

Turkey to host NATO ground forces

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Amid ongoing deadly unrest in Syria, NATO plans to turn its airbase in Turkey into a stronghold for the US-led military alliance's ground forces.

The alliance would transfer its ground forces from a military base in the city of Heidelberg in southwestern Germany and another outpost in Spain to the Izmir Air Station in western Turkey, Journal of Turkish Weekly reported earlier in the month.

The base, NATO's oldest stronghold in Turkey, currently accommodates 400 operational and technical forces.

The move constitutes a part of sweeping reforms in the alliance, which according to its Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen would ultimately "make NATO leaner, more flexible, and better able to deal with future challenges."

Outlining the changes, Rasmussen has said, "We have agreed to reshape NATO's command structure, making it more efficient, more deployable, and more compact."

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