

U.S. to deploy 3,000 additional troops to Saudi Arabia



Washington, October 11 (RHC)-- The Pentagon has announced it has approved the deployment of 3,000 additional U.S. troops and military hardware to Saudi Arabia, boosting the country's defenses after attacks on its oil installations.

U.S. Secretary of Defense Mark Esper authorized the deployment of two more Patriot missile batteries, one THAAD ballistic missile interception system, two fighter squadrons and one air expeditionary wing, the Pentagon said in a statement.

"Secretary Esper informed Saudi Crown Prince and Minister of Defense Mohammed bin Salman (MBS) this morning of the additional troop deployment to assure and enhance the defence of Saudi Arabia," it said. "Taken together with other deployments this constitutes an additional 3,000 forces that have been extended or authorised within the last month," it said.

Esper later told reporters that the deployments were in response "to continued threats in the region" and came after a conversation with MBS about "efforts to protect from further Iranian aggression." MBS had requested additional support, Esper said.

Since May, the US has increased the number of its forces by about 14,000 in the Central Command area covering the Middle East, the defense department said.

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