

# *Germany Considers Deporting Refugees in Military Aircraft*

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Berlin, October 22 (RHC)-- Germany says it is considering plans to use military aircraft to accelerate the deportation of those denied refugee or asylum status in the Western European country. German Defense Minister Ursula von der Leyen said: "Obviously, the usage of the Transall (army transport aircraft) is not ruled out. But only in the event that all civilian transport capacities are exhausted and if it does not affect the German army's priority missions."

The remarks came hours after Germany's Bild newspaper reported that Berlin was looking into the use of army aircraft to send asylum seekers, whose applications had been rejected, back to their home countries.

Germany, Europe's top destination for refugees, is expecting to receive between 800,000 and one million asylum seekers this year. Most of the asylum seekers who risk their lives to reach Europe are reportedly fleeing conflict-hit zones in Africa and the Middle East, particularly Syria. However, officials in the European countries are divided on how to deal with the huge refugee influx.

In another relevant development on Wednesday, European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker also announced a mini-summit in the Belgian capital city of Brussels on Sunday, consisting of leaders from the European Union member states and Balkans to deal with the current refugee crisis in Europe.

“In view of the unfolding emergency in the countries along the western Balkans migratory route, there is a need for much greater cooperation, more extensive consultation and immediate operational action,” Juncker’s office said.

EU member states, including Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Romania and Slovenia, as well as non-EU countries such as Serbia and Macedonia have been invited to attend the upcoming summit.

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