Congressional Research Service
Informing the legislative debate since 1914

U.S. Periods of War and Dates of Recent Conflicts

Updated December 14, 2018

Congressional Research Service
https://crsreports.congress.gov
RS21405

CRS REPORT
Prepared for Members and
Committees of Congress

Summary

Many wars or conflicts in U.S. history have federally designated "periods of war," dates marking their beginning and ending. These dates are important for qualification for certain veterans' pension or disability benefits. Confusion can occur because beginning and ending dates for "periods of war" in many nonofficial sources are often different from those given in treaties and other official sources of information, and armistice dates can be confused with termination dates. This report lists the beginning and ending dates for "periods of war" found in Title 38 of the *Code of Federal Regulations*, dealing with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). It also lists and differentiates other beginning dates given in declarations of war, as well as termination of hostilities dates and armistice and ending dates given in proclamations, laws, or treaties. The dates for the recent conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq are included along with the official end date for Operation New Dawn in Iraq on December 15, 2011, and Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan on December 28, 2014. Operation Inherent Resolve continues along the Syrian-Iraqi border effective October 15, 2014.

For additional information, see the following CRS Products: CRS In Focus IF10539, *Defense Primer: Legal Authorities for the Use of Military Forces*, by Jennifer K. Elsea; CRS Report RL31133, *Declarations of War and Authorizations for the Use of Military Force: Historical Background and Legal Implications*, by Jennifer K. Elsea and Matthew C. Weed.

Contents

War Dates 1
Indian Wars 1
Spanish-American War 1
Mexican Border Period 2
World War I 2
World War I Against Germany 2
World War I Against Austria-Hungary 2
World War II 2
World War II with Germany 3
World War II with Japan 3
World War II with Italy 3
World War II with Bulgaria 4
World War II with Hungary 4
World War II with Romania 4
Korean Conflict 4
Vietnam Era 4
Tonkin Gulf Resolution 4
Conflicts in Lebanon 1982-1983, Grenada 1983, and Panama 1989-1990 5
Persian Gulf War 5
Recent Conflicts: Afghanistan and Iraq 6
Afghanistan—Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) 6
Afghanistan—Operation Freedom's Sentinel (OFS) 7
Iraq—Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) 8
Iraq—Operation New Dawn (OND) 9
Islamic State-Operation Inherent Resolve (OIR) 10

Contacts

Author Information 10

War Dates

Congress, usually through a declaration of war, has often been the first governmental authority to designate the beginning date of a war or armed conflict. The President, or executive branch officials responsible to him, through proclamation, or Congress, through legislation, has been responsible for designating the war's termination date.[1] In some cases, later legislation is enacted to extend these beginning and ending dates for the purpose of broadening eligibility for veterans' benefits.[2] This report notes the variations in the dates cited in the *Code of Federal Regulations* (C.F.R.) "periods of war" and those dates given in the declarations of war beginning and the proclamations, laws, or treaties terminating such conflicts.[3] Adding to the confusion, during World War II, wars were declared and terminated with six individual combatant countries. Moreover, armistice dates are also often confused with termination dates.[4]

Title 38, Part 3, Section 3.2 of the *Code of Federal Regulations*, dealing with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), lists official beginning and termination dates for most war periods from the Indian Wars to the present to be used in determining the availability of veterans' benefits.[5] The material below summarizes these dates. Where applicable, a summary of the Department of Veterans Affairs official beginning and termination dates is provided followed by a citation to the lettered C.F.R. section. For some entries, this initial summary is followed by an explanatory note or declaration, armistice, cease-fire, or termination dates cited by other official sources. Also included are dates for the recent conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Indian Wars

January 1, 1817, through December 31, 1898, inclusive. Service must have been rendered with U.S. military forces against Indian tribes or nations. *Code of Federal Regulations*, 3.2 (a).

Spanish-American War

April 21, 1898, through July 4, 1902, inclusive. If the veteran served with the U.S. military forces engaged in hostilities in the Moro Province, the ending date is July 15, 1903. The Philippine Insurrection and the Boxer Rebellion are included for the purposes of benefit determination under this C.F.R. section. *Code of Federal Regulations*, 3.2 (b).

