



## A MESSAGE FROM THE COMMANDANT OF THE MARINE CORPS

As we pause to celebrate the 237th birthday of our Corps, we reflect on the rich legacy of service handed down to us, we recommit ourselves to the tasks at hand, and we look forward toward a bright future in service to our country.

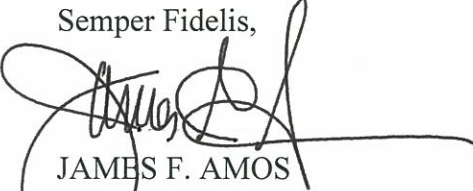
Marines exist to fight and win our Nation's battles. We are most proud of our well-earned reputation for answering the clarion call first. This was never more evident than at the epic battle of Guadalcanal 70 years ago. Picked to lead the first allied counter-offensive of the Pacific war because they were the "most ready," Marines landed on 7 August 1942 in the Solomon Islands. They persevered through months of unremitting deprivation and bitter combat. By the time the veterans of the Blue Diamond, the Cactus Air Force, our legendary Marine Raiders, and initial elements of the Follow-Me Division gathered together to raise a canteen and toast the birthday of their beloved Corps some three months later, the battle was no longer an issue. The situation was well in hand...victory was assured.

We carry that same legacy of resolute commitment and valor today. Over the past year, Marines have stood firm in the toughest of circumstances and on numerous occasions. We've taken the fight to the enemy in Helmand and to the Horn of Africa. We've manned the ramparts of beleaguered embassies in the Middle East and North Africa, fought alongside our allies throughout the world, while behind the scenes, afloat and ashore, other Marines did the painstaking hard work required to maintain our high levels of readiness and efficiency.

As we look toward the future, we know that our sentimental place in the hearts of our fellow Americans and critical role in the defense of our way of life are assured. America has always wanted a Marine Corps...it's always been that way. Now, more than ever, America needs its Marines as we confront a dangerous and unpredictable world. Faced with difficult days ahead, we will continue to draw strength from our rich heritage and the shared values of the Marines to our left and to our right. We know who we are...we know what we stand for. As ever we will strive to be found worthy of the legendary trust of our fellow Americans.

I salute the enduring faithfulness of those who have gone before, of those who wear our cloth today, and of the families who stand so resolutely at our sides. Happy Birthday, Marines!

Semper Fidelis,



JAMES F. AMOS  
General, U.S. Marine Corps