



More than 300 U.S. aircraft coming home from Allied Force

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WASHINGTON (AFP) -- More than 300 U.S. aircraft will return to their home bases in the United States and Europe after the completion of Operation Allied Force.

Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen announced the first two increments of the redeployment June 21. The first increment of 124 aircraft will commence redeploying immediately and take place over the next two weeks.

Aircraft scheduled to redeploy from bases in Europe to the continental United States include:

- 12 F-117s from Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany, to Holloman Air Force Base, N.M.;
- Two EC-130E's from Aviano AB, Italy, to Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz.;
- Seven EA-6B's from Aviano to Naval Air Station Whidbey Island, Wash. (four), and to Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point, N.C. (three);
- 12 F-16CJs from Bandirma AB, Turkey, to Shaw AFB, S.C.
- One P-3C from NAS Sigonella, Italy, to NAS Brunswick, Maine;
- 11 B-52H's Royal Air Force Fairford, England, to Barksdale AFB, La.; and
- Six B-1s from Fairford to Ellsworth AFB, S.D.

Aircraft scheduled to redeploy from bases in Europe to their home stations in Europe include:

- 26 F-15E's from Aviano to RAF Lakenheath, England; and

-- 20 F-16CJs from Aviano to Spangdahlem.

In addition, Task Force Hawk forces without a follow-on mission to Kosovo and which are not participating in continuing support of refugees in Albania will return to home stations in Germany.

The redeployment of these aircraft will also allow the release of 27 KC-135 tanker-equivalent air refueling assets.

The planes have been directed to return so they will be available to meet NATO mission requirements or other U.S. national security requirements around the world. The repositioning of these assets will have no significant impact on U.S. ability to support NATO ground or air power requirements, according to Cohen.

A second increment of more than 243 continental United States-based aircraft will begin redeploying after the first increment has completed its redeployment.

The second increment is anticipated to include the following types and numbers of CONUS-based aircraft: 34 A-10s; 24 F-18D's; 24 F-15C's; 12 F-15E's; 24 F-16CJs; 33 F-16 CGs; 12 F-117s; 10 EA-6B's; three AC-130U's; two HC-130s; four MH-60G's; four MH-53J's; four MH-53M's; three MC-130s; five E-3C's; six EC-130(CC)s; three EC130E's; 31 C-130s; six HH-60G's; one C-9 and a number of KC-135-equivalent aircraft still to be determined.

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