

Statement by Secretary of Defense Mark T. Esper on the Operation to Capture or Kill Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi

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"This is a great day for America and a great day for the world. Last night, US joint special operations forces and interagency partners flawlessly executed a Commander-in-Chief directed operation to capture or kill Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. As a result, al-Baghdadi, who led the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria terrorist movement and inspired one of the most brutal and misguided terror campaigns in modern history, is dead at the hands of the United States military.

With our partners we defeated the physical caliphate of ISIS earlier this year and now its founder and leader is dead. This is a major victory in the enduring defeat ISIS mission. I want to commend all those participating in and supporting the operation - American and partners alike - for a job well done."