

No more German troops for Afghanistan

by UPI

BERLIN - Germany will not send more soldiers or allow its troops to be deployed in southern Afghanistan, Defense Minister Franz-Josef Jung said Friday. Jung told reporters the country will continue its mission to Afghanistan at its current level, Deutsche Welle reported. There are 3,200 German soldiers in Afghanistan, most of them deployed in the north, which is relatively safe, or in Kabul. U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates said last week that European countries should add 3,200 soldiers to the NATO force. NATO has 40,000 troops in the country, more than half of them from the United States. Canada, which has 2,500 soldiers in the south, the most dangerous part of the country, has threatened to pull out unless NATO provides some relief. The German parliament has capped its Afghanistan force at 3,500 and has said the troops should only be sent to the north in most circumstances. The country has contributed jet fighters in the south. The Defense Ministry announced this week it would provide \$1.5 million in additional aid to help Afghans survive a harsh winter.

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