---

[1] For background on the War Powers Act and use of military force abroad, see the following: CRS Report RL31133, *Declarations of War and Authorizations for the Use of Military Force: Historical Background and Legal Implications*, by Jennifer K. Elsea and Matthew C. Weed, and CRS In Focus IF10539, *Defense Primer: Legal Authorities for the Use of Military Forces*, by Jennifer K. Elsea.

[2] The American Legion also follows these dates closely in determining who is eligible for membership; the Veterans of Foreign Wars has its own much more elaborate list of dates.

[3] *Code of Federal Regulation* (C.F.R.) Title 38, Part 3, §3.2 Periods of war, at https://ecfr.io/Title-38/pt38.1.3#se38.1.3_12.

[4] *Armistice*—"In International law, a suspension or temporary cessation of hostilities by agreement between belligerent powers." *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, Joint Publication 1-02, Department of Defense, 12 April 2010, on p.36 at https://fas.org/irp/doddir/dod/jp1_02-april2010.pdf.

[5] Title 38 of the C.F.R., titled "Pensions, Bonuses and Veterans' Relief," is not to be confused with Title 38 of the *United States Code*, titled "Veterans Benefits." Laws enacted in each Congress are first collected as session laws, published in the *Statutes at Large* for each session. These laws are then codified by subject and published in the *United States Code*. The general guidance given by these laws results in the issuance of more detailed regulations to implement these laws. Such regulations are first published in the *Federal Register* and are then codified by subject in the C.F.R.

Declared by an act of Congress April 25, 1898 (30 Stat. 364, Ch. 189). An armistice signed August 12, 1898. Terminated by Treaty signed at Paris, December 10, 1898 (30 Stat. 1754), ratified and proclaimed April 11, 1899.

Mexican Border Period

May 9, 1916, through April 5, 1917. In the case of a veteran who during such period served in Mexico, on the borders thereof, or in the adjacent waters thereto. *Code of Federal Regulations*, 3.2 (h).

World War I

April 6, 1917, through November 11, 1918, inclusive. If the veteran served with the U.S. military forces in Russia, the ending date is April 1, 1920. Service after November 11, 1918, and before July 2, 1921, is considered World War I service if the veteran served in the active military, naval, or air service after April 5, 1917, and before November 12, 1918. *Code of Federal Regulations*, 3.2 (c).

World War I Against Germany

Declared by Joint Resolution of Congress of April 6, 1917 (40 Stat. 429, Ch. 1). Armistice signed near Compiègne, France, November 11, 1918. Terminated July 2, 1921, by Joint Resolution of Congress (42 Stat. 105, Ch. 40, 1).

World War I Against Austria-Hungary

Declared by Joint Resolution of Congress, December 7, 1917 (40 Stat. 429, Ch. 1). An armistice signed near Compiègne, France, November 11, 1918. Terminated July 2, 1921, by Joint Resolution of Congress (42 Stat. 106, Ch. 40, 3).

World War II

December 7, 1941, through December 31, 1946, inclusive. If the veteran was in service on December 31, 1946, continuous service before July 26, 1947, is considered World War II service. *Code of Federal Regulations*, 3.2 (d).

During World War II, war was officially declared against six separate countries. The war with each was not over until the effective date of the Treaty of Peace. Note also the confusion cited

below over which day is the official Victory in Europe Day (V-E Day)[6] and Victory over Japan Day (V-J Day).[7]

World War II with Germany

Declared by Joint Resolution of Congress, December 11, 1941 (55 Stat. 796, Ch. 564). German representative Colonel General Alfred Jodl signed the unconditional act of surrender to Allied representatives in a schoolhouse in Reims, France, on May 7, 1945. A second German surrender ceremony was held on May 8 in Berlin at the insistence of the U.S.S.R. Cessation of hostilities declared as of noon, December 31, 1946, by presidential proclamation of December 31, 1946 (Proc. no. 2714, 61 Stat. 1048). State of war with the "government of Germany" terminated October 19, 1951, by Joint Resolution of Congress of that date (65 Stat. 451, Ch. 519), by Presidential Proclamation 2950, October 24, 1951. No peace treaty with Germany was signed.

