DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
WASHINGTON DC 20310

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To Our Soldiers and Families

Today, President Bush announced his decision to return to twelve-month deployments in the CENTCOM theater for active Army units. The President's decision reflects the improved security situation in Iraq – one made possible by your unwavering commitment and willingness to sacrifice – as well as the recognition of the impact of extended deployments on Army Families and our readiness. Today's policy change will help reduce that strain as we continue to grow the Army and restore balance.

The Army will reduce "Boots On the Ground" time to no more than twelve months for all active component Soldiers deploying to the CENTCOM area of operations after 1 August 2008. Soldiers deploying prior to 1 August will complete their scheduled deployments.

The return to twelve-month deployments does not change the Army's dwell time policy. This policy is intended to give units time to properly reset and allow Soldiers, Families, and friends to reconnect.

You have chosen a most noble profession. With your Families standing with you in support, you have borne the increased stress and burden of this war for our Army and our Nation. A grateful Army and Nation thank you.

Sincerely,

Kenneth O. Preston
Sergeant Major of the Army

George W. Casey, Jr.
General, United States Army
Chief of Staff

Pete Geren
Secretary of the Army