



5 December 2005

## *A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE FROM THE COMMANDER*

*For most of us the Christmas Season means family gatherings and pleasant evenings. It is a time to pause and reflect on our blessings. It is a time of good cheer. In our countries we are free to believe as we chose and free to worship according to that belief. Many of us believe that Christmas celebrates the birth of Christ, one of the three pillars of Christianity. This is our right and we will passionately defend that right. This year instead of spending evenings with cousins, siblings, and immediate family and friends we are standing on the front lines of a war that is being waged against an enemy whose goal is to take away our freedoms and destroy our way of life. We are meeting this enemy on his own ground. We are in fact waging peace. We are vying for the hearts and minds of those upon whom the enemy preys. We are winning. Each of you knows better than most that freedom is not free... it comes at a cost. In our case it is this separation, a small price to pay to keep our countries and our families free and safe. I cannot begin to express my gratitude for your selfless service, your dedication to God, Country and to the Freedoms for which we fight. This season I feel a deep sense of honor and humility for the privilege of serving with you and spending this very special season in your company. You have my utmost respect and admiration. Thank you, God Bless you and Merry Christmas.*

*Semper Fidelis*

*T. F. Ghormley  
Major General, U.S. Marine Corps  
Commander, Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa*

