

Austin Sworn In as Secretary of Defense



Washington Headquarters Services Director David Muir swears in Lloyd J. Austin III as secretary of defense, the Pentagon, Washington, D.C., Jan. 22, 2021. Holding the Bible is the Junior Military Assistant to the Secretary of Defense, Marine Corps Lt. Col. Caleb Hyatt. DoD / Lisa Ferdinando

ARLINGTON, Va.— Retired Army Gen. Lloyd J. Austin III was sworn in Jan. 22 as secretary of defense at the Pentagon by Washington Headquarters Services Director David Muir after a morning confirmation vote from the Senate.

Austin issued the following message to the Defense Department the same day:

“I am honored to have this chance to serve again and to do so alongside you and your families. My wife, Charlene, and I know all too well the sacrifices you make to keep this country safe. That safety is job one, and I promise to work as hard as

you do at it.

“The way I see it, my job as Secretary of Defense is to make you more effective at doing yours. That means ensuring you have the tools, technology, weapons, and training to deter and defeat our enemies. It means establishing sound policy and strategy and assigning you clear missions. It means putting a premium on cooperation with our allies and partners. And it means living up to our core values, the same ones our fellow citizens expect of us.

“Right now, of course, doing my job also means helping our country get control of the pandemic, which has killed more than 400,000 Americans. You have already come to the aid of our Nation’s health care professionals. You can expect that mission to continue. But we must help the Federal Government move further and faster to eradicate the devastating effects of the coronavirus. To that end, we will also do everything we can to vaccinate and care for our workforce and to look for meaningful ways to alleviate the pressure this pandemic has exerted on you and your families.

“None of us succeeds at this business alone. Defending the country requires teamwork and cooperation. It requires a certain humility, a willingness to learn, and absolute respect for one another. I know you share my devotion to these qualities.

“I am proud to be back on your team.”