

# *Russia Says Estonia-NATO Airbase Plan Provocative*

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Moscow, October 21 (RHC)-- The Russian Foreign Ministry has called plans by Estonia to expand an airbase to provide more space for NATO aircraft as "provocative."

"In the light of constant speculation about the need for the military alliance (NATO) and in particular the United States to deploy extra military forces on its 'eastern flank' we view these preparations as an openly provocative step aimed at destabilizing the situation," the ministry said in a statement on Tuesday.

The statement came after the Estonian Air Force said it intended to expand Amari airbase, where NATO stations some of its planes. The airbase is used for NATO Baltic air policing patrols aimed at protecting the airspace of the three Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania from Russian warplanes.

In September 2015, Lockheed Martin F-22 Raptor fighters, developed for the United States Air Force, were deployed at Amari.

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