World War II with Japan

Declared by Joint Resolution of Congress, December 8, 1941 (55 Stat. 795, Ch. 561). Japanese representatives publicly signed unconditional surrender document on the deck of the USS *Missouri* anchored in Tokyo Bay on September 2, 1945. President Truman proclaimed this date Victory over Japan Day or V-J Day. Cessation of hostilities declared as of 12 noon, December 31, 1946, by presidential proclamation of December 31, 1946 (Proc. no. 2714, 61 Stat. 1048). Terminated by Multilateral Treaty of Peace with Japan, signed at San Francisco, September 8, 1951 (3 UST 3329), and ratified March 20, 1952, effective April 28, 1952.

World War II with Italy

Declared by Joint Resolution of Congress, December 11, 1941 (55 Stat. 797, Ch. 565). Cessation of hostilities declared as of noon December 31, 1946, by presidential proclamation of December

[6] May 7, 1945, is listed as V-E Day in commentary about signing the first German surrender document in *Historic Documents of World War II* by Walter Consuelo Langsam (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1958), p. 144. However, May 8, 1945, is cited as V-E day in *The Encyclopedia of American Facts and Dates*, p. 528; as the "Official V-E Day" in Louis L. Snyder, *Louis L. Snyder's Historical Guide to World War Two* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1982), p. 736; and the *World Almanac of World War II*, ed. Brigadier Peter Young (New York: Pharos Books, 1981), p. 347, states in its chronology for May 8, "The British and Americans celebrate VE Day (Victory in Europe Day). Truman, Churchill and King George VI all make special broadcasts." Although President Truman did not officially proclaim May 7 as V-E (Victory in Europe) Day, he did proclaim Sunday, May 13, 1945, a day of prayer. To make for more confusion, his May 8, 1945, Proclamation 2651, proclaiming May 13 as a day of prayer, is titled, "Victory in Europe; Day of Prayer" (3 C.F.R., 1943-1948 Comp.), p. 55. In addition, his May 8 news conference in which he proclaims May 13 a day of prayer is titled, "The President's News Conference on V-E Day"—*Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States. Harry S. Truman, 1945* (Washington: GPO, 1961), p. 43.

[7] In his news conference of August 14, 1945, announcing news of the Japanese government's complete acceptance of terms of surrender, President Truman states, "Proclamation of V-J Day must wait upon the formal signing of the surrender terms by Japan."—*Public Papers,* p. 216. The proclamation of September 2 as V-J Day was given in his September 1, 1945, "Speech to the American People after the Signing of the Terms of Unconditional Surrender by Japan."—*Public Papers,* p. 254. However, no formal, numbered proclamation was apparently issued. Both August 14, the day of President Truman's announcement of the Japanese surrender, and September 2, the official day proclaimed by President Truman in his speech, are cited as V-J Day in *Chase's Calendar of Events 2002* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2002), pp. 421 and 555. August 15 is cited as V-J Day by *The Encyclopedia of American Facts and Dates*, 9th ed., by Gordon Carruth (New York: Harper Collins, 1993), p. 530. August 15, on which the Japanese Emperor made his historic broadcast to the Japanese people telling of Japan's surrender, is cited as V-J Day in *The World Almanac of World War II*, p. 353.

31, 1946 (Proc. no. 2714, 61 Stat. 1048). Terminated by Treaty of Peace dated at Paris, February 10, 1947 (61 Stat. 1247), effective September 15, 1947.

World War II with Bulgaria

Declared by Joint Resolution of Congress, June 5, 1942 (56 Stat. 307, Ch. 323). Cessation of hostilities declared as of noon December 31, 1946, by presidential proclamation of December 31, 1946 (Proc. no. 2714, 61 Stat. 1048). Terminated by Treaty of Peace dated at Paris, February 10, 1947 (61 Stat. 1915), effective September 15, 1947.

World War II with Hungary

Declared by Joint Resolution of Congress, June 5, 1942 (56 Stat. 307, Ch. 324). Cessation of hostilities declared as of noon December 31, 1946, by presidential proclamation (Proc. no. 2714, 61 Stat. 1048). Terminated by Treaty of Peace dated at Paris, February 10, 1947 (61 Stat. 1757), effective September 15, 1947.

World War II with Romania

Declared by Joint Resolution of Congress, June 5, 1942 (56 Stat. 307, Ch. 325). Cessation of hostilities declared as of noon December 31, 1946, by presidential proclamation of December 31, 1946 (Proc. no. 2714, 61 Stat. 1048). Terminated by Treaty of Peace dated at Paris, February 10, 1947 (61 Stat. 1757), effective September 15, 1947.

