

A Message to the People of Kuwait

On behalf of the members of the U.S. Army, U.S. Navy, U.S. Marine Corps, U.S. Air Force, veterans of Operation Desert Storm, and the people of the United States, Third Army congratulates the Government of Kuwait and its people on this significant day in history. It is a great honor for the U.S. military to participate in the celebration of Kuwait's independence and liberation.

Twenty years ago, Kuwait and the United States formed an unbreakable alliance, which has grown into a comprehensive partnership that promotes freedom, prosperity and democracy in the Middle East region and the world.

Our partnership was forged in fire, beginning on the morning of Aug. 2, 1990, as Saddam Hussein's forces rolled into downtown Kuwait City and took the nation by force. The size and scope of the invasion caught the world community off guard, but the world response was immediate and decisive. Within five days of the invasion, U.S. forces deployed to the region. Their objective, as outlined in National Security Directive 45, was clear: the "immediate, complete, and unconditional withdrawal of all Iraqi forces from Kuwait," and the "restoration of Kuwait's legitimate government."

By late September, there were nearly 200,000 U.S. forces in Saudi Arabia, a number which would eventually grow to 697,000, including Soldiers, Marines and Airmen. The U.S. Navy also deployed 108 ships to the region. An additional 32 nations joined the fight with Canada, Egypt, France, Morocco, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, the United Arab Emirates and the United Kingdom providing the bulk of the forces to support Kuwait's military.

The Coalition proved that Western and Arab forces can and will stand together, and can do so with speed and precision. During the 42-day air campaign, Coalition forces flew over 100,000 sorties, dropping 88,500 tons of bombs which were pinpointed to destroy military targets. Once the Coalition ground forces mobilized, justice came swiftly. One hundred hours after the ground assault into Kuwait and Iraq began, it was over. On Feb. 27, Iraq's force of 545,000 was in full retreat. As a result U.S. President George H.W. Bush declared a cease-fire and announced the liberation of Kuwait.

Since 1991, the relationship between Kuwait and the United States has only grown stronger. Today, U.S. forces in Kuwait stand ready to provide whatever support is needed. Our long-term commitment to the Government of Kuwait, its people, and to all our allies in the region, is unwavering. We look forward to a continued partnership, bolstering our mutual security and economic goals.

In celebration of the 20th anniversary of the liberation of Kuwait from Iraq, as well as the 50th anniversary of Kuwait's independence, the U.S. military has been invited to participate in several events leading up to, and including, a large military parade Feb. 26 in Kuwait City.

Desert Storm Quotes



"One of the beauties of Desert Storm, it laid to rest a lot of fear that we were no longer capable of getting the job done. It sent a strong message of the United States' willingness to help smaller countries."

George Herbert Walker Bush
President of the United States



"I would like to affirm to the American people that Kuwait shall remain a partner of the United States. Kuwait shall remain an ally and a partner of the United States."

His Highness
Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah
Fifteenth Amir of the State of Kuwait



"We thank God for restoring our country to their people, Kuwait back to the Kuwaitis, and we will remember this liberation that was achieved by brothers."

His Highness
Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah
Fourteenth Amir of the State of Kuwait



"Freedom will live and prosper in this part of the world in spite of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein. Aggression will not stand. This was a guy who invaded a country that was not doing anything to him."

Gen. Colin L. Powell
Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff



"[U.S. Forces] didn't want to go to war, they didn't want to leave their families, but when their country asked them to, they did because it was the right thing to do."

Gen. H. Norman Schwarzkopf
Commander, Coalition Forces



"We worked together. Every member of the Coalition was equal. It didn't matter whether it was a country with just a few airplanes or a country with a whole air armada, everybody was equal."

Gen. Charles A. Horner
Commander, U.S. and allied air operations



DESERT STORM COALITION FORCES



July 17
Saddam Hussein accuses Kuwait of oil overproduction and theft from Rumailia Oil Field

Aug. 8
Iraq annexes Kuwait.
Aug. 9
UN declares annex invalid

Aug. 20
Initial element of Third Army deploys to Saudi Arabia for Operation Desert Shield

Oct. 2
U.S. naval forces enter Arabian Gulf

Nov. 8
Bush orders additional deployments to give offensive options

Jan. 16
Deadline passes and Iraq does not withdraw - U.S. announces Operation Desert Storm

Jan. 30
U.S. Forces in gulf exceed 500,000 troops

Feb. 24
Ground war begins with U.S. and Coalition forces moving into Iraq and Kuwait

Feb. 28
Bush announces cease fire order

March 8
U.S. combat forces begin returning home

Desert Storm Timeline

Aug. 2
Iraq invades Kuwait. United Nations requests withdrawal

Aug. 2
U.S. naval forces set a course toward the region

Aug. 22
President George H.W. Bush authorizes call up of reserves

Sept. 14
Iraqi forces storm numerous diplomatic missions in Kuwait City

Nov. 29
UN sets date of Jan. 15 for Iraq to withdraw

Jan. 17
Air war begins, U.S. planes attack Iraqi forces in Kuwait and Baghdad

Feb. 22
Bush issues ultimatum for Iraqi troops to withdraw by Feb. 23

Feb. 26
Kuwaiti leaders declare they are in control of Kuwait City

March 3
Iraqi leaders formally accept cease fire terms