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512th Airlift Wing, Dover Air Force Base, Del.



FSS superintendent promoted to chief

Family members adhere temporary chevrons to the sleeves of new Chief Master Sgt. Scott Anderson, superintendent of the 512th Force Support Squadron, who was promoted to the Air Force's highest enlisted rank in a ceremony Aug. 31, 2012, at the 3rd Airlift Squadron auditorium. Shown are: (l to r) son, Joseph; son, Ethan; and wife, Dana. The Greenville, Maine, native joined the Air Force in 1995 and became a reservist in 2000. The family arrived here earlier this summer from Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport Air Reserve Station, Minn. (U.S. Air Force photo by Chief Master Sgt. Matt Proietti)

President pledges responsible Afghanistan drawdown

Donna Miles

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON – The United States will remain focused on the mission in Afghanistan while working toward ending the war in a responsible way that protects everything its military members have sacrificed for there, President Barack Obama said Aug. 31.

Obama traveled to Fort Bliss, Texas, to honor service members he credited with making a turnaround in Iraq and also helping Afghanistan chart its own new future.

“You left Iraq with honor, your mission complete, your heads high,” he told the assembly of active, National Guard and reserve troops and their families. “And today Iraq has a chance to forge its own destiny.”

Last visiting Fort Bliss two years ago, Obama recalled reminding the troops there that “we had more work to do, including taking the fight to al-Qaida.”

Flashing forward to today, the president cited progress. “With allies and partners, we’ve taken out more top al-Qaida terrorists than at any time since 9/11,” he said. “And thanks to the courage of our forces, al-Qaida is on the road to defeat, and bin Laden will

never again threaten the United States.”

Obama recognized Fort Bliss troops who have recently returned from Afghanistan or are currently deployed there, and some scheduled to deploy soon.

“I’ve got to tell you the truth,” he said. “This is still a very tough fight.”

The president recognized the sacrifices made, noting that he met earlier in the day with Gold Star families who lost loved ones in the conflict.

“Because of their sacrifice, because of your service, we pushed the Taliban back,” the president said. “We’re training forces. The transition to Afghan lead is under way. And, as promised, more than 30,000 of our troops will have come home by next month.”

Obama offered assurance that “as in Iraq, we are going to end this war responsibly.”

The Afghans will take the lead for their own security next year, he noted, and the transition will be complete in 2014.

“And even as this war ends, we will stay vigilant until Afghanistan is never again a source for attacks against America -- never again,” Obama said, drawing cheers from the crowd. “So we’re not just ending these wars. We’re doing it in a way that keeps America

safe and makes America stronger.”

That, the president said, includes the military. Drawing down forces, he said, will mean fewer deployments, which creates more time to train, improve readiness, prepare for the future and reconnect with families.

“So make no mistake: ending the wars responsibly makes us safer, and it makes our military even stronger,” he said.

The president recognized that the future, post-conflict military will be leaner. He promised, however, that the United States will continue making the investments needed “to keep you the absolute best military in the world, bar none.”

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