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HUNZEKER BECOMES 53RD V CORPS COMMANDER

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HEIDELBERG, Germany -- Lt. Gen. Kenneth W. Hunzeker assumed command of V Corps during a ceremony here Aug. 8.



SPC SHANE ESCHENBURG

U.S. Army Europe Commander Gen. David McKiernan (right) joins Lt. Gen. James Thurman (center) and Lt. Gen. Kenneth Hunzeker in reviewing assembled V Corps units during the ceremony in which Thurman passed command of V Corps to Hunzeker, on Campbell Barracks in Heidelberg, Germany Aug. 8.

Hunzeker comes to the corps from command of the Civilian Police Assistance Training Team, Multi-National Security Transition Command -- Iraq. But the general is no stranger to V Corps. He served as the last commander of the 1st Infantry Division in Germany prior to the division's return to the United States in summer 2006.

That command was just the most recent of Hunzeker's many ties to Europe. Since 1975, when he completed a tour as a lieutenant with the 2nd Armored Division, he has served in several staff and command assignments in Germany.

Hunzeker said his move from Iraq to Heidelberg to become the 53rd V Corps commander was a bit of a rapid deployment mission.

"To think I was training the Civilian Police Assistance Training Team - Iraq just some 96 hours ago is incredible," he said.

The general praised the corps' Soldiers for their contributions and dedication, and expressed his pleasure in returning to Germany to lead them.

“I find no greater joy and honor than to lead the world’s finest -- the American Soldier,” he told the assembled corps units on the Campbell Barracks parade field.

“We are all truly grateful and thankful for your service and for answering the nation’s call to duty. We all know we’re an Army at war, and you represent what’s great about our nation. You are defenders of liberty, freedom and democracy -- an American way of life.”

Gen. David D. McKiernan, U.S. Army Europe commanding general, said V Corps is fortunate to have had a great leader in Thurman, and that Hunzeker’s return to Germany is “great news for our troops, families and civilians.”

McKiernan added he has no doubt the general and V Corps are ready to take on the many challenges ahead as the corps transforms within USAREUR and 7th Army, trains for combat, and deploys to combat.

“We have a full plate, preparing more V Corps Soldiers to go back and fight while transforming to 7th Army,” said McKiernan.

Thurman, whose brief tenure with V Corps began in February, is departing the corps to become the Army’s chief of operations in Washington, D.C.



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