

Massive deployment of US and allied troops in Afghanistan

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The Obama administration is committed to a massive deployment of US and allied troops in Afghanistan. The top U.S. commander in Afghanistan, Gen. David McKiernan, had requested 30,000 troops. So far the president has authorized 17,000 troops "and the Pentagon identified 12,000 to send."

NATO troops are facing fierce resistance. NATO countries have been called upon by the US to increase their troops in Afghanistan officially to combat the "war on terrorism".

Afghanistan is a strategic geopolitical hub in Central Asia bordering on China and the former Soviet Union. It is at the crossroads of strategic oil and gas pipelines.

It also supplies more than 90 percent of the world's supply of heroin. Retail sales worldwide of Afghan heroin are of the order of 200 billion dollars a year. It is worth noting these multibillion proceeds of the Afghan drug trade, deposited in Western banks, constitute, at a time of crisis, a financial safety net for the Western banking system.

In recent developments, Germany is to contribute to the surge in Afghanistan.

"Chancellor Angela Merkel says Germany will send 600 extra troops to Afghanistan in the run-up to elections there later this year.

Germany currently has more than 3,500 troops in the NATO-led force in Afghanistan. They serve under a mandate from parliament that allows the deployment of a maximum 4,500 soldiers."

Canada has stated that it will pull out its 2,500 combat troops in Afghanistan by 2011. Barack Obama will be on an official visit to Canada on February 19th. Pressure has been put to bear on Ottawa not to proceed with troop withdrawals.

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