

Secretary Hegseth's Message to the Force



From U.S. Department of Defense Public Affairs, Jan. 25, 2025

ARLINGTON, Va. – The following message to the U.S. armed forces was released by the new Defense Secretary, Pete Hegseth:

“It is the privilege of a lifetime to lead the warriors of the Department of Defense, under the leadership of our Commander in Chief Donald J. Trump. We will put America First, and we will never back down.

The President gave us a clear mission: achieve Peace through Strength. We will do this in three ways – by restoring the warrior ethos, rebuilding our military, and reestablishing deterrence.

o We will revive the warrior ethos and restore trust in our military. We are American warriors. We will defend our country. Our standards will be high, uncompromising, and clear. The strength of our military is our unity and our shared purpose.

o We will rebuild our military by matching threats to capabilities. This means reviving our defense industrial base, reforming our acquisition process, passing a financial audit, and rapidly fielding emerging technologies. We will remain the strongest and most lethal force in the world.

o We will reestablish deterrence by defending our homeland – on the ground and in the sky. We will work with allies and partners to deter aggression in the Indo-Pacific by Communist China, as well as supporting the President’s priority to end wars responsibly and reorient to key threats. We will stand by our allies – and our enemies are on notice.

All of this will be done with a focus on lethality, meritocracy, accountability, standards, and readiness.

I have committed my life to warfighters and their families. Just as my fellow soldiers had my back on the battlefield, know that I will always have your back. We serve together at a dangerous time. Our enemies will neither rest nor relent. And neither will we. We will stand shoulder to shoulder to meet the urgency of this moment.

Like each of you, I love my country and swore an oath to defend the Constitution. We will do that each and every day, as one team. Together we will accomplish the President’s mission to deter war, and if necessary, defeat and destroy our enemies. Godspeed!”