Defense Intelligence Agency Gets New Director

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JOINT BASE ANACOSTIA-BOLLING, WASHINGTON – Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta presided over a change of director ceremony at Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) headquarters here today.

Army Lt. Gen. Michael Flynn assumed DIA directorship and command of the Joint Functional Component Command for Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (JFCC-ISR) from Army Lt. Gen. Ronald Burgess in front of a large audience assembled to honor both men, their families, and the agency's contributions to national defense.

A Department of Defense combat support agency and an important member of the United States Intelligence Community, DIA provides all-source defense intelligence to prevent strategic surprise and deliver a decision advantage to warfighters, defense planners, and policymakers.

Speaking as the current Secretary of Defense and a past CIA director, Panetta praised Flynn's achievements and capabilities. "Mike Flynn brings to this position decades of experience in military intelligence. His knowledge of the 21st century battlefield is unsurpassed," he said. Flynn's past deployments included operations URGENT FURY (Grenada), UPHOLD DEMOCRACY (Haiti), IRAQI FREEDOM (Iraq) and ENDURING FREEDOM (Afghanistan).

Panetta also thanked the DIA workforce, "the dedicated men and women, who work every day and every night, without fanfare, to keep our nation safe." Looking back over the past decade, the secretary added, "The landscape has changed, but it's changed for the better. DIA in particular has evolved into a global agency, which operates wherever our forces are engaged and at every point along the chain of command. Military intelligence is now far more integrated, far more effective, and more vital than ever to our ability to defend this country."

Flynn comes to DIA having recently served as assistant director of national intelligence for partner engagement. He has served throughout his 31-year career in a variety of command and staff positions to include director of intelligence (J2) for the Joint Staff and director of intelligence for International Security Assistance Force and U.S. Forces-Afghanistan. He graduated from the University of Rhode Island in 1981 and was commissioned through the university's ROTC program. As the 18th director of the Defense Intelligence Agency, Flynn commands JFCC-ISR under U.S. Strategic Command headed by Air Force Gen. C. Robert Kehler who remarked, "The alignment of JFCC-ISR and DIA makes good sense. We have leveraged the power and capabilities of the DIA, the collection management responsibilities of its director, and the global

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planning and operational focus of the combatant commander."

Flynn will oversee a worldwide DIA workforce of more than 16,500 military and civilian employees who often deploy alongside warfighters and interagency partners to defend America's national-security interests.

The new director affirmed, "DIA has always been and will remain a highly agile and adaptive workforce and will stand unyielding in times of crisis as it supports our military forces and warfighting commanders. DIA has always responded to rapidly changing global events. It has demonstrated an amazing level of resiliency regardless of increased demands, yet despite the many challenges we face, the people of DIA continue to stand firm in their commitment to our nation's defense." Outgoing director Burgess was commissioned through the Auburn University ROTC program in 1974 and held a variety of key staff and command positions in the course of his career. He became the 17th director of DIA on March 18, 2009, and retires after 38 years of service.

Speaking to the crowd assembled at DIA headquarters Burgess said, "As our nation's intelligence professionals we have a non-negotiable obligation to the American people to call it the way we see it."

He added, "What guides this agency and its professionals every day is the understanding that while much of what we do is secret, our work is forever a public trust. And we must earn that trust anew every day."

Director of National Intelligence James Clapper presented Burgess with the National Intelligence Distinguished Service Medal in recognition of his contributions to the intelligence community. Clapper praised Flynn for his recent work at the Office of the Director of National Intelligence and Burgess to whom he referred as, "a role model for leadership in the entire community." Clapper added, "DIA is a significant supporter of special operations, and was so in the [Usama bin Laden] takedown operation a year ago last May – something which I don't think DIA ever really got appropriate credit for."

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Army Gen. Martin Dempsey, made remarks at the ensuing retirement ceremony, telling Burgess, "In the defense and national intelligence community, you have clearly been something I refer to as a leader of consequence and a champion of those whom we place in harm's way around the globe." Burgess also received the Defense Distinguished Service Medal and a certificate of appreciation from President Obama. Secretary of the Army John McHugh presented Marta Burgess with a certificate of appreciation signed by Army Chief of Staff Gen. Raymond Odierno in recognition of her lifetime of service to the nation.

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