

## Special Presidential Envoy for the Global Coalition to Counter ISIL: General John Allen (USMC, Ret.)

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General John Allen (USMC, Ret.) is the Special Presidential Envoy for the Global Coalition to Counter ISIL. He was appointed September 16, 2014 by President Obama. Allen is a retired U.S. Marine four star General and former commander of the NATO International Security Assistance Force and U.S. Forces in Afghanistan from July 2011 to February 2013. Upon his retirement from the Marine Corps, he was appointed as the Senior Advisor to the Secretary of Defense on Middle East Security.

Allen's command of the 150,000 U.S. and NATO forces in Afghanistan occurred at a particularly critical period in the war. During his command, he recovered the 33,000 U.S. surge forces, moved the Afghan National Security Forces into the lead for combat operations and pivoted NATO forces from being a conventional combat force into an advisory command. Further, he established the division size Special Operations Joint Task Force, the first such organization of that nature during his nearly 38-year military career, Allen served in a variety of command and staff positions in the Marine Corps and the Joint Force. Prior to assuming command of the NATO and U.S. forces in Afghanistan, Allen commanded at every level in the Marine Corps through the Marine Expeditionary Brigade. As a general officer, Allen served as the principal director of Asia/Pacific policy in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, a position he held for nearly three years. He was involved extensively on policy initiatives involving Mongolia, China, and Southeast Asia, as well as the Six Party Talks on the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. He played a major role in organizing the relief effort during the South Asian tsunami from 2004 to 2005.

Allen's contingency and combat operations assignments included Operation Sea Signal in the Caribbean in 1994, Operation Joint Endeavor in the Balkans from 1995 to 1996, Operation Iraqi Freedom in Iraq from 2007 to 2008 and Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan from 2011 to 2013. During his combat tour in Iraq, he played a major role in the emergence of the Awakening or Sahawa movement which ultimately liberated the Al Anbar Province from Al Qaeda.

Beyond his operational credentials, Allen has also led a number of professional military educational programs including service as the director of the Marine Infantry Officer Program; commanding officer of the Marine Corps Basic School; and commandant of midshipmen at the United States Naval Academy. He is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations. Allen holds a Bachelor of Science in operations analysis from the U.S. Naval Academy, a master's degree in national security studies from Georgetown University, a Master of Science in strategic intelligence from the Defense Intelligence College and a Master of Science in national security strategy from the National Defense University. He is a recipient of an Honorary Doctor of Strategic Intelligence from the National Intelligence University

He is on a leave of absence from the Brookings Institution where he is co-director of the Center for 21st Century Security and Intelligence.