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## Bulgaria could deploy contingent in Afghanistan after 2014: Defense Minister

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Bulgaria could deploy 80 to 120 troops in Afghanistan after 2014, the country's Defense Minister Angel Naydenov said on Thursday.

"The ministry has analyzed the possibilities of Bulgaria's participation in NATO's operation in Afghanistan after 2014, and currently we have three options with contingent numbering from 80 to 120 soldiers," Naydenov said at an international conference dedicated to Afghanistan after International Security Assistance Force (ISAF).

Based on the military assessment, Bulgaria would choose an option after further coordination with NATO, the minister said. Bulgaria would also coordinate its future involvement in Afghanistan with the initiatives of other international organizations, he added.

Bulgaria has been participating in the NATO-led ISAF mission since 2002.

In January, the Balkan country decided to withdraw some 40 percent of its 600-member contingent stationed in Afghanistan during the first half of 2013. Only adviser teams will stay in Afghanistan after 2015.