

U.S. Military Plans New Intelligence Base in Bahrain



Washington, January 17 (RHC)-- The U.S. military plans to establish an intelligence center in the Persian Gulf kingdom of Bahrain in a bid to compensate for its dwindling presence in the war-torn Afghanistan.

A senior U.S. military official told a Senate hearing that the planned espionage center in the Arab state, home to the U.S. Navy's 5th Fleet, will be an "integral part" of the Pentagon's post-2014 strategy in Afghanistan.

According to a report published by the Washington Post, the move to expand the U.S. military and intelligence presence in Bahrain comes despite the grave human rights record of the ruling Al Khalifa regime for its brutal crackdown on a popular uprising that has left scores shot and tortured to death and many more injured and prosecuted for taking part and even sympathizing with the continuing anti-regime protests in the country.

However, the United States has long been suspected by regional countries, particularly Iran and Russia, of promoting the growth of the narcotics trade in Afghanistan ever since American and NATO military forces invaded the country in 2001 under the pretext of fighting terror and bringing stability to Afghanistan.

There have been numerous press accounts over the past years pointing to the involvement of U.S. troops and CIA operatives in Afghanistan's expanding drug trade. A United Nations reports that cultivation of opium poppies, which are processed to make heroin, reached a record high in 2013.

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