



UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND
OFFICE OF THE COMMANDER
7115 SOUTH BOUNDARY BOULEVARD
MACDILL AIR FORCE BASE, FLORIDA 33621-5101

Congratulations on your assignment to the United States Central Command. On behalf of all of us on the Central Command team, welcome to Tampa. We look forward to serving with you.

Central Command is the premier warfighting combatant command. We carry out our missions in an area of the world where the sweep of history is as remarkable as it is complex. I urge you to study this history and the culture. Central Command has played a significant role in the region since its inception years ago as the Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force. Understanding the historical context in which our forces operate will prove invaluable to you – and to our mission – as we develop relationships and build trust throughout the region.

As you are aware we are a command at war – overseeing major combat operations in Afghanistan and a civil-military effort to preserve stability in Iraq, as well as conducting operations to defeat violent extremism, deter aggression, combat proliferation, and counter piracy elsewhere in the region. We are also deeply involved in developing partnerships and security assistance programs to avoid future conflict. You will work alongside military representatives of dozens of nations from around the world. I encourage you to get to know our allies and their families - it's an enriching opportunity.

In all that we do, we have a duty to those who are deployed on the ground throughout the Central Command area of responsibility, many of whom you will be serving alongside during the course of your assignment. To the Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, Coast Guardsmen and Civilians working in harsh conditions, day after day, we owe them our very best effort. A request from one of our components is never an interruption of our daily routine; rather it is the reason our headquarters exists.

As you contribute to these vital missions, recognize that we need you at the top of your game physically, mentally and spiritually. You need to take time to work out, read, reflect, and be with your family, striking the best balance between duty and off-duty pursuits in the midst of a high operational tempo. Leave time is essential to maintaining your health as well, so lead by example and ensure subordinates are taking leave too.

Again, I welcome you and your family to Tampa – a town with its own rich history, including a great tradition of supporting military operations, service members, and their families. You'll find enclosed a helpful pamphlet to start your exploration of the beaches and the attractions of the greater Tampa Bay area. Both you and your family have opportunities that exist only here so give your best every day and enjoy what will be one of the most educational, demanding and satisfying tours possible.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "James N. Mattis", is positioned above the typed name.

JAMES N. MATTIS
General, U.S. Marines