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Program Executive Officer Assumes Charter for Assembled Chemical Weapons Alternatives Program

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ABERDEEN PROVING GROUND, Md. - The charter of the Program Executive Office, Assembled Chemical Weapons Alternatives was assumed by the Program Executive Officer, Michael S. Abaie, Nov. 28 during a ceremony presided over by Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Threat Reduction and Arms Control, Dr. Charles J. Ball.

"I am proud when I reflect on ACWA's unique role in the annals of our country's National Defense – we are eliminating the last of an entire family of weapons to better ensure our own fighting men and women will not themselves face such a horrific threat on the battlefields of the future," Abaie said.

"I am honored to have become part of this team and its commitment to writing the final chapter of the U.S. Chemical Demilitarization Program – by not later than December 31, 2023," Abaie said.
 "With your support, that is a promise we will transform into a reality."

Abaie, who has been the senior government official of PEO ACWA since Sept. 10, is responsible for overseeing all aspects of the program, including operations at the Pueblo Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant in Colorado, the Blue Grass Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant in Kentucky and PEO ACWA's Anniston Field Office in Alabama.

"Mike, with all your achievements to date, I am confident in your ability to overcome the current challenges of the program. You are dealing with new technologies and processes, which will present complications and uncertainties," Ball said. "With all other Chemical Weapons Convention milestones achieved by the United States, our collective objective for the overall Chemical Demilitarization Program is nothing less than 100 percent destruction of the remaining U.S. chemical weapons stockpile."

Previously, Abaie served as the Director of the Engineering Directorate within the U.S. Army Research, Development and Engineering Command Chemical and Biological Center. Under Abaie's leadership, the 600-employee Engineering Directorate conducted the Center's engineering development, testing, and additive manufacturing, and provided engineering support for the acquisition and sustainment of chemical and biological defense systems and materiel.

A member of the Army's Senior Executive Service, Abaie has held leadership roles within the Joint Chemical and Biological Defense Program (CBDP) and Joint Program Executive Office for Chemical Biological Defense (JPEO-CBD) from 1998 to 2014. He served as the Program Manager for Navy-led CBDP, the Deputy Joint Program Manager for Collective Protection, and the Joint Program Manager for Collective Protection. He also served as the Product Support Manager for the Joint Portfolio at the JPEO-CBD to address the high cost of sustainment for chemical and biological equipment.

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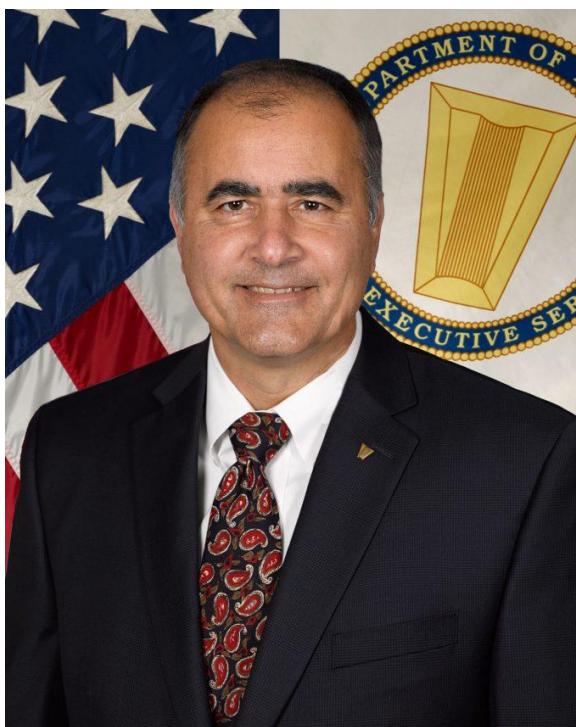


**A Partnership for Safe
Chemical Weapons
Destruction**

Abaie said he owes a debt of gratitude to several members of the local Army community he has worked with and to those who mentored him. He also said he credited his parents, wife Maureen, twins Zach and Sierra, and Tim, a close family friend, with providing support and encouragement during his career.

The destruction of the remaining two U.S. chemical weapons stockpiles, stored at the U.S. Army Pueblo Chemical Depot, Colorado and the Blue Grass Army Depot, Kentucky, is a function of the Department of Defense as mandated by law. PEO ACWA is aligned under the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Nuclear, Chemical and Biological Defense Programs, a component of the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment. As a Program Executive Office, PEO ACWA is administratively attached to the U.S. Army Acquisition Support Center.

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Caption: Mr. Michael S. Abaie, Program Executive Officer, Assembled Chemical Weapons Alternatives