



SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
1000 DEFENSE PENTAGON  
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1000

NOV 6 9 2020

Mr. President,

It has been a distinct honor to once again serve our great nation and fellow citizens, this time as the 27<sup>th</sup> Secretary of Defense for the world's premier military force.

I have served these last few years as both Secretary of Defense and Secretary of the Army in full faith to my sworn oath to support and defend the Constitution, and to safeguard the country and its interests, while keeping the Department out of politics and abiding by the values Americans hold dear.

I first took this oath thirty-eight years ago as a Cadet at the United States Military Academy, and many times more since then. I have lived my professional life in accordance with the West Point motto of "Duty, Honor, Country" and have put service to Nation above self as a 21-year Active Duty, Reserve, and National Guard Army officer — in both war and peace, at home and abroad — and as a public servant in the Executive and Legislative branches of government on multiple occasions.

I have been privileged to serve with an outstanding team of military and civilian leaders across the Department of Defense, and alongside the best men and women in uniform the nation has to offer these last few years. Together, we have made solid progress implementing the National Defense Strategy by modernizing the force, improving its readiness and lethality, strengthening ties with allies and partners, and reforming the Department to make it more efficient. We have also made major strides in taking care of our military personnel, spouses, and their families, and launched important initiatives to improve diversity, inclusion, and equity in the Armed Services.

At the same time, we stood up the Space Force and Space Command, recapitalized the nuclear triad, expanded the authorities and resources of Cyber Command, launched a readiness and capabilities renaissance in the Army, and proposed a bold vision for a 500+ ship Navy. As such, I am confident the Defense Department's progress on all of these initiatives has improved the security of the United States and advanced our interests abroad, and that we would prevail in any conflict if called upon to do so.

In addition to these major changes that are underway, I am proud of how the Defense Department handled the following issues in particular:

- Provided full and timely support to the American people in response to COVID-19, while protecting the force and maintaining our military readiness;

- Strengthened allies and partners, defended international rules and norms, and demonstrated U.S. commitment to confront China's bad behavior in the Indo-Pacific;
- Worked closely with NATO to improve allied readiness, deter Russian adventurism, ensure the enduring defeat of ISIS, and chart a new path forward in Afghanistan;
- Acted decisively to restore deterrence with Iran, curtail Tehran's malign behavior, and help defend and reassure regional partners;
- Brought multiple terrorist leaders to justice and focused counter-terrorism operations abroad against threats to the homeland; and,
- Conducted a Defense Wide Review process and Service reforms that freed up time, money, and manpower to put back into the Department's top priorities.

I serve the country in deference to the Constitution, so I accept your decision to replace me. I step aside knowing there is much we achieved at the Defense Department over the last eighteen months to protect the nation and improve the readiness, capabilities, and professionalism of the joint force, while fundamentally transforming and preparing the military for the future.

I have never been prouder to serve my country than as a Soldier or Civilian in the Department of Defense, especially knowing that the military has the faith, confidence, and support of the American people. Moreover, I will always admire and remain forever proud of the great work our Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, Space Professionals, and Civilians do each and every day around the world and here at home to keep America safe.

They are all great patriots who are committed to those values and behaviors that represent the best of the military profession and mark the character and integrity of the Armed Forces the American people respect and admire. I want to thank them for living up to that standard, for honoring their oath to the Constitution, and for their support to me and my leadership team.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Matt. Egan". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.