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U.S. ARMY EUROPE-LED AVIATION TASK FORCE TRANSFERS BALAD MISSION AS IT MOVES TO CAMP TAJI

By Sgt. Brandon Little

12th Combat Aviation Brigade Public Affairs Office

LOGISTICAL SUPPORT AREA ANACONDA, Balad, Iraq -- Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Task Force XII officially transferred command of Multi-National Corps – Iraq’s key aviation asset to Task Force 49 during a transfer of authority ceremony here Dec. 3.



SGT BRANDON LITTLE

Col. Timothy J. Edens, commander of U.S. Army Europe's 12th Combat Aviation Brigade and Task Force XII, furls the brigade's colors with the help of TF XII Command Sgt. Maj. H. Lee Kennedy during a Dec. 3 ceremony at Logistical Support Area Anaconda in Balad, Iraq. The ceremony transferred authority for TF XII's mission in Balad to Task Force 49.

This ceremony welcomed Task Force 49 into their new role and marked the beginning of a new mission for Task Force XII, which is led by U.S. Army Europe's 12th Combat Aviation Brigade.

“With this transfer of authority, we’re going to prove that Army aviation has the same capabilities and flexibility as our ground forces,” said Maj. Gen. James E. Simmons, MNC-I deputy commanding general.

The headquarters element of Task Force XII is moving to Camp Taji to assume the command of the aviation task force for Multi-National Division - Baghdad. That task force will be comprised of the 4th Squadron, 3rd Armored Cavalry

Regiment from Fort Hood Texas and USAREUR's 3rd Battalion, 158th Aviation and Forward Logistics Element, 412th Aviation Support Battalion, both from Katterbach, Germany.

“I am confident that (these battalions) designated in Task Force XII in Taji will exceed all expectations,” said Col. Timothy J. Edens, commander of 12th CAB and Task Force XII.

Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Task Force 49 comes from Fort Wainwright, Alaska, and will assume command of 2nd Battalion, 159th Aviation; 5th Battalion, 158th Aviation; 2nd Battalion, 147th Aviation; 412th Aviation Support Battalion, and Task Force Hawk from B Company, 3rd Battalion, 158th Aviation.

“We are handing the controls to another outstanding brigade headquarters,” said Edens. “I expect, and am fully confident, that the excellence of (the units that will remain here) will continue.”

During the ceremony Edens and Task Force XII Command Sgt. Maj. H. Lee Kennedy carefully furled the Task Force XII and cased them in a blue canvas cover. Task Force 49’s colors were then uncased and unfurled by its commander, Col. Chandler C. Sherrell, and Task Force 49 Command Sgt. Maj. Richard Mitchell.

“Each and every mission this brigade has undertaken has been done in a professional and effective manner,” said Simmons. “Just as (Task Force XII) has succeeded, Task Force 49 will as well, under their able leadership.”



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