



NEWS RELEASE

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

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Corps of Engineers celebrates Martin Luther King Jr. Day in Afghanistan

KABUL – Air Force Chaplain Maj. Calvin D. Dixon challenged U.S. Army Corps of Engineers personnel and their guests to continue Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.'s legacy by daring to dream of a better future for themselves and for others on Monday, Jan. 18.

Speaking to a crowd of more than 100 during the King Day celebration at the Qalaa House compound, Dixon recalled the famous “I Have a Dream” speech, which King delivered in Washington, D.C., at the height of the Civil Rights Movement in 1963.

Dixon reminded the audience that included in King’s call for racial harmony, he spoke of his dream for all people to overcome difficulties and crookedness; to rise up together to achieve brotherhood, freedom and justice. Dixon told the military personnel and civilians at Qalaa House that King was captivated and driven by his dream.



Air Force Chaplain Maj. Calvin D. Dixon speaks during the King Day event.

Dixon said King worked tirelessly to achieve his dream and that he made a lasting and profound impression on the lives of Americans and people worldwide. Dixon encouraged those at the King Day event to keep the civil rights leader's spirit alive by pursuing their own dreams.

"All great achievements must be started as a dream," said Dixon, a wing chaplain from Los Angeles Air Force Base in California. "If you don't have a dream, how are you going to have your dream come true?"

He asked them to persevere through whatever obstacles and challenges they encountered in their personal quests. "The next worse thing to not having a dream is not holding onto that dream," he said.

Dixon told members of his audience that they are well positioned to make lasting contributions of their own, because King's message was universal and wasn't limited geographically to the United States or anywhere else.

He commended those in the audience for serving in Afghanistan as part of the coalition forces' efforts to restore basic human rights to the country's population. He said their very presence in the war zone speaks volumes about their willingness to make positive changes.



Army Chaplain Capt. Kenneth E. Reid addresses the crowd at Qalaa House.

Army Chaplain Capt. Kenneth E. Reid offered the invocation and benediction, and the Camp Eggers Choir and the Corps of Engineers' Afghanistan Engineer District-North public affairs chief David Salazar sang during the hour-long program at the Col. John B. O'Dowd Dining Facility.

The Corps of Engineers is the primary organization building army bases, police stations, roads, airstrips and other infrastructure projects in Afghanistan to increase the country's stability and economy. The Corps of Engineers has two districts in the country – Afghanistan Engineer District-North, which is based in Kabul; and Afghanistan Engineer District-South, which is based in Kandahar.

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