

Russia to rearrange troops due to U.S. missile shield

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Russia's Defense Ministry plans to change the configuration of troops in Kaliningrad in response to U.S. missile shield plans in Central Europe, a high-ranking army official said on Wednesday.

"The General Staff and the main combat training department of the Russian Armed Forces are deciding how we will configure the troops," said Lt. Gen. Vladimir Shamanov, who heads the Armed Forces combat training directorate.

The general did not indicate whether the troops in the Kaliningrad Region, Russia's Baltic exclave which borders on Poland, will be substantially reinforced.

The United States is planning to deploy 10 missile interceptors in Poland and a radar in the Czech Republic to avert possible strikes from "rogue" states, such as Iran.

Russia has fervently opposed Washington's plans, saying the European shield would destroy the strategic military balance and threaten Russia's national interests.

Shamanov also said over 230 billion rubles (\$9.4 billion) had been allocated for Armed Forces combat training in 2008.

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