

Obama to seek more troops for Afghanistan

by UPI

WASHINGTON -- More U.S. troops in Afghanistan and more funds for Pakistan are two key conclusions of a just-completed review of the U.S. strategy for the region.

U.S. President Barack Obama on Friday was expected to announce the new strategy, which includes sending an additional 4,000 troops to Afghanistan and a package that would triple U.S. aid to Pakistan to \$1.5 billion a year over five years, CNN reported.

The troops, who would be in addition to the 17,000 the president previously said would be deployed to Afghanistan, would be responsible for training the Afghan army and police force.

The strategy's goal is to "disrupt, dismantle and defeat al-Qaida and destroy the safe haven that has developed in Pakistan and prevent it from rebuilding in Afghanistan," one official told CNN.

The plan doesn't include an exit strategy but does require periodic assessments by commanders on the ground, a senior administration official said.

"This is a strategy, not a straitjacket," the official said.

Ambassadors and other representatives of countries from the region were expected to attend the announcement, the White House schedule indicated.

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