



CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20318-9999

Armed Forces Day 17 May 2008

Today, American citizens will pause to honor those of you who accept the grave and honorable responsibility of defending our country. It is right we do so.

The world remains a dangerous place. The hundreds of thousands of you who have deployed since September 11th -- many of you more than once -- already know that. You've stood up to those dangers. You've lost friends to them. You may even have lost a bit of yourself to them.

You and your families have sacrificed greatly, and we appreciate it.

The enemies we face, from radical extremists to regional powers with nuclear ambitions, directly and irrefutably threaten our vital national interests. They threaten our very way of life.

You stand between these dangers and the American people. You accepted a grave and honorable responsibility. You signed up, took an oath, made a promise to defend something larger than yourselves. And then you went out and did it.

Whether you serve in Baghdad or Bagram, Kabul or Kuwait -- whether you find yourself at sea in the Pacific, flying support missions over Europe, on the ground in Africa or working every day at stateside bases -- you are making a difference and so is every person in your family. Your service matters.

Thank you and God bless.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "M. G. Mullen", followed by a long horizontal line.

M. G. MULLEN
Admiral, U.S. Navy