



News

- > [News Articles](#)
- > [News/Casualty Releases](#)
- > [Press Advisories](#)
- > [News Transcripts](#)
- > [Publications](#)
- > [Speeches](#)
- > [Contracts](#)
- > [Testimony](#)
- > [Messages](#)
- > [Special Reports](#)

Secretary of Defense

- > [Biography](#)
- > [Speeches](#)
- > [Messages](#)
- > [Testimony](#)
- > [Travels](#)
- > [News Photos](#)

Deputy Secretary of Defense

- > [Biography](#)
- > [Speeches](#)
- > [Travels](#)

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Press Operations

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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Release No: NR-281-14
May 31, 2014

Statement from Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel on the return of Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl

A few hours ago, the family of Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl was informed by President Obama that their long wait for his return will soon be over. Sgt. Bergdahl is now under the care of the U.S. military after being handed over by his captors in Afghanistan. We will give him all the support he needs to help him recover from this ordeal, and we are grateful that he will soon be reunited with his family.

Also today, I informed Congress of the decision to transfer five detainees from Guantánamo Bay to Qatar. The United States has coordinated closely with Qatar to ensure that security measures are in place and the national security of the United States will not be compromised. I appreciate the efforts of the Emir of Qatar to put these measures in place, and I want to thank him for his instrumental role in facilitating the return of Sgt. Bergdahl.

Sgt. Bergdahl's return is a powerful reminder of the enduring, sacred commitment our nation makes to all those who serve in uniform. The United States government never forgot Sgt. Bergdahl, nor did we stop working to bring him back. I am grateful to all the military and civilian professionals from DOD and our interagency partners who helped make this moment possible, and to all those Americans who stood vigil with the Bergdahl family.