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Public Affairs Office**

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**Country music star Trace Adkins performs for Q-West Soldiers**

ADKINS

By Sgt. Keith M. Anderson, 16<sup>th</sup> SB Public Affairs

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE Q-WEST, Iraq — Country music star Trace Adkins spent the day at Q-West visiting Soldiers, blowing up ordnance, and putting on an evening performance for more than 400 Soldiers at the Favors Outdoor Theater here Sept. 22.

“We heard a rumor that for whatever reason Q-West usually gets scratched off the itinerary so we made a point of coming out here,” said Trace Adkins. “We were sent by several hundred million Americans to say thanks for what you do.”

Adkins’ visit to Q-West was one of seven stops in Iraq for the Country Music Television award-winning artist. He won CMT’s ‘2008 Male Video of the Year’ for the song “I got my game on.” His USO tour includes 15 stops in several countries.

During the day, Adkins visited several Q-West units, then he went out with explosive ordnance Soldiers and got the opportunity to detonate some older ordnance.

“They said it was some ordnance that they had to get rid of, so that’s why they let me do

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it,” Adkins said.

The performance was filmed for an upcoming special on the Great American Country network, tentatively slated for November.

The concert was must-see for many Soldiers.

“It’s Trace Adkins, it’s the Badonkadonk guy!” said Master Sgt. Terri Jasso, maintenance non-commissioned officer in charge, 16th Sustainment Brigade.

The 41-year-old from Danville, Ill., said she respected Adkins.

“I think he supports the U.S., that he’s a patriotic person, and he supports Soldiers for what we do,” Jasso said. “And he gives his mom ‘props.’ You have to respect a person that respects his mom.”

After the show Jasso, and many other Soldiers and contractors were able to get photos with Adkins.

Tracy Thede, entertainment tour producer, USO, said it was important for Soldiers to see concerts and shows.

“The reason we do this for Soldiers is at the end of the day we just want them to know that we think about them and want to provide a touch of home wherever they are in this world,” Thede said. “We want to be sure everyone knows they’re appreciated and not forgotten.”

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Adkins told Soldiers how important they are during his concert.

“At my concerts [in the U.S.] I tell them that I’m coming out here and I get a standing ovation every time,” Adkins said. “So I’m coming out here to say thanks for what you do, from millions of Americans.”

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Country music star Trace Adkins speaks to Soldiers in between songs during a concert at Favors Outdoor Theater here Sept. 22. Adkins’ visit to Q-West was one of seven stops in Iraq for the Country Music Television award-winning artist. He won CMT’s ‘2008 Male Video of the Year’ for the song “I got my game on.” His USO tour includes 15 stops in several countries. “We heard a rumor that for whatever reason Q-West usually gets scratched off the itinerary so we made a point of coming out here,” said Trace Adkins. “We were sent by several hundred million Americans to say thanks for what you do.” (Photos by Sgt. Keith M. Anderson)

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