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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Gov. Shumlin Thanks Guard Members Returning from Massachusetts and Senegal

BERLIN – Gov. Peter Shumlin today welcomed home Vermont National Guard members who recently returned from a snow removal deployment to Massachusetts and a humanitarian deployment to Senegal. At a ceremony at the Berlin Armory, the Governor and Adjutant General Steven Cray thanked the returning men and women of our highly-respected National Guard and presented them with certificates recognizing their service to the state of Vermont.

“Whether it is helping our next door neighbors or those halfway around the world, we’re constantly reminded of the professionalism, dedication, and work ethic of the men and women of the Vermont National Guard,” said Gov. Shumlin. “No matter where in the world they operate, the men and women of the Guard embody for communities near and far the values and ideals we hold so dear in Vermont. I couldn’t be prouder to be their Commander in Chief, to welcome them home, and to thank them for a job well done.”

"The State Partnership Program and Defense Support to Civil Authorities are two important missions that the Vermont National Guard undertake," said Adjutant General Cray. "Helping our friends at home and abroad in times of need and for opportunities to work together are initiatives that our Guardsmen are proud to perform."

Both deployments included members of the 131st Engineer Company. About 38 Guard members deployed to Massachusetts in February to assist with snow removal following a series of powerful winter storms that affected eastern Massachusetts. Over the course of 13 days, the Guard members loaded and hauled over 15,742 cubic yards of snow and clocked over 2,000 man hours. These soldiers were presented a “Veterans of Foreign Snows” certificate by the Governor in recognition of their service to Vermont.

An additional 23 soldiers deployed to Senegal in February where they constructed a Humanitarian Demining Training site and conducted trainings to assist Senegalese soldiers with the daunting task of removing land mines in their country. This mission reinforced a very strong strategic relationship and expanded and developed relationships between Vermont soldiers and their Senegalese counterparts. The interpersonal relationships, training, and construction projects will pay dividends for years to come.

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