

Germany Mulls More Troops For Afghan War: Report

By [Agence France-Presse](#)

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In-depth Report: [AFGHANISTAN](#)

BERLIN: The German government is considering increasing the upper limit of its troop contingent in Afghanistan to 7,000 from the current 4,500, Deutschlandfunk public radio reported October 1.

The increase would be put before parliament in December when the mandate for the mission comes up for renewal, the report said. All but one of the main parties in parliament have supported the mission until now.

The report, which did not cite the source of its information, said that Berlin wanted the increase to give Germany greater clout at an upcoming international conference on the increasingly bloody eight-year-old mission.

The conference, which Chancellor Angela Merkel wants to use to press the Afghan government to assume more responsibilities, will take place in February or March, and not later this year as previously expected, the report added.

Last year press reports said that Berlin wanted to raise the upper limit to 4,500 troops from 3,000. Initially denied by the government, the reports turned out to be accurate.

The German contingent, the third-biggest in a 100,000-strong international force including 65,000 under NATO command, is based in the relatively peaceful north of the country, which has become more violent in recent months.

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A spokeswoman for the foreign ministry said only that a "new mandate was something for the new government and for the new parliament."

Opinion polls show that the mission in Afghanistan, which has seen German soldiers' heaviest fighting since World War II, is highly unpopular.

Thirty-five German troops have been killed since the deployment began in 2001.

The commander of international forces in Afghanistan, U.S. Gen. Stanley McChrystal, has warned in a leaked report that the conflict could be lost within a year without more troops.

McChrystal has asked U.S. President Barack Obama to send another 40,000 soldiers as part of a rigorous counter-insurgency push.

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