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Germany Seeks to Expand Military Deployments in Eastern Europe

By Jason Ditz

March 30, 2014

German officials have made no bones about wanting an interventionist foreign policy, despite repeated polls showing the public strongly opposed to overseas adventures.

So when the Crimea dispute cropped up, it might as well have been Christmas for the Merkel government, which is now using it as leverage to push through plans for more operations abroad.

The target is Eastern Europe, which has a long history of unpleasant military interactions with Germany, but where the Merkel government is planning to increase deployments, starting with warplanes to up patrols in the area.

This is being done nominally to “counter Russia,” and Baltic states with little military of their own to oversee are only too eager to see foreign deployments there, a ticket to making their portfolios relevant.

So far, all of the aerial deployments to Eastern Europe have just increased tensions, putting neighboring Belarus on edge, and leading them to encourage Russia to deployment more warplanes in Minsk to protect against NATO’s expansion.