

Pentagon Chief Praises U.S. Bid to Store Heavy Weapons in Eastern Europe



Berlin, June 23 (RHC)-- U.S. Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter has praised Washington's decision to station heavy weaponry in Eastern Europe, and vowed the United States will defend its allies against Russia.

"The concept is to have sets of equipment principally to support training so that they are already located there, including heavy equipment," Carter said in an address in Berlin, Germany. "There is the possibility also of more equipment being positioned for contingencies." The U.S. is planning to store tanks and other heavy weapons near the Russian border.

The rhetoric and actions from Washington and Moscow have intensified in recent days amid the worst tensions since the Cold War, which both sides blame on each other. U.S. officials and observers point to the Ukrainian conflict as the underlying issue for the increased tensions.

The U.S. has already sent B-2 and B-52 nuclear-capable bombers, F-15Cs and A-10 attack planes as well as Army and Navy assets to Europe for a show of force, according to CNN.

NATO allies in Eastern Europe have stepped up their military moves, including exercises and the creation of a NATO rapid response force. In response, Russian President Vladimir Putin has announced a plan for his country to add 40 intercontinental ballistic missiles to its nuclear arsenal this year.

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