Korean Conflict

June 27, 1950, through January 31, 1955, inclusive. *Code of Federal Regulations*, 3.2 (e).

On June 25, 1950, North Korean Communist forces attacked South Korean positions south of the 38th parallel, leading to an immediate United Nations (U.N.) Security Council resolution calling for a cease-fire and withdrawal of the North Korean forces. On June 26, President Truman ordered U.S. air and sea forces in the Far East to aid South Korea. On June 27, the U.N. Security Council adopted a resolution asking U.N. members for assistance in repelling the North Korean armed attack and in restoring peace and security in the area. On June 30, the President stated that he had authorized the use of certain U.S. air and ground units wherever necessary. No declaration of war was requested of Congress and no authorization for use of force, by statute, was requested or enacted. An armistice signed at Panmunjom, Korea, on July 27, 1953, between U.N. and Communist representatives (4 UST 234; TIAS 2782). No peace treaty was ever signed.

Vietnam Era

The period beginning on February 28, 1961, and ending on May 7, 1975, inclusive, in the case of a veteran who served in the Republic of Vietnam during that period. The period beginning on August 5, 1964, and ending on May 7, 1975, inclusive, in all other cases. *Code of Federal Regulations*, 3.2 (f).

Tonkin Gulf Resolution

No declaration of war was requested of Congress. Instead, there was a Joint Resolution of Congress to promote the maintenance of international peace and security in Southeast Asia, which

stated in part that Congress "approves and supports the determination of the President, as Commander in Chief, to take all necessary measures to repel any armed attack against the forces of the United States and to prevent any further aggression." H.J. Res. 1145, P.L. 88-408, August 10, 1964 (78 Stat. 384). The Tonkin Gulf Resolution was formally repealed on January 12, 1971, by P.L. 91-672, (84 Stat. 2055). The Agreement Ending the War and Restoring Peace in Vietnam signed in Paris, January 27, 1973 (TIAS 7674). Joint communiqué implementing the agreement and protocols of January 27, 1973, signed at Paris and entered into force, June 13, 1973.

Conflicts in Lebanon 1982-1983, Grenada 1983, and Panama 1989-1990

Lebanon. U.S. Marines deployed on August 21, 1982 and September 29, 1982, were part of a temporary multinational force in Lebanon. See S. 639, P.L. 98-43 (Lebanon Emergency Assistance Act of 1983).

Grenada. On October 25, 1983, U.S. troops were deployed to Grenada "to restore law and order" and to protect American lives at the request of the members of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States. Known as Operation Urgent Fury, by December 15, 1983, all forces had been withdrawn.

Panama. On December 21, 1989, President George H.W. Bush reported that he had ordered U.S. military forces to Panama to protect the lives of American citizens and bring General Noriega to justice. Known as Operation Just Cause, by February 13, 1990, all the invasion forces had been withdrawn.

Note: Participation in these conflicts alone does not confer automatic veterans' status for servicemembers. For more information, see CRS Report R42324, *Who Is a "Veteran"?—Basic Eligibility for Veterans' Benefits*, by Scott D. Szymendera, and CRS Report RL31133, *Declarations of War and Authorizations for the Use of Military Force: Historical Background and Legal Implications*, by Jennifer K. Elsea and Matthew C. Weed.

Persian Gulf War

August 2, 1990, through April 6, 1991, when Iraq officially accepted cease-fire terms. Congress passed H.J.Res. 77, Authorizing the Use of Military Force Against Iraq, the same day it was introduced (January 12, 1991), and it was signed by the President on January 14, 1991 (P.L. 102-1). Operation Desert Storm and the air war phase began at 3 a.m. January 17, 1991 (January 16, 7 p.m. Eastern Standard Time). Allied ground assault began at 4 a.m. February 24 (February 23, 8 p.m. EST). Cease-fire declared at 8:01 a.m. February 28, 1991 (12:01 a.m. EST).[8] Cease-fire terms negotiated at Safwan, Iraq, March 1, 1991.[9] Iraq officially accepted cease-fire terms, April

[8] *Cease fire*—"A command given to any unit or individual firing any weapon to stop engaging the target." *Department of Defense Dictionary*, p. 67.

