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CONTACT: Lt. Col. Richard Stackpole

OFFICE: 615.313.0662

richard.a.stackpole.mil@mail.mil

Tennessee Guardsmen return home from deployment

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – More than 100 Soldiers assigned to the Tennessee National Guard's 253rd Military Police Company returned home Wednesday, Feb. 3, after an 11-month deployment overseas.

"We're all excited to be back home," said Capt. Dana Shears, commander of the 253rd Military Police Company. "It was a great deployment. Everyone worked hard and we proudly represented the Volunteer State."

Headquartered in Lenoir City and with a detachment in Bristol, the 253rd mobilized this past March. They were the first Soldiers from Tennessee to train and deploy in support of overseas contingency operations in the midst of a worldwide pandemic.

"These Tennesseans mobilized just as the COVID-19 pandemic began," said Maj. Gen. Jeff Holmes, Tennessee's Adjutant General. "The unit overcame many challenges as there were so many unknowns at the beginning, but these Soldiers were adaptive and agile and focused on their mission. They exemplified selfless-service and one of their most difficult tasks was to leave their home and families during a tumultuous time and trust us here at home to look after them."

The 253rd Military Police Company Soldiers returned to Smyrna's Volunteer Training Site at approximately 11 a.m. and were greeted by family and friends. After conducting a short in processing, the unit bused to Lenoir City and released to go home.

"I'm proud of the great job they did and all they persevered through," said Holmes. "Their professionalism exemplifies the caliber of Soldiers who serve in the Tennessee National Guard."

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Soldiers from the 253rd Military Police Company are welcomed home by Maj. Gen. Jeff Holmes, Tennessee's Adjutant General, and his command team, as they arrived in Smyrna on Feb. 3, following an 11-month deployment in support of overseas contingency operations. (Photo by Capt. Kealy Moriarty)



Maj. Gen. Jeff Holmes, Tennessee's Adjutant General, welcomes home Soldiers from the 253rd Military Police Company just after they arrived at Smyrna's Volunteer Training Center on Feb. 3, following an 11-month deployment in support of overseas contingency operations. (Photo by Capt. Kealy Moriarty)

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