spending and half of NATO countries have committed to meet the 2% defense spending target by 2024. Our Asian allies have also boosted their defense spending this year in response to the growing North Korean threat. These increased contributions support President Trump's call for our allies and partners to take a greater share in defending our shared values.

The Department also took definitive steps to enhance our lethality and readiness. In FY2017, nearly \$1 billion was reprogrammed to improve our missile defense and munitions capabilities, and AT&L laid the groundwork for increased cooperation with commercial industry to maintain our competitive edge. The Comptroller also initiated the Department's first agency-wide audit, a significant part of our pledge to provide security and solvency for the American taxpayer. On the technology front, DoD's CIO established a new civilian personnel system to help manage cyber professionals across the department. This, coupled with the decision to elevate CYBERCOM to combatant command status, will enable the Department to rapidly adapt to cyber threats.

The above examples are just a small sampling of the Department's achievements made this year as we prepare to head into an exciting 2018. Next month we will release the first National Defense Strategy in a decade, laying the groundwork for future defense budgets while setting our top-line priorities. The department will continue to prioritize peace through strength by making additional gains in lethality, creating opportunities for rapid innovation, and – with Congressional support – rebuilding military readiness.

We expect nothing less than the highest level of performance from you and your teams. You set the bar high in 2017 – let's keep that momentum going in 2018. As the New Year reenergizes our efforts, we ask that you drive towards the above priorities, always keeping in mind our Department's three lines of effort: restoring military readiness as we build a more lethal force, expanding and strengthening our alliances and partnerships, and bringing business innovation and affordability to the Department of Defense.

Thank you for helping make 2017 such a successful year for the Department!

Have a safe and happy New Year,
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