

Colorado-based armored brigade arrives in Europe

By Staff Sgt. Alvin Reeves 23 March 2022



An M1 Abrams main battle tank from 3rd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division disembarks at Alexandroupoli, Greece, March 21, 2022.

ALEXANDROUPOLI, Greece — An M1 Abrams main battle tank is the first item from 3rd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division to disembark at a port in Alexandroupoli, Greece, March 21, 2022. The 3rd ABCT is commencing its preplanned, nine-month deployment to Europe in support of Operation Atlantic Resolve. Approximately 200 vehicles and equipment items will be staged at the port facility in the coming days and prepared for onward movement. The equipment arrived aboard the commercial cargo vessel “Liberty Passion” following its journey across the Atlantic from a port in Charleston, South Carolina.

The 839th Transportation Battalion Commander Lt. Col. Carey Way highlighted the coordinated effort to get the “Iron Brigade” of 4th Infantry Division into Europe. “It’s a tremendous opportunity for us to partner with 21st Theater Sustainment Command; the incoming unit, 3/4 ID; and the movement control battalion out of Germany.” He continued, “The partnerships with the Greek government and military have been

tremendous throughout this operation. We come here very often to discharge vessels in support of RAF rotations and exercises in southern and northern Europe. It's just a tremendous collaboration to make this all happen; to have the capabilities of Alexandroupoli on display is great for the U.S. Army, it's great for the Greeks, and U.S. European Command, in general."

Greece is just one of three ports that 3rd ABCT will deploy its equipment into Europe through. Similar port operations will take place in the Netherlands and Denmark over the coming weeks. In total, the Fort Carson, Colorado-based armor battalion will deploy nearly 4,000 Soldiers and bring more than 2,000 equipment items — to include Abrams main battle tanks, Paladins self-propelled cannon artillery system, Bradley fighting vehicles, and additional tracked and wheeled vehicles of various types.

After training for many months, 3rd ABCT is looking forward to its upcoming mission in Europe.

Maj. Jonathan Protor, operations officer for 1st Battalion, 66th Armor Regiment, 3rd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, expressed gratification for the concerted effort to deploy the unit. "It's been great support to get us all here and we're working as a team to, overall, accomplish the mission," he said. The infantry officer, assigned to the oldest armor unit in the Army, further shared that during the deployment, there are planned, long-range movements across multiple countries are designed to test and reinforce the unit's sustainment capabilities and mission command systems.

The 21st Theater Sustainment Command is the lead organization for coordinating and executing the complex onward movement of 3rd ABCT's equipment and has a significant presence at the Alexandroupoli port, to include transportation experts from 39th Transportation Battalion (Movement Control).

"We, as sustainers, are tasked to verify all documentation and ensure their approval from the host nation, for deployment and customs clearance," Capt. Ryan Lee explained. He is the commander of 635th Movement Control Team and conveyed the vital role his team and its parent organization, 39th Movement Control Battalion, play in mission success for deploying and redeploying units. "This job is important because we have to facilitate the combat unit's freedom of maneuver to make sure those combat powers can get to the right locations at the right times. Even though

it's cold and windy, we are extremely proud of every soldier here today. I hope they understand that each individual's role is important in making this unit move from this port to their final destination."

Operation Atlantic Resolve, and similar exercises, allow both Army and commercial transportation and logistics experts to sharpen their skills, fine-tuned their abilities, and collaborate successful operations at this scale across Europe.

"The port operation in Alexandroupoli clearly demonstrates the Army's ability to deploy forces from the U.S., bring them into Europe effectively and safely, and then move them to training locations all across the theater," said Col. Joshua Hirsch, 598th Transportation Brigade (Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command) commander. "We've done this successfully at this port for several Atlantic Resolve rotations and in support of other key missions. It's also important to understand that the highly capable Alexandroupoli facility is just one of many ports that are able to support the deployment of U.S. Army equipment. The Army has tremendous flexibility in how we deploy and maneuver forces because of the diversity of ports we work with. In coordination with our allies and partners, and with the commercial sector, we can now bring Army equipment into Europe at times and places of our choosing."

With the deployment of 3rd ABCT, U.S. Army will have three armored brigades in Europe at one time for the first time, since 2007. The other armored brigades currently in theater are the 1st Armored Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division and 1st Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division. All three brigades will fall under the command of U.S. Army V Corps. Also known as "Victory Corps," V Corps is America's forward deployed corps in Europe; the unit works alongside NATO Allies and regional security partners to provide combat-ready forces, execute joint and multinational training exercises, and retain command and control for all rotational and assigned units in the European theater.

Since April 2014, U.S. Army Europe and Africa has led the Department of Defense's Atlantic Resolve land efforts by bringing units based in the U.S. to Europe. Units, such as 3rd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, are ready, combat-capable forces able to conduct extensive bilateral, joint and multilateral training throughout its deployments to more than a dozen countries in Europe. Moreover, Atlantic Resolve enables the U.S. to enhance deterrence, increase readiness and support NATO.

