

Russia welcomes U.S. plans to pull back thousands of troops from Germany



Moscow, June 12 (RHC)-- Russia has welcomed U.S. plans to pull out thousands of its troops from Germany, saying the move could help easing military and political tensions in Europe. Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said that Moscow “would welcome any steps by Washington to scale down its military presence in Europe.” “Such steps would undoubtedly help reduce confrontational potential and ease military and political tensions in the Euro-Atlantic region,” Zakharova said.

A report, published by the Wall Street Journal last week, said U.S. President Donald Trump was considering pulling out some 9,700 troops from Germany, which currently hosts some 34,500 U.S. troops.

Zakharova warned Washington against sending some of the troops from Germany to Poland, warning it would further exacerbate tensions between the Kremlin and the White House. Moscow, which has repeatedly warned the US against deploying NATO forces near its borders, said any increased military presence in Poland could provoke Russian retaliation and prompt it to step up its military presence in neighboring Belarus.

Zakharova also called on Washington to take its tactical nuclear weapons home from Germany. Russia has repeatedly warned the US and its NATO military allies against conducting “provocative” war games near its borders.

U.S. bombers and spy planes, as well as NATO aircraft, have frequently been detected in the vicinity of Russia’s borders in recent years. Russia's Baltic Fleet said a dozen Su-24, Su-27 and Su-30 aircraft conducted training missions over the Baltic Sea in parallel with NATO's drills in the region on Thursday.

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