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Holiday Message to the Troops from Command Sergeant Major Thomas Capel, International Security Assistance Force Senior Enlisted Leader

Coalition partners, Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines, I hope this message finds you in good spirits. I'd like to take a moment to recognize your hard work, sacrifice, and dedication to the mission here in Afghanistan. Believe me, the noble people of Afghanistan and the 352,000 brave men and women of the Afghan National Security Forces appreciate your efforts on their behalf. Today, they enjoy freedoms and hope for the future that would not have been possible without your training and support. The ANSF have consistently shown improvements in the protection and defense of their great nation from those who would deny it the freedom and dignity it deserves. Their continued success is a direct reflection on you and ISAF, the greatest coalition force ever assembled.

I know that many of you will miss spending this holiday season with your families, friends, and loved ones back at home. This is a sacrifice that no medal, coin, ribbon, or award can fully recognize. Take comfort in knowing you are sharing in a historic campaign for a modern and free Afghanistan. I also ask that you remember to thank your loved ones back home, for their sacrifice is great as well.

This past year I have traveled throughout Afghanistan and met with many of you and your leaders. In doing so I have learned many of your concerns and I will continue to do my best to bring attention and action where needed. It may not always be visible from your foxhole, forward operating base, or position on the battlefield, but great things **are** taking place here in Afghanistan.

Please take care of each other. I have been here in Afghanistan for many holidays and know the additional stress it can bring. Leaders, look after your Troops; and Troops, look after one another.

On behalf of the commander, Gen. John Allen, we are proud to serve with each and every one of you. Also, a special thanks from us to your families during this holiday season. We continue to count them as part of our team and consider their support vital to mission success.

THOMAS R. CAPEL  
Command Sergeant Major, USA  
Command Senior Enlisted Leader  
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