[9] This agreement is actually a transcript of the discussion held at Safwan Airfield, Iraq, between Coalition participants, U.S. Gen. M. Norman Schwarzkopf and Lt. Gen. Khalid of the Joint Arab Forces, and Iraqi participants, Lt. Gen. Sultan Kasim Ahmad, Chief of Staff of the Ministry of Defense, and Lt. Gen. Sala Abud Mahmud, III Corps Commander.

6, 1991.[10] Cease-fire took effect April 11, 1991. Currently, the *Code of Federal Regulations*, 3.2 (i) does not list an official end date.[11]

On May 18, 2018, President Donald J. Trump issued a Notice to Congress, "to continue in effect beyond May 22, 2018, for 1 year the national emergency with respect to the stabilization of Iraq declared in Executive Order13303."[12]

Recent Conflicts: Afghanistan and Iraq

Shortly after the terrorist attacks in the United States on September 11, 2001, President George W. Bush called on Afghanistan's leaders to hand over Osama bin Laden and other al Qaeda leaders and close their terrorist training camps. He also demanded the return of all detained foreign nationals and the opening of terrorist training sites to inspection.[13] These demands were rejected. The Administration sought international support from the United Nations (U.N.) for military action against Afghanistan. U.N. Security Council Resolution 1368 of September 12, 2001, stated that the Council "Expresses its readiness to take all necessary steps to respond to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 ... "[14] This resolution was interpreted by many as U.N. authorization for military action in response to the 9/11 attacks. As a result, Congress passed S.J.Res. 23, "Authorization for Use of Military Force," on September 14, 2001. This bill was signed by President George W. Bush on September 18, 2001, as P.L. 107-40, and it authorized the President to use "all necessary and appropriate force against those nations, organizations, or persons he determines planned, authorized, committed, or aided the terrorist attacks that occurred on September 11, 2001, or harbored such organizations or persons.... "[15] Operations in the region began with U.S. military forces deployed to the region on October 7, 2001.

Afghanistan—Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF)

Operations began with U.S. military forces deployed to Afghanistan to combat terrorism on October 7, 2001, and designated Operation Enduring Freedom.

On March 27, 2009, President Barack Obama announced a new strategy in Afghanistan and Pakistan and ordered the deployment of 17,000 troops that had been previously requested by General David McKiernan.[16] In President Obama's "Address to the Nation on the Way Forward

[10] Acceptance is in the form of a letter to the U.N. Security Council accepting the terms of U.N. Resolution 687 (U.N. document S22485, April 11, 1991).

[11] 38 C.F.R. Part 3, §3.2 Periods of war, at http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?rgn=div5&node=38:1.0.1.1.4#se38.1.3_12. Note: Section (i) for the Persian Gulf War lists "August 2, 1990, through date to be prescribed by Presidential proclamation or law." No specific end date is listed as of the date of this report.

[12] The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, "Notice Regarding the Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to the Stabilization of Iraq," May 18, 2018, at https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/notice-regarding-continuation-national-emergency-respect-stabilization-iraq-2/.

[13] President George W. Bush, "Address Before A Joint Session of Congress on the United States Response to the Terrorist Attacks of September 11," September 20, 2001, p. 65, at https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/infocus/bushrecord/documents/Selected_Speeches_George_W_Bush.pdf.

[14] United Nations, Security Council Resolution 1368 (2001), adopted by the Security Council at its 4370th meeting, on September 12, 2001, at https://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/Documents/1368.pdf.

[15] P.L. 107-40, "To authorize the use of United States Armed Forces against those responsible for the recent attacks launched against the United States," at http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PLAW-107publ40/pdf/PLAW-107publ40.pdf.

[16] The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, "Remarks by the President on a New Strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan," press release, March 27, 2009, at https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-a-new-strategy-afghanistan-and-pakistan.

in Afghanistan and Pakistan" at West Point on December 1, 2009, he stated that "it is in our vital national interest to send an additional 30,000 U.S. troops to Afghanistan. After 18 months, our troops will begin to come home. These are the resources that we need to seize the initiative, while building the Afghan capacity that can allow for a responsible transition of our forces out of Afghanistan."[17]

On June 22, 2011, President Obama again addressed the American people about the way forward in Afghanistan: "We will begin the drawdown of U.S. troops from a position of strength. We have exceeded our expectations on our core goal of defeating al-Qaeda killing 20 of its top 30 leaders, including Osama bin Laden. We have broken the Taliban's momentum, and trained over 100,000 Afghan National Security Forces."[18] As a result, U.S. forces began the withdrawal of 10,000 troops from Afghanistan.

