



THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

**THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
HAS AWARDED**

**THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE MEDAL FOR
DISTINGUISHED PUBLIC SERVICE**

TO

President Barack Obama

For distinguished public service as the Commander-in-Chief of the finest fighting force the world has ever known from January 20, 2009 to January 20, 2017.

January 2017



Ash Carter

*Ash Carter
Secretary of Defense*



Citation

*to accompany the award of the
Department of Defense Medal
for Distinguished Public Service*

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President Barack Obama distinguished himself as the Commander-in-Chief of the finest fighting force the world has ever known from January 20, 2009 to January 20, 2017. President Obama kept our nation safe, led a strategic transition in our defense strategy, strengthened our alliances and pursued new partnerships, and laid the foundation for a force of the future that will continue to win our nation's wars. President Obama countered decisively the most immediate threat to our national security – terrorism. He directed the operation to kill Osama bin Laden, decimated Al Qaeda's terrorist network, put the Islamic State of Iraq and Levant on a path to a lasting defeat, and developed counterterrorism platforms from South Asia to North Africa. He did so relentlessly, effectively, with increased transparency, and in strict accordance with our values. Simultaneously, President Obama achieved verifiable nuclear disarmament of Iran – the gravest threat to security in the Middle East. And while countering proliferation abroad, he directed recapitalization of our vitally important nuclear deterrent here at home. As he successfully neutralized immediate threats to our security, President Obama also directed a transition in our defense strategy. He implemented a rigorous intellectual, policy, and legal framework to guide the most solemn of decisions that a Commander-in-Chief makes – to deploy and employ our men and women in uniform. He supported strategic investments to perpetuate our military edge in the air, at sea, with missile defenses, and in space and cyber domains, including by establishing the U.S. Cyber Command. In so doing, he led the transformation of the U.S. military from over a decade of counterinsurgency into a full-spectrum fighting force. And, critically, he directed the United States rebalance to the Asia-Pacific – the most consequential region for America's future. President Obama also recognized that security in the world cannot be America's responsibility alone. He strengthened our alliances and pursued new partnerships. In Europe, he led the adaptation of NATO to continue its commitment to a stable Afghanistan, and to actively counter threats to Europe's east and south. In particular, President Obama directed the bolstering of our allied military presence in Europe and reestablishing of deterrence against Russian aggression. In Asia, he modernized our alliances with Japan and Korea, strengthening the cornerstone of security in East Asia and deterring threats from North Korea. In the Middle East, he strengthened Israel's qualitative military edge, including with an unprecedented package of foreign military funding. But in an ever changing world, President Obama recognized that America's relationships must also change. He directed the advancement of new strategic partnerships, including the unprecedented deepening of the strategically consequential U.S.-India partnership. In all of this, President Obama recognized that the source of America's greatest strength, including its military strength, is its people. To ensure that the U.S. military stays the best, he understood that we must continue to attract, recruit, retain, develop, and transition the best talent that our nation has to offer. His repealing of the don't ask, don't tell policy and his support for opening all military occupations and position to women will help ensure that. He also championed advanced research and innovative programs to care for the nation's wounded warriors and their families, and led efforts to help veterans make the transition to civilian life. These and many other distinctive accomplishments of President Obama reflect great credit upon himself, the Department of Defense, and the United States of America.