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Federal Government | Search | Bundeswehr to remain in Afghanistan

4-5 minutes

The German government has extended the mandate covering the deployment of German troops in Afghanistan until 31 March 2019. Up to 1,300 soldiers, as compared to the current ceiling of 980, will in future train and advise the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces. The area in which German troops will be deployed is also to be extended around Kunduz.



Staying power is needed in Afghanistan Photo: action press

Armed German troops will continue to be part of the NATO-led Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan, the Cabinet has decided. The German Bundestag must still approve the

extension of the mandate.

Achieving stability in Afghanistan, such that it no longer poses a threat to Germany, its allies, or the region, remains a major German concern.

Ceiling on German troops raised

The number of German troops is to rise: rather than the current 980 soldiers, up to 1,300 can be deployed under the extended mandate. Their task will be to train, advise and support the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces (ANDSF).

The ceiling has been raised as a result of the modification to NATO's defence concept. The area of deployment of German troops will also be extended around Kunduz. The mandate will run until 31 March 2019.

Important duties

In addition to their training mandate as 'framework nation' in the north of Afghanistan, the Bundeswehr will in future play an important part in implementing the **ANDSF Roadmap**.

This Roadmap, adopted by the Afghan government in 2017, lays the foundations for improving the effectiveness and capabilities of the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces. It also specifically addresses key problems within the security forces, including corruption within the Forces, which impacts adversely on their legitimacy in the eyes of the people.

In addition, the NATO-led mission is to support the Independent Election Commission of Afghanistan in

administering and supervising the parliamentary and presidential elections in 2018 and 2019.

Prospects for Germany's engagement in Afghanistan

The German government will submit to the German Bundestag the report on the status of and prospects for Germany's engagement in Afghanistan. This report provides a critical analysis of the situation in Afghanistan and lays out the future prospects the German government aims to achieve by means of this engagement.

International support has produced tangible results since 2001 – especially in the fight against terrorism. The situation of the Afghan people has, however, also improved. Rather than only one million children, today eight million children attend school. Women have seen their position within society improve, and progress has been made in the fields of health care and infrastructure.

Nevertheless there have been setbacks, particularly in areas which have seen international troops withdraw substantially. In these areas Afghan forces have assumed sole responsibility for security – and have experienced serious difficulties in fighting Al Qaeda and the Taliban.

Support for the peace process

In spite of justified concerns regarding the further development of Afghanistan, there are grounds for cautious optimism that the Afghan government and the international community will attain their goals.

The German government sees an inner-Afghan peace process between the Afghan government and the Taliban with international and regional support as a way of resolving the conflict inside Afghanistan. It is working to ensure that the peace process involves the Taliban at political level.