

Sites Named for New NATO Bases in Eastern Europe

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A specialist inspects Canadian Air Task Force jet CF-188 after landing in the Siauliai air base, Lithuania.

The five NATO new bases intended to contain the Russian threat will be located in Poland, Romania, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, a German newspaper reported Sunday.

The bases will be used for logistics, reconnaissance and mission planning, and will boast permanent multinational staffs of between 300 and 600 employees per base, Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung reported.

The workforce figures exclude actual troops, whose deployment in Eastern Europe is limited by a 1997 treaty between Russia and NATO known as the Founding Act, the report said.

But "small contingents" of NATO troops will be present at the bases at all times, the daily said, citing a classified draft plan of the alliance's revamp.

In addition, NATO will have a 4,000-strong rapid reaction force ready to deploy in the east

within two to seven days, the report said.

The figure was placed at 10,000 by The Financial Times on Saturday. The discrepancy could not be immediately reconciled.

The plan will be discussed at an upcoming NATO summit in Wales next week, the newspaper said.

The document explicitly lists Russia as a threat and says the boosting of NATO's military presence in the east is tasked with protecting the alliance's new members from Russia.

NATO publicly voiced plans to boost its eastern defenses last week, but gave no details. The organization expanded in the 1990s and 2000s to include Eastern European countries that were previously members of the Moscow-run Warsaw Pact.

Poland, the Baltic states and Canada — also a NATO member — called for a repeal of the 1997 Russia-NATO Founding Act, Der Spiegel magazine said Sunday, citing unnamed sources at NATO and the German government.

NATO accused Russia last week of having dispatched a limited military contingent to eastern Ukraine to help the flagging pro-Russian insurgency there. Official Moscow denied backing the rebels, who pushed back official Kiev's forces last week.

NATO suspended cooperation with Russia in May following the outbreak of civil strife in Ukraine.

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