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Ceremonies add Rashid missions to 2nd Brigade, 1st Armored Division operations in Iraq

FORWARD OPERATING BASE FALCON, Iraq – Soldiers of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division accepted authority for operations in Iraq's Rashid district during a pair of transfer of authority ceremonies here, March 4.



During the first ceremony, the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division transferred authority for their area of operations in Rashid to the 2nd BCT.

“Along with local leaders and the [Iraqi security forces] we have formed an unbeatable team in Rashid,” said Col. Ted Martin, commander of 1st BCT, during his remarks at the event. “I thank you for your friendship, patriotism and support. No longer can the enemy use neighborhoods as battlefields. Each day brings new hope for the citizens of Rashid.”

The 2nd BCT arrived in Iraq nine months ago to support the ISF in the Diyala province south of the Iraqi capital. The March 4 ceremony marked the addition of Rashid to the brigade's area of operations for the remainder of their deployment.

Martin and 1st BCT Command Sgt. Maj. Michael I. Bobb cased the brigade standard, signifying the completion of the unit's yearlong deployment.

Col. Pat White, commander of the 2nd BCT, applauded the accomplishments of 1st BCT Soldiers and ISF during the previous year, and said his troops are committed to providing the same partnership and support to the ISF during their time in southern Baghdad.

In turn, Martin extended a personal thanks to the 2nd BCT command team for its friendship and professionalism.

“The Soldiers of the Raider Brigade know and acknowledge the sacrifices that your Soldiers have already made in Iraq, and we wish you all the best in the days ahead,” Martin said.

The second ceremony here marked the passing of responsibility for missions in West Rashid to the “Iron Knights” of the 2nd BCT's Task Force 1st Battalion, 35th Armor from the 4th Infantry Division's 1st Battalion, 22nd Infantry.

The 1-22nd deployed to Iraq in February 2008. Its commander, Lt. Col. Matthew Elledge, said his battalion is turning over its mission to an experienced team.

“It is great to have a seasoned unit to assume responsibility of Rashid,” said Elledge. “I am confident the ‘Iron Knights’ will do a fantastic job.”

Security conditions continue to improve within the Rashid district and the transfer of authority demonstrates the steady progress in the area and the commitment of Multi-National Division - Baghdad to provide security for the Iraqi people, Elledge added.

Soldiers of the 1-22nd and the 1-35th have conducted side-by-side operations over the past week to prepare the 1st Armored Division troops to conduct operations in the neighborhoods of West Rashid with their ISF partners. The 1-35th has already assisted the citizens of Mada'in Qada and the battalion is ready for any challenges they'll meet in the coming months, said its commander, Lt. Col. Rich Morales, commander.

The 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division is a U.S. Army Europe unit based in Baumholder, Germany.

(This article was compiled from reports by the Multi-National Division - Baghdad and 2nd Brigade, 1st Armored Division Public Affairs Offices.)



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