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Soldiers of 18th Military Police Brigade, 95th MP Battalion mark return from latest Iraq deployments

18th Military Police Brigade Public Affairs Office release

MANNHEIM, Germany – The Soldiers of the 18th Military Police Brigade Headquarters and Headquarters Company and the 95th MP Battalion Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment were officially welcomed home during a ceremony in the Sports Arena on Benjamin Franklin Village here, Jan. 30.



SPC ADRIENNE KILLINGSWORTH

Maj. Gen. Yves Fontaine, commander of the 21st Theater Sustainment Command (left), watches as Col. Mark Spindler, commander of the 18th Military Police Brigade (center), and brigade Command Sgt. Maj. Bernard McPherson attach an Iraq campaign streamer to the brigade's colors during a Jan. 30 ceremony at the Sports Arena on Benjamin Franklin Village in Mannheim, Germany. The ceremony officially marked the end of combat tours in Iraq for the brigade and the 95th MP Battalion.

During the ceremony the units uncased their colors, marking the official return of the units from their 15-month combat tours in Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The units' Soldiers came home in December.

Maj. Gen. Yves Fontaine, commander of the 21st Theater Sustainment Command, was the guest speaker for the event, and presented the Iraq Campaign Medal to 18th MP Brigade commander Col. Mark Spindler, brigade Command Sgt. Maj.

Bernard McPherson, 95th MP Battalion commander Lt. Col. John Bogdan and battalion Command Sgt. Maj. Brenda Curfman. Fontaine also presented the units with their Iraq campaign streamers, which were placed on their respective colors after the uncasing.

“The uncasing and presentation of the colors is to represent the presence of the command and the reassumption of that command's authority. It's a time to reflect upon the

accomplishments of these great Soldiers and leaders that stand before you,” Spindler told the assembled guests and more than 200 Soldiers standing in formation.

In their remarks at the event, Fontaine and Spindler each highlighted the units' achievements during their combat tours.

The advancements made by Iraqi police as a result of training and direction provided by both units were among several successes which, Spindler said, were “accomplishments that have, in many cases, broken new ground and set the standard for excellence.”

Fontaine reflected on the impact of those achievements.

“I know your mission was a success, as we watch the news we will see tomorrow Iraq conducting elections in 14 of its 18 provinces and holding nationwide parliamentary elections by the end of the year,” the general said. “The processes of democracy are never successful without the efforts of a professional police force that the people trust and have confidence in. The 18th MP Brigade and the 95th MP Battalion laid the foundation for that trust in confidence.”

While deployed, the members of HHC 18th led efforts to expand the Iraqi police service by more than 10,000 officers since 2007, established two major police centers and mentored the Iraqi police training programs, brigade officials said. The 18th and its subordinate battalions provided leadership and support to more than 50 units across Iraq.

The 95th's HHD was responsible for Iraqi police development across the volatile eastern half of Baghdad. With five subordinate companies, “Task Force 95” conducted more than 12,000 combat patrols and more than 9,000 joint patrols with the Iraqi police.

The combined efforts of both headquarters improved Iraqi security and provided Iraqi citizens the opportunity to pursue an honorable profession while also increasing citizens' trust in their police and their ability to serve and protect, brigade officials said.

Spindler touched on the future of the two units when he turned to Fontaine and said, “It gives me great pride to report that the 95th MP Battalion and the 18th MP Brigade are fully reintegrated, understand our mission and are prepared to accept full command and control of all subordinate units from a very talented, but tired, rear detachment. We remain ever ready and ever vigilant.”



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