On December 28, 2014, after 13 years of combat operations, President Obama and Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel announced the end of OEF, a conflict that claimed the lives of more than 2,200 American troops, and the beginning of a follow-on mission on January 1, 2015.[19] A transition ceremony was held at the International Security and Assistance Force headquarters in Kabul, Afghanistan, attended by U.S. commanders and allied troops from the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). For more information, see CRS Report RL30588, *Afghanistan: Post-Taliban Governance, Security, and U.S. Policy*, by Kenneth Katzman and Clayton Thomas.

Afghanistan—Operation Freedom's Sentinel (OFS)

Effective January 1, 2015, Secretary of Defense Hagel announced that the U.S. mission in Afghanistan would focus on training, advising, and assisting Afghan security forces and designated it as Operation Freedom's Sentinel.[20] During 2015, approximately 13,000 troops, with nearly 10,000 from the United States, were deployed alongside NATO's 28 member nations and 13 partner nations for its Resolute Support Mission (RSM).[21] RSM focused on training, advising, and assisting (TAA) the Afghan Security Institutions (ASI) and the Afghan National Defense & Security Forces (ANDSF) in order to build their capabilities and long-term sustainability.[22] On

[17] The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, "Remarks by the President in Address to the Nation on the Way Forward in Afghanistan and Pakistan," press release, December 1, 2009, at https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-address-nation-way-forward-afghanistan-and-pakistan.

[18] The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, "Remarks by the President on the Way Forward in Afghanistan," press release, June 22, 2011, at https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2011/06/22/remarks-president-way-forward-afghanistan.

[19] U.S. Department of Defense (DOD), "Obama, Hagel Mark End of Operation Enduring Freedom," news release, December 28, 2014, at https://dod.defense.gov/News/Article/Article/603860/obama-hagel-mark-end-of-operation-enduring-freedom/.

[20] DOD, "Statement by Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel on Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Freedom's Sentinel," news release, NR-631-14, December 28, 2014, at https://dod.defense.gov/News/News-Releases/News-Release-View/Article/605332/statement-by-secretary-of-defense-chuck-hagel-on-operation-enduring-freedom-and/.

[21] NATO Resolute Support Mission (RSM) "placemat": Key Facts and Figures, at http://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2015_10/20151007_2015-10-rsm-placemat.pdf. As of October 2015, there were 13,110 troops from 42 nations including the United States. Note on numbers: The number of troops above reflects the overall contribution of individual contributing nations. They should be taken as indicative as they change daily, in accordance with the deployment procedures of the individual troop-contributing nations.

[22] NATO, Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan, October 13, 2016, at http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_113694.htm. At the 2016 NATO Summit in Warsaw, Allied leaders decided to extend the presence of RSM beyond 2016. Two years later, at the Brussels Summit in July 2018, they committed to sustaining the mission until conditions indicate a change is appropriate.

October 1, 2015, Gen. John F. Campbell, commander, RSM, U.S. Forces-Afghanistan/ISAF, defined the U.S. military's objectives: "U.S. forces are now carrying out two well-defined missions: a Counter-Terrorism (CT) mission against the remnants of Al-Qaeda and the Resolute Support TAA mission in support of Afghan security forces. Our CT and TAA efforts are concurrent and complementary. While we continue to attack the remnants of Al-Qaeda, we are also building the ANDSF so that they can secure the Afghan people, win the peace, and contribute to stability throughout the region."[23] On October 15, 2015, President Obama announced that the posture of 9,800 U.S. troops in Afghanistan would remain through 2016. By the end of 2016, 5,500 troops were expected to remain in Afghanistan to support the U.S. embassy in Kabul and at bases in Bagram, Jalalabad, and Kandahar to train Afghans and focus on counterterrorism operations in the region.[24]

On August 21, 2017, President Donald Trump announced his strategy in Afghanistan and South Asia in a speech at Fort Myer, Virginia. He stated, "In Afghanistan and Pakistan, America's interests are clear: We must stop the resurgence of safe havens that enable terrorists to threaten America, and we must prevent nuclear weapons and materials from coming into the hands of terrorists and being used against us, or anywhere in the world for that matter."[25]

