

# *Pentagon Announces U.S. War Games in Baltic States*

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Washington, April 23 (RHC)-- The United States will send hundreds of troops to Poland, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia over the coming days for joint war games, according to the U.S. Department of Defense.

Pentagon press secretary Rear Admiral John Kirby said on Tuesday that the maneuvers will last for a month, and involve approximately 600 troops. He added that the maneuvers were not symbolic, but what he called "real infantry training."

Last week, the Washington Post reported that the Barack Obama administration is planning to send thousands of troops to Poland. A day after meeting with U.S. Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel at the Pentagon on Thursday, Polish Defense Minister Tomasz Siemoniak visited the Washington Post and told the newspaper that Poland and the U.S. will soon announce "the deployment of U.S. ground forces to Poland as part of an expansion of NATO presence in Central and Eastern Europe in response to events in Ukraine."

Washington and Moscow are at loggerheads over the situation in Ukraine. In a meeting last week, Russia, Ukraine, the U.S. and the European Union agreed over steps to "de-escalate" the crisis in eastern Ukraine, where anti-Kiev protesters seized buildings in several towns and cities.

Meanwhile, Ukrainian authorities have ordered a military offensive against the protesters, claiming that Russian special forces are fueling unrest in the country. However, Russian President Vladimir Putin

dismissed as "nonsense" claims that Russian special forces are fomenting the unrest in eastern Ukraine. Putin said: "It's all nonsense; there are no Russian units, special forces or instructors in the east of Ukraine."

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