

EU military chief wants European troops in Greenland after U.S. threats to take control



Robert Brieger, chairman of the European Union Military Committee (EUMC), poses for a photo with other attendees during the informal EU ministerial meeting on defense in Toledo, Spain

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Brussels, January 26 (RHC)-- The EU's military chief has said that it would make sense to station European troops in Greenland following U.S. President Donald Trump's repeated calls for acquiring the autonomous Danish territory.

"In my view, it would make perfect sense not only to station US forces in Greenland, as has been the case to date, but also to consider stationing EU soldiers there in the future," General Robert Brieger, chairman of the 27-member EU Military Committee (EUMC), said.

"That would send a strong signal and could contribute to stability in the region," he said in remarks published by Germany's Welt am Sonntag on Saturday. He said due to "increasing ice melt as a result of climate change" creating new navigation routes, and due to its rich untapped resources, Greenland is becoming increasingly important for Brussels, thus putting the EU on a confrontational course with Trump's expansionist policy.

The Austrian-born top brass said he hoped that the US, as a member of the United Nations, would respect the inviolability of borders as stipulated in the UN Charter.

"The island is of great importance from a geopolitical point of view and is also highly relevant from a security policy perspective," the former Austrian chief of staff added, voicing his concerns over what he described as "a certain potential for tension."

EUMC is the highest military office of the European Council, which is a consultative body in Brussels as the EU bloc has no dedicated army and US-led NATO troops play the role of the EU's military.

Greenland's location along the shortest route from Europe to North America has strategic importance for the US. Its ballistic missile warning system is stationed in Greenland.

Trump, in his recent remarks, cited acquiring Greenland as one of his top priorities, expressing his willingness to use economic or military means to annex the Danish territory.

The U.S. State Department said Secretary of State Marco Rubio spoke with his Danish counterpart Lars Løkke Rasmussen on Friday. Greenland's Prime Minister Mute Egede, who is committed to Greenland's independence, has repeatedly stated that the island is not for sale and that the people on the island themselves must decide their own future.

In a heated phone conversation earlier this month, Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen reportedly told Trump that Greenland would have to decide for itself whether to become independent.

[SOURCE: PRESS TV and REUTERS]

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