On September 2, 2018, Army Gen. John M. Nicholson passed command of NATO's Resolute Support Mission and U.S. Forces Afghanistan to Army Gen. Austin S. Miller during a ceremony in Kabul, Afghanistan.[26] Gen. Miller emphasized to coalition troops that what they are doing in Afghanistan makes their own countries and citizens safer. The "train, advise, assist" mission allows Afghan security forces to take the fight to the enemy, and to give the Afghan government the security needed to provide stability and no longer a safe haven for terrorists.[27]

See CRS Report R44853, *Additional Troops for Afghanistan? Considerations for Congress*, by Kathleen J. McInnis and Andrew Feickert, for more information.

Iraq—Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF)

In mid-2002, the George W. Bush Administration began deploying U.S. troops to Kuwait. During the 107th Congress (2001-2002), Congress debated whether to send U.S. troops to Iraq, and on October 16, 2002, H.J.Res. 114 was signed into law as P.L. 107-243, Authorization for the Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution of 2002. This law authorized the President to use military force to "defend the national security of the United States against the continuing threat posed by Iraq" and "to enforce all relevant U.N. Security Council resolutions against Iraq."[28]

---

[23] Gen. John F. Campbell, commander, Resolute Support Mission, U.S. Forces-Afghanistan/ISAF, "Operation Freedom's Sentinel and our continued security investment in Afghanistan," Army.mil, October 1, 2015, at https://www.army.mil/article/156517/operation_freedoms_sentinel_and_our_continued_security_investment_in_afghanistan.

[24] The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, "Statement by the President on Afghanistan," October 15, 2015, at https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2015/10/15/statement-president-afghanistan.

[25] The White House, Briefings and Statements, "Remarks by President Trump on the Strategy in Afghanistan and South Asia," August 21, 2017, at https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/remarks-president-trump-strategy-afghanistan-south-asia/.

[26] Jim Garamone, "Miller Takes over NATO, U.S. Commands in Afghanistan," DOD News, September 2, 2018, at https://dod.defense.gov/News/Article/Article/1618550/miller-takes-over-nato-us-commands-in-afghanistan/.

[27] Jim Garamone, "Commander Wants Coalition Forces in Afghanistan to Know Why They Fight," DOD News, September 29, 2018, at https://dod.defense.gov/News/Article/Article/1649125/commander-wants-coalition-forces-in-afghanistan-to-know-why-they-fight/.

[28] P.L. 107-243, "Authorization for the use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution of 2002," at

On November 8, 2002, the U.N. Security Council adopted Resolution 1441. This resolution found Iraq in breach of past U.N. resolutions prohibiting stockpiling and importing weapons of mass destruction (WMDs).[29] The Hussein government in Iraq continued to be uncooperative with U.N. investigators, which heightened the situation through spring 2003.

In an address to the nation on March 17, 2003, President George W. Bush gave Iraqi President Saddam Hussein and his sons a 48-hour ultimatum to leave Iraq.[30] On March 19, 2003, President Bush announced to the nation that the early stages of military operations against Iraq had begun and designated them Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF).[31]

On May 1, 2003, in an address to the nation, President Bush declared that "major military combat actions in Iraq have ended,"[32] yet U.S. troops remained in Iraq.

A ceremony at Camp Victory in Baghdad on January 1, 2010, marked the end of the Multinational Forces-Iraq (MNF-I) and the beginning of United States Forces-Iraq (USF-I), which merged five major command groups into one single headquarters command.[33] As General David Petraeus, head of U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM), noted, "This ceremony marks another significant transition here in Iraq. It represents another important milestone in the continued drawdown of American Forces."[34] Troops from 30 countries have served in MNF-I since 2003.

On August 31, 2010, President Obama announced that the American combat mission in Iraq had ended. A transitional force of U.S. troops remained in Iraq with a different mission: advising and assisting Iraq's security forces, supporting Iraqi troops in targeted counterterrorism missions, and protecting U.S. civilians.[35]

Iraq—Operation New Dawn (OND)

Effective September 1, 2010, the military operations in Iraq acquired a new official designation: Operation New Dawn.[36] A short ceremony marked the transfer in which Army General Ray Odierno passed command of USF-I to Army General Lloyd J. Austin. On December 15, 2011, U.S. Armed Forces in Baghdad marked the official end of the war in Iraq. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and other top U.S. military leaders observed the official end of U.S. Forces Iraq's mission after nearly nine years of conflict that claimed the lives of nearly 4,500 U.S. troops.[37] On the military side of Baghdad International Airport, Army General Martin E.

