



PRESS RELEASE

Department of National Defense – Republic of the Philippines

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Former SOCOM Chief and AFP Surgeon get DND posts

Retired MGen. Daniel R. Casabar, Jr., a former Commander of the Philippine Army's elite Special Operations Command (SOCOM) and retired BGen. Mariano A. Mejia, a military surgeon who previously headed the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) Medical Center, joined the Department of National Defense (DND) as Director of the Government Arsenal (GA) and Chief of Medical Staff of the Veterans Memorial Medical Center, respectively.

Defense Secretary Delfin N. Lorenzana presided over their oath-taking ceremony witnessed by DND senior leaders and officials of concerned bureaus / offices along with family members of Casabar and Mejia on 15 August 2017 at Camp Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City.

The Defense Chief also graced the formal turnover ceremony of the GA yesterday, August 16, 2017 at Camp Gen. Antonio Luna in Limay, Bataan where Casabar officially took over the post from Director Jonathan C. Martir.

Secretary Lorenzana lauded Dir. Martir's contribution to the advancement of the DND's Self-Reliant Defense Posture (SRDP) Program during his time as GA Director and welcomed MGen Casabar's addition to the *One Defense Team*.

"I trust that the incoming Director, MGen. Casabar, can carry on the reforms and good governance that MGen Martir started," Secretary Lorenzana said. "I know that the Government Arsenal is in good hands with MGen. Casabar on top, confident that he can stir the GA to realize our long-time dream of having a self-reliant defense posture," Secretary Lorenzana added.

Under the SRDP Program, the GA is envisioned to become the primary supplier of rifles and ammunition not only to the AFP, but to the entire security forces of the Philippine government including the Philippine National Police, Philippine Coast Guard, and other government security agencies.

Before his retirement from active military service, MGen. Casabar served as the Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics and Commander of Special Operations Command (SOCOM), Army Support Command (ASCOM) and of the 56th Infantry Battalion, 7th Infantry Division.

Created under Republic Act No. 1884, the Government Arsenal is one of the five bureaus under the DND which is tasked to "design, manufacture, procure, stockpile and allocate small arms, weapons, ammunition for these weapons government arsenal and other munitions for the AFP, PNP and other government law enforcement agencies; and to sell and export excess products."

Meanwhile, retired BGen. Mejia also assumed his post at the Veterans Memorial Medical Center (VMMC) vice Dr. Martha Nucum. The 59-year-old former Surgeon General of the AFP is no stranger to the job as he had previously headed the AFP Medical Center in V. Luna Avenue, Quezon City. He also served as former Army Chief Surgeon and Commander of various military hospitals and facilities like the Fort Bonifacio General Hospital, Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo Hospital, among others.

Dr. Mejia's numerous accomplishments, awards and decorations in the AFP was capped with his hosting of the 6th ASEAN Chiefs of Military Medicine Conference in July 2016 at EDSA Shangri-la Hotel, Mandaluyong City. With the theme "Global Climate Change: Challenges to the ASEAN military medicine," the successful conference was attended by delegates from Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao-People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar and Singapore.

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