

Gates: More U.S. troops shows commitment

by UPI

WASHINGTON -- A recommendation to boost U.S. troops in Afghanistan "does not reflect dissatisfaction" with international forces, U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates said. Gates, under fire from NATO allies for remarks regarding the quality of their troops' training, said during a roundtable discussion Thursday the deployment request of 3,200 Marines reflects the United States' commitment to Afghanistan. Several defense ministers have called for an explanation. "This deployment of Marines does not reflect dissatisfaction about the military performance in Afghanistan of allied forces from other nations," Gates said. "(Allied) forces ... have stepped up to the plate and are playing a significant and powerful role in Afghanistan." Media reports of his "discontent" about the operations in Afghanistan do not "reflect reality" or "the views of our government," he said. He said he has said NATO as an institution had difficulties moving from a Cold War orientation to a "more global and expeditionary posture." "We have to acknowledge the reality that the alliance as a whole has not trained for counterinsurgency operations even though individual countries have considerable expertise at and success in this arena," he said.

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