

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

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### U.S. ARMY EUROPE BIDS FAREWELL TO ITS SENIOR ENLISTED MEMBER IN HEIDELBERG CEREMONY

By Dave Melancon

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**HEIDELBERG, Germany** -- U.S. Army Europe's noncommissioned officer corps bid farewell to their top NCO on behalf of the command's 46,000 Soldiers and their Families during a farewell retreat ceremony here June 18.



DAVE MELANCON

Command Sgt. Maj. Iuniasolua T. Savusa, U.S. Army Europe's outgoing command sergeant major, bids farewell to Soldiers, Family members, civilian employees and other guests during a retreat ceremony in Heidelberg, Germany, June 18. Savusa, who served as USAREUR's senior enlisted member since May 2006, was recently selected to serve as the command sergeant major for the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan.

Command Sgt. Maj. Iuniasolua T. Savusa, USAREUR's senior enlisted member since May 2006, was recently selected to serve as the command sergeant major of the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan by former USAREUR commanding general and ISAF commander Gen. David McKiernan.

"In the last two years, more than 19,000 USAREUR Soldiers have trained and deployed in support of Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom. Many of those Soldiers are still deployed today," Savusa said. "Some of them I will see very soon, when I get to my new post as the command sergeant major of the International Security Assistance Force in Kabul."

During his tenure as USAREUR's top NCO, the command has undergone many unit reflaggings and returns to the United States, base closures, infrastructure changes, deployments and redeployments, he said. USAREUR has provided support to the U.S. European Command and the recently formed African Command, completed numerous theater security cooperation missions and Joint Task Force-East training events, and

managed the day-to-day business of taking care of Soldiers.

“It has been an honor to serve as the U.S. Army Europe and 7th Army command sergeant major for the past two years,” Savusa told those who attended the ceremony. Well-wishers included U.S. Rep. Eni Fa'aua'a Hunkin Faleomavaega Jr., American Samoa's delegate to the U. S. House of Representatives, Lt. Gen. Gary D. Speer, USAREUR acting commanding general, and Carmen McKiernan, wife of Gen. McKiernan.

“One of the things I have enjoyed most about this position is the time I spend with Soldiers,” Savusa said. “I am continuously amazed and astounded by the fervent passion that these Soldiers have for their country, their units, and their mission.”

Calling his Family “the most selfless and the most patriotic Family in America,” Savusa praised all USAREUR military Families for their resiliency and strength.

“It is an unfortunate fact in our business that our Families have to become experts at managing the home and caring for the Family in the absence of their Soldiers,” he said. “Because of our strong spouses, sons and daughters, our Soldiers are able to focus on the success of the mission.”

The command sergeant major also praised and thanked his colleagues on the USAREUR staff, its units, the Department of Defense Dependents School system, the Installation Management Command-Europe and the citizens of Germany and Italy for their support.

“As I leave you today, I ask that you continue your great contributions that serve not only this military community, but also our outstanding Army and our great nation,” he said.

“When selected to come to USAREUR, Command Sgt. Maj. Savusa broke the mold,” Speer said during his remarks at the event. “So when he came in with his light (infantry) background, I finally had a Ranger buddy.”

Savusa was expected to stay in USAREUR at least another year, Speer continued.

“As Gen. McKiernan started his preparations to go to Afghanistan and he went through the process for his command sergeant major, it is not surprising that he chose to reach out for his right-hand man to join him in NATO's international security force.”

Savusa never lost focus on the command's priorities of winning the war against terrorism and taking care of Soldiers, their Families and the civilian workforce, Speer said. He frequently visited units in garrison and in Iraq and Afghanistan to assess their readiness and quality of life.

Savusa was instrumental in getting NCOs from partner nations into USAREUR training centers and in establishing an annual Europe-wide conference of senior NCOs, he added.

“Sgt. Maj. Savusa, your legacy includes Soldiers prepared for the fight and winning the war; noncommissioned officer development in both the United States Army and our coalition partners; leading noncommissioned officers through change in structure, footprint and attitude; transformation; caring for Soldiers, Families and civilians,” Speer said.

In recognition of his service to USAREUR, Savusa was awarded the Army's Legion of Merit during the ceremony.

Savusa served two previous tours in Afghanistan. In 2002, he served in Kandahar as command sergeant major for the 101st Airborne Division's Task Force Rakkasan. In 2005, he was assigned to Bagram Airfield as the Combined Joint Task Force 76 command sergeant major.

While no announcement has been made about Savusa's successor, V Corps Command Sgt. Maj. Ralph Beam has been selected to serve as interim USAREUR command sergeant major.



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