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NATO Chief: More Troops, More Planes for Eastern Europe

By Jason Ditz

April 16, 2014

NATO Secretary-General Anders Fogh Rasmussen told reporters that the go-ahead has been given for a dramatic military build-up in eastern Europe, saying there will be “more planes in the air, more ships on the water and more readiness on the land.”

Rasmussen presented the planned buildup as a “clear message” to Russia about NATO’s commitment to protecting its members in the region against threats to “fundamental security.”

He followed that up with a demand for Russia to immediately withdraw its troops from the area around the Ukrainian border, and to make a public denunciation of the protesters in eastern Ukraine, who have been demanding more autonomy.

NATO’s eastern members, primarily Poland, have been pushing for a huge buildup in the region to counter the prospect of a Russian invasion, though officials’ predictions of Russian troops storming through the Ukraine, with an eye on the rest of Europe, have yet to pan out.