



By: TA | AP Brief

# US to withdraw 5,000 troops from Germany



The United States will withdraw about 5,000 troops from Germany in the next six to 12 months, the Pentagon said Friday, fulfilling President Donald Trump's threat as he clashes with the German leader over the U.S. **war with Iran**.

Trump had threatened to withdraw some troops from the NATO ally earlier this week after Chancellor Friedrich Merz said the U.S. was being "humiliated" by the Iranian leadership and criticized Washington's lack of strategy in the war.

Pentagon spokesman Sean Parnell said in a statement that the "decision follows a thorough review of the Department's force posture in Europe and is in recognition of theater requirements and conditions on the ground."

Germany hosts several U.S. military facilities, including the headquarters of its European and Africa commands, Ramstein Air Base and a medical center in Landstuhl, where casualties from the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq were treated. U.S. nuclear missiles are also stationed in the country.

The number of troops leaving Germany would be 14% of the 36,000 American service members stationed there.

News of the troop withdrawal drew swift pushback from Democrats in Congress as well as a hawkish Washington think tank.

They said the move will benefit Russian President Vladimir Putin and weaken U.S. security interests.

The withdrawal "suggests American commitments to our allies are dependent on the president's mood," said Sen. Jack Reed of Rhode Island, the ranking Democrat on the Senate Armed Services Committee.

"The president should immediately cease this reckless action before he causes irreversible consequences for our alliances and long-term national security," Reed said.

Bradley Bowman, a scholar at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, said the U.S. military's presence in Germany and elsewhere in Europe "not only strengthens deterrence against additional Kremlin aggression but also facilitates the projection of American military power into the Mediterranean, the Middle East, and Africa."

Trump ignored questions from reporters about the withdrawal on Friday as he boarded Air Force One in Ocala, Florida, following a rally to tout his economic agenda.

## Patriot missile systems

Trump made a similar threat in his first term, saying he would pull about 9,500 of the roughly 34,500 U.S. troops who were then stationed in Germany, but he didn't start the process and Democratic President **Joe Biden** formally stopped the planned withdrawal soon after taking office in 2021.

The mercurial U.S. leader has mused for years about reducing the American **military presence in Germany**, and has railed **against NATO** for its refusal to assist Washington in the war, which began on Feb. 28 with U.S.-Israeli strikes on Iran.

Trump wrote Wednesday on social media that the U.S. was reviewing possible troop reductions in Germany, with a "determination" to be made soon.

On Thursday, he was still thinking about Merz, posting that the German leader should "spend more time on ending the war with Russia/Ukraine" and "fixing his broken Country" than concerning himself with Iran.

**Depending on operations, exercises and troop rotations, around 80,000-100,000 U.S. personnel are usually stationed in Europe**

American allies in NATO have braced for a U.S.

troop withdrawal since Trump took office, with Washington warning that Europe would have to look after **its own security**, including that of Ukraine, in the future.

Depending on operations, exercises and troop rotations, around 80,000-100,000 U.S. personnel are usually **stationed in Europe**.

NATO allies have expected for more than a year that the U.S. troops deployed after Russia launched its all-out war on Ukraine in February 2022 would be first to leave.

Ed Arnold, an expert in European security at the Royal United Services Institute, or RUSI, in London, said Europe is more concerned about issues like a U.S. redeployment of **Patriot missile systems** and ammunition from Germany to the Middle East.

In October, the U.S. confirmed that it would reduce its troop presence on NATO's borders with Ukraine. The move to cut 1,500-3,000 troops came on short notice and unsettled NATO ally Romania, where the military organization runs an air base.