

Gates recommends Dempsey as next Army Chief of Staff

Jim Garamone, American Forces Press Service

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WASHINGTON, Jan. 6, 2011 - Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates has recommended to President Barack Obama that he nominate Army Gen. Martin E. Dempsey to be the next Army Chief of Staff.

Gates made the announcement at a Pentagon news conference.

The Army Chief of Staff is the highest-ranking Soldier and serves as a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

If nominated by the president and confirmed by the Senate, Dempsey would succeed Gen. George W. Casey Jr., who has served as Army chief of staff since April 2007 and will retire after more than 40 years of service.

Dempsey, 58, is commander of the Army's Training and Doctrine Command, based at Fort Monroe, Va.

Navy Adm. Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, called Dempsey a "creative thinker and a terrific soldier" who has his unequivocal support.

Dempsey served as the acting commander of U.S. Central Command upon the retirement of Navy Adm. William Fallon in 2008. He took up the Training and Doctrine Command's reins in December 2008.

Dempsey commanded the 1st Armored Division in Iraq in 2003 and 2004, and he served as commander of the Multinational Security Transition Command in Iraq from 2007 to 2008.

He was commissioned as a second lieutenant following graduation from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, N.Y., in 1974. He was assigned to Germany as an armor officer, and he served with the 3rd Armored Division during Operation Desert Storm.