

The US has No Intention of Leaving Afghanistan: Military Presence in Afghanistan to Maintain US Geostrategic Interests

By [Rick Rozoff](#)

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The U.S. has no intention of leaving Afghanistan after the 2014 deadline for withdrawing its troops because of the geostrategic importance of the country, says Rick Rozoff from the Stop NATO organization.

On Tuesday, Gen. Joseph Dunford, the current U.S. commander in occupied Afghanistan, told the Senate Armed Services Committee that U.S. troops should remain in Afghanistan after 2014. Dunford said he had not made any assessments on the U.S. troop level beyond 2014.

In January, the Wall Street Journal reported that the Pentagon plans to leave roughly 3,000, 6,000, or 9,000 U.S. troops in after the 2014 deadline for NATO operations in the country.

Earlier this month, Army General Martin Dempsey, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, also expressed his support for maintaining 8,000 to 12,000 NATO troops in the war-torn country after the 2014 deadline for the withdrawal of occupying forces.

"In a nation that borders Iran, borders Pakistan, borders China, and is not terribly far from Russia as well, the U.S. and its Western military allies intend to maintain military operational capabilities," said Rozoff in a phone interview with the U.S. Desk on Wednesday.

"The U.S. has massively upgraded air force bases that were built, in some cases modernized, decades ago by former Soviet Union, those in Bagram, Shindand, Kandahar and other places.

"These are bases that have been increased by a factor of several times in size and in sophistication and are capable, or could be capable in short order, of hosting strategic bombers, that is, even long-range U.S. military aircraft that could be used for any military conflict within the general region," added Rozoff.

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