

# DISTINGUISHED MEMBER OF THE SPECIAL FORCES REGIMENT



**COLONEL  
RONALD D. JOHNSON**  
*U.S. Army, Retired*

Inducted April 20, 2023



Colonel Ronald D. Johnson enlisted in the U.S. Army National Guard in 1971. He completed Officers Candidate School in 1973 and graduated from the Special Forces officers course in 1977, while assigned to the 20th Special Forces Group (Airborne). In 1984, he entered full-time active duty as the detachment commander with 3rd Battalion, 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne) in Panama. He would serve in a wide variety of command and staff positions, directly contributing to the long outstanding history of the Special Forces Regiment. This includes being selected as the first Special Forces officer to attend the Army War College fellowship at the Central Intelligence Agency.

Johnson spent a significant portion of his military career in the Southern Command Area of Responsibility and is fluent in Spanish. He led combat operations in El Salvador as one of the authorized 55 military advisors during the civil war in the 1980s. He also deployed to the Balkans in the 1990s as the senior military officer of an integrated team from the Central Intelligence Agency, National Security Agency, and Special Mission Unit personnel to apprehend persons indicted for war crimes.

After his military career, Johnson served a second career with the Central Intelligence Agency and participated in worldwide operational and combat experiences in integrated actions with special mission units. He also served as the senior representative for both the Director of National Intelligence and the Central Intelligence Agency at the U.S. Southern Command, and as the Science and Technology Liaison to the U.S. Special Operations Command for the Central Intelligence Agency.

In 2019, Johnson was appointed and served as the United States Ambassador to El Salvador until his retirement in 2021. He is a recipient of El Salvador's two highest awards: the Grand Order of Francisco Morazán, and Grand Silver Cross. In 2020 he was awarded the Sue M. Cobb Award for Exemplary Diplomatic Service from the Department of State. He is an honorary chair of the Office of Strategic Services Society and is a Life Member of the Special Forces Association.

He has been married to his wife, Alina for more than 40 years, they live in Miami, Florida.