

# VFW Honors America's Iraq War Veterans

## We honor our Iraq War veterans and remember those still deployed to the region

Dec 14, 2023

**WASHINGTON** — On Dec. 15, the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) joins a grateful nation in remembering the end of the Iraq War, taking time to honor the service and sacrifice of the veterans of the conflict, and paying tribute to all those who made the ultimate sacrifice in the fight against terror.

On Dec. 15, 12 years ago, then-General Lloyd J. Austin III cased the colors of the U.S. Forces – Iraq, officially marking the end of Operation New Dawn. The ceremony was a significant milestone for America's military operations in the Middle East, which, including Operation Iraqi Freedom, wrapped up eight years, eight months and 26 days of persistent conflict in the country of Iraq. The combined toll of casualties from Operations Iraqi Freedom and Operation New Dawn far exceeded that of the much longer and more widespread Operation Enduring Freedom.

More than 1.5 million soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines deployed to Iraq between March 20, 2003, and Dec. 18, 2011. More than 32,000 U.S. service members were wounded in action in Iraq and its surrounding area, and 4,486 made the ultimate sacrifice, a total almost double the number of lives lost worldwide in the Global War on Terrorism. On Dec. 18, 2011, the last convoy of American troops left Iraq and more than 21 years after Saddam Hussein's forces invaded Kuwait, it seemed as though our nation could finally shift our focus away from Iraq. However, it only took three years before we were sending the U.S. military back to the country to combat the terror group ISIS through the still-ongoing Operation Inherent Resolve.

Please join the more than 1.4 million members of the VFW and its Auxiliary in honoring the veterans of the Iraq War and remembering those still deployed to the region.

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