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### **Executive Order 12985— Establishing the Armed Forces Service Medal**

*January 11, 1996*

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including my authority as Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces of the United States, it is hereby ordered as follows:

**Section 1. Establishment.** There is hereby established the Armed Forces Service Medal with accompanying ribbons and appurtenances, for award to members of the Armed Forces of the United States who, on or after June 1, 1992, in the opinion of the Joint Chiefs of Staff: (a) Participate, or have participated, as members of United States military units in a United States military operation in which personnel of any Armed Force participate that is deemed to be significant activity; and

(b) Encounter no foreign armed opposition or imminent hostile action.

**Sec. 2. Approval and Award.** The medal, with ribbons and appurtenances, shall be of an appropriate design approved by the Secretary of Defense and shall be awarded by the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Transportation with respect to the Coast Guard when it is not operating as a service in the Navy, under uniform regulations, as prescribed by the Secretary of Defense. The regulations shall place the Armed Forces Service Medal in an order of precedence immediately before the Humanitarian Service Medal.

**Sec. 3. Criteria.** The medal shall be awarded only for operations for which no other United States service medal is approved. For operations in which personnel of only one Military Department or the Coast Guard participate, the medal shall be awarded only if there is no other suitable award available to the department or the Coast Guard. No more than one medal shall be awarded to any one person, but for each succeeding operation justifying such award a

suitable device may be awarded to be worn on the medal or ribbon as prescribed by appropriate regulations.

**Sec. 4. Posthumous Provision.** The medal may be awarded posthumously and, when so awarded, may be presented to such representative of the deceased as may be deemed appropriate by the Secretary of Defense or the Secretary of Transportation.

**William J. Clinton**

The White House,  
January 11, 1996.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., January 17, 1996]

NOTE: This Executive order was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 13, and it was published in the *Federal Register* on January 18.

### **Remarks to American Troops at Aviano Air Base, Italy**

*January 13, 1996*

**The President.** Thank you very much. Good morning.

**Audience members.** Good morning.

**The President.** I know it's early, but we can do better than that. Good morning. [Laughter]

Minister Corcione, Ambassador Bartholomew, our distinguished Italian hosts and guests, General Joulwan, General Ryan, Colonel Wald, Chief Myers, Colonel Moody, Aviano families, and to the men and women of Operation Decisive Edge. Let me begin by thanking the Colonel for that fine welcome and thanking all of you for making me feel so welcome. I am very pleased finally to have a chance to come here to Aviano and to see you. And since it's so early, I may be more pleased to see you than you are to see me. But I'm glad you came out anyway.

I thank you for giving me the chance to meet you and to tell you how important and how appreciated your work is. What you and our allies are doing here and in Bosnia is the difference between a war that resumes and a peace that takes hold. You are giving people who have suffered so very much a chance to enjoy the blessings of a normal life. You are living up to the great traditions of

the Armed Forces of the United States, protecting our Nation's interest by keeping a fire out that has threatened the heart of Europe's stability. On behalf of all the American people, I come here most of all to thank you for the superb job you are doing on this historic mission.

As you did in Operation Deny Flight and Operation Deliberate Force, the 31st Fighter Wing and all of the units here at Aviano, including the Guard and the Reserve, are showing in Operation Decisive Edge the professionalism, the skill, and the dedication that make America's military the greatest on Earth, and make NATO a force for peace throughout Europe.

The American people know that the burden of America's leadership weighs heavily on you and on the families that are here. Many of you who are here have been a long way from home for a good long while. Others have just arrived. Because of the sacrifices you are making here and in the Balkans and the strength of the families that stand behind you, your country is able to stand up for its values and its interests.

I particularly want to thank Colonel Wald, who has done a tremendous job in commanding Aviano and the 31st Fighter Wing. America is proud of the way this base has met the challenge of this operation. He told me just before we came in here that he'd been here about 6 months, and the very first day he was on the job was one of the days that our bombing campaign was underway.

Today, as a part of my visit here and in recognition of Colonel Wald's fine performance and his outstanding career over 25 years in the United States Air Force, I am pleased to promote him to brigadier general. *[Applause]*

Colonel, it sounds like if we were doing this by popular opinion, I wouldn't stop there. *[Laughter]*

I would like to ask Mrs. Wald and their daughter, Marissa, to come up and stand with me. And I'd like to ask Mrs. Wald to help me as we put the stars on the general's shoulder.

General, our Nation and I look forward to many more years of your service. We thank you and congratulate you.

Let me say a special word of thanks to the Italian Defense Minister, Mr. Corcione, the Italian Government, and the people of Italy for the hospitality that all of them have shown our forces and for their help in coordinating this difficult operation. All of you know that all of our efforts over the last several years to contain the conflict in Bosnia, to deliver humanitarian aid, and in the end, to bring an end to it, would not have been possible without the partnership of the Italian Government and the Italian people. And the United States is very grateful for it, and we thank you.

I also want to say a word of appreciation to all the other countries, especially those of our NATO allies participating in Decisive Edge. I know that distinguished units from Britain and Spain are here today; they, too, are playing a vital part in keeping our alliance strong and making sure this mission will succeed. And we thank them.

Men and women of Decisive Edge, let me say now, good luck and Godspeed. You are heroes for peace. Our Nation is very proud of you. And as long as you live I hope you will always look back on this mission as something of historic importance and fundamental human decency.

Thank you. God bless you, and God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:21 a.m. in Hangar One. In his remarks, he referred to Minister of Defense Domenico Corcione of Italy; U.S. Ambassador to Italy Reginald Bartholomew; Gen. George Joulwan, USA, Supreme Allied Commander, Europe; Gen. Michael Ryan, USAF, Commander, 5th Allied Tactical Air Forces; Col. Charles Wald, USAF, Commander, Aviano Air Base; M. Sgt. Michael Myers, USAF, Senior Enlisted Adviser, 31st Fighter Wing; and Col. David L. Moody, USA, Vice Commander, 31st Fighter Wing.

### **Remarks to American Troops at Taszar Air Base, Hungary** *January 13, 1996*

Thank you very much, General Joulwan, and General Shalikashvili, General Crouch, and especially General Abrams. This is—he was saying on the way in, this is about the third time we have done this, and we're about