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SERGEANT MAJOR OF THE ARMY VISITS SOLDIERS, VIEWS TRAINING DURING DAY IN GRAFENWOEHR, VILSECK

By Spc. Gerald Wilson

Joint Multinational Training Command Public Affairs Office

HEIDELBERG, Germany -- Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth O. Preston observed training and talked with troops about the ever-changing face of today's force during a visit to the Joint Multinational Training Command here Oct. 28.

U.S. Army Europe
Command Sgt. Maj.
Iuniasolua T. Savusa
and V Corps
Command Sgt. Maj.
Ralph Beam joined
Preston for the visit.

Preston began his day here talking with Warrior Leader Course students at the 7th Army NCO Academy. In his remarks he praised the Soldiers for choosing the Army as a career, and challenged them to talk about their jobs and share their experiences with their families and friends back home.



SPC GERALD WILSON

Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth O. Preston (right) talks with Soldiers on a range at the Grafenwoehr (Germany) Training Area during a visit to area units Oct 28.

"I urge you to tell the Soldier's story," he said. "Let them know what it is you do."

“Don’t let anybody tell you are anything less than the cream of society,” Preston said. “You should be proud to talk about what you, as a Soldier, do every day.”

Following his discussion with the students, Preston tour the ranges here and had an opportunity to observe members of 1st Armored Division's 1st Battalion, 6th Infantry taking part in a Mission Readiness Exercise.

Following the range visit, it was on to Vilseck, where Preston addressed members of the 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment’s rear detachment. Preston spoke about how the Army is striving to be more modular in design.

“What this means is, we want and MP company in Heidelberg, Germany to look just like an MP Company from the reserves based out of Baltimore, and that company should look just like a unit from the Kentucky National Guard,” he said.

“Like units -- whether it be reserve, active, or National Guard -- we want them all to be the same.”

The concept of the modular redesign began in January of 2004, the sergeant major said. At that time there were 33 brigade combat teams. Since then, the Army has grown, and should be at 44 brigade combat teams by Oct. 2008.

Preston explained that units are being redesigned to make the Army a stronger and larger fighting force, saying brigades are being broken down and rebuilt to create more brigades to help combat the need for back-to-back deployments.

“This is the biggest transformation the Army has seen since World War II,” Preston said.

Preston ended his visit to JMTC by sharing dinner with several Soldiers and NCOs from the 2nd SCR, including several who had been wounded during deployment in Iraq.



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