---

https://www.congress.gov/107/plaws/publ243/PLAW-107publ243.pdf.

[29] United Nations, Security Council Resolution 1441 adopted on November 8, 2002, at its 4644th meeting at http://www.un.org/Depts/unmovic/documents/1441.pdf.

[30] U.S. President (G.W. Bush), "Address to the Nation on Iraq," *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents*, March 24, 2003, vol. 39, no. 12, pp. 338-341.

[31] Ibid, pp. 342-343.

[32] Ibid, May 5, 2003, vol. 39, no. 18, pp. 516-518.

[33] Staff Sgt. Luke Koladish and Sgt. Kat Briere, "New Command Marks Milestone in Iraq," U.S. Army website, January 2, 2010, at http://www.army.mil/article/32437/New_command_marks_milestone_in_Iraq/.

[34] Ibid.

[35] The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, "Remarks by the President in Address to the Nation on the End of Combat Operations in Iraq," August 31, 2010, at https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2010/08/31/remarks-president-address-nation-end-combat-operations-iraq.

[36] U.S. Army, "Operation New Dawn," August 31, 2010, at https://www.army.mil/article/44526/operation_new_dawn.

[37] Cheryl Pellerin, "Dempsey: Iraq Campaign Was worth the Cost," *DOD News*, December 15, 2011, at http://archive.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=66488.

Dempsey, Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta, Army General Lloyd J. Austin III, commanding general of U.S. Forces Iraq, and U.S. Ambassador to Iraq James F. Jeffrey addressed U.S. and Iraqi officials and more than 150 troops and media from around the world.[38]

For more information, see CRS Report R45025, *Iraq: Background and U.S. Policy*, by Christopher M. Blanchard, and CRS In Focus IF10404, *Iraq and U.S. Policy*, by Christopher M. Blanchard.

Islamic State-Operation Inherent Resolve (OIR)

Effective October 15, 2014, the DOD designated U.S. and coalition operations "Operation Inherent Resolve"[39] against the terrorist group the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL, another name for the Islamic State) along the Syrian-Iraqi border. The commander of U.S. 3rd Army and Army Forces Central Command was designated the commander of the Combined Joint Task Force–Operation Inherent Resolve (CJTF-OIR) on October 17, 2014.[40] Airstrikes by U.S. and coalition forces continue. As of June 30, 2017, the total cost of operations related to ISIS since kinetic operations started on Aug. 8, 2014, is $14.3 billion and the average daily cost is $13.6 million for 1,058 days of operations.[41] For more information, see CRS Report R44135, *Coalition Contributions to Countering the Islamic State*, by Kathleen J. McInnis, CRS In Focus IF10328, *The Islamic State*, by Christopher M. Blanchard and Carla E. Humud.

Author Information

Barbara Salazar Torreon
Senior Research Librarian

Disclaimer

This document was prepared by the Congressional Research Service (CRS). CRS serves as nonpartisan shared staff to congressional committees and Members of Congress. It operates solely at the behest of and under the direction of Congress. Information in a CRS Report should not be relied upon for purposes other than public understanding of information that has been provided by CRS to Members of Congress in connection with CRS's institutional role. CRS Reports, as a work of the United States Government, are not subject to copyright protection in the United States. Any CRS Report may be reproduced and distributed in its entirety without permission from CRS. However, as a CRS Report may include copyrighted images or material from a third party, you may need to obtain the permission of the copyright holder if you wish to copy or otherwise use copyrighted material.

[38] Ibid.

[39] DOD, Operation Inherent Resolve, at http://www.inherentresolve.mil/About-Us/.

[40] CJTF-OIR, Combined Joint Task Force Operation Inherent Resolve Fact Sheet at http://www.inherentresolve.mil/Portals/14/Documents/Mission/History.pdf?ver=2016-03-23-065243-743.

[41] CJTF-OIR, "Cost of Operations" at https://dod.defense.gov/OIR/.