



General Joseph L. Votel is a retired U.S. Army Four-Star officer and the former Commander of the U.S. Central Command – responsible for U.S. and coalition military operations in the Middle East, Levant and Central and South Asia. During his 39 years in the military, he commanded special operations and conventional military forces at every level. His career included combat in Panama, Afghanistan and Iraq. Notably, he led a 79-member coalition that successfully liberated Iraq and Syria from the Islamic State Caliphate. He preceded his assignment at CENTCOM with service as the Commander of U.S. Special Operations Command and the Joint Special Operations Command.

In January of 2020, General Votel became President & CEO of Business Executives for National Security (BENS). He is member of the Board of Trustees of Noblis Corporation and a Strategic Advisor for Sierra Nevada Corporation. Votel is a Board Director with Minnesota Wire, DC Capital Partners and a member of the Government Advisory Board for Insight Partners. He is a non-resident Distinguished Fellow at the Middle East Institute and the Distinguished Chair of the Combating Terrorism Center at West Point.

Votel is a 1980 graduate of the United States Military Academy and earned master's degrees from the U.S. Army Command and Staff College and the Army War College. He is married to Michele; and they have two grown sons, a daughter-in-law and two grandchildren. The Votels reside in Lake Elmo, Minnesota.