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CONTACT: Lt. Col. Richard Stackpole

OFFICE: 615.313.0662

richard.a.stackpole2.mil@mail.mil

Tenn. National Guard Field Artillery Regiment Deploys

SMYRNA, Tenn. – More than 350 Soldiers from Tennessee National Guard's 1st Battalion, 181st Field Artillery Regiment, deployed Sunday, March 7, on the first leg of a 10-month deployment overseas.

At approximately 1 p.m., the battalion, headquartered in Chattanooga with units from Dayton, Fayetteville, Lawrenceburg, and Pulaski, held a farewell ceremony at Smyrna's Volunteer Training Site. Family, friends, and dignitaries including Governor Bill Lee, First Lady Maria Lee, Congressman Mark Green, and Maj. Gen. Jeff Holmes, Tennessee's Adjutant General, attended the event.

"I've watched you train in challenging times with COVID-19 and you've taken on multiple missions in the past year," Holmes said when addressing the unit. "You're ready, you're prepared, and you're professional. I know you are ready and this is your moment."

During the ceremony, the 1-181st cased their battalion colors, which will be uncased when they arrives in the Middle East.

"We've trained under unique circumstances, and many Soldiers assisted with the COVID-19 task force and other missions this past year," said Lt. Col. Phillip Hill, Jr., 1-181st Battalion Commander. "We are trained, ready, and the Soldiers of this battalion have displayed an ability to step up and meet every challenge. I am 100% confident that they will continue to do so."

Following the ceremony, the Soldiers said goodbye to their families and boarded aircraft headed to Fort Bliss, Texas, where they will receive additional mobilization training before deploying overseas in support of Operation Spartan Shield and Inherent Resolve. While deployed, the Soldiers will be operating in multiple countries under U.S. Central Command.

"This is a special day," said Holmes. "This represents everything that is good about America."

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A Soldier deploying with the Tennessee National Guard's 1st Battalion, 181st Field Artillery Regiment, hugs his family goodbye as he departs Smyrna's Volunteer Training Site for a 10-month deployment to the Middle East on March 7. (photo by Staff Sgt. Timothy Cordeiro)



Lt. Col. Phillip Hill and Command Sgt. Maj. Carlos Quick, the leadership team for the Tennessee National Guard's 1st Battalion, 181st Field Artillery Regiment, case their unit colors during a departure ceremony at Smyrna's Volunteer Training Site on March 7. The battalion began a 10-month deployment where they will serve in the Middle East. (photo by Staff Sgt. Timothy Cordeiro)



Soldiers with the Tennessee National Guard's 1st Battalion, 181st Field Artillery Regiment, load an aircraft at Smyrna's Volunteer Training Site following the unit's departure ceremony for a 10-month deployment to the Middle East on March 7. (photo by Staff Sgt. Timothy Cordeiro)

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