

## U.S. Army Europe and 7th Army

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### CEREMONY BIDS FAREWELL TO 'STRIKE HARD' BRIGADE AS UNIT HEADS FOR THIRD IRAQ DEPLOYMENT

By Ignacio 'Iggy' Rubalcava

U.S. Army Garrison Baumholder Public Affairs Office

**BAUMHOLDER, Germany** -- Soldiers, family members and American and German guests crowded into the Hall of Champions at Smith Barracks here March 27 to say farewell to the Soldiers of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division who will soon return to Iraq for the brigade's third deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Originally planned as an outdoor event, Baumholder's snow-covered Minick Field forced the ceremony indoors and instead of the entire 2nd BCT falling into formation, representatives of each of the brigade's battalions and companies stood in ranks on the hall's main floor.

At the head of the formation, Col. Patrick White, the 2nd BCT commander, and 2nd BCT Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Eyer, cased the brigade's colors, signaling the beginning of the unit's deployment.

V Corps Commander Lt. Gen. Kenneth W. Hunzeker, addressed the Soldiers during the ceremony.

"Each one of you deserves our respect and gratitude," Hunzeker said.



IGNACIO 'IGGY' RUBALCAVA

Col. Patrick White, commander of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division (right), and brigade Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Eyer case the brigade's colors during the 2nd BCT farewell ceremony in the Hall of Champions at Smith Barracks in Baumholder, Germany, March 27. The 2nd BCT will soon depart for the unit's third deployment to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.



IGNACIO 'IGGY' RUBALCAVA

(Left to right) Volkmar Pees, mayor of the Baumholder (Germany) district; Sean Lambur, Baumholder's plans, analysis and information office chief; and Maj. Roman Jaehnel, deputy commander of the German Maneuver Training Area Command at Baumholder, speak briefly before the ceremony bidding farewell to Soldiers of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, at Smith Barracks in Baumholder, March 27.

“The ‘Strike Hard’ brigade, in war and peace, has amassed a proud and legendary record of service,” the general continued. “The next chapter in the long and glorious history, your third deployment to Iraq ... begins today. I’m proud to be here with you today as you send your formations back to combat, again, for the third time in five years.”

After thanking the general for his praise of the brigade, White had a very short and simple message for the guests and Soldiers:

“This brigade is combat ready. It’s ready to deploy. Iron Soldiers.”



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