

NATO readiness plan to deter Russian threat

NATO defence ministers are set to unveil a new plan to increase the alliance's readiness capacity as a deterrence against any Russian attack



■ NATO members



■ “Four Thirties”

By 2020, NATO would have 30 mechanized battalions (600 to 1,000 troops per battalion), 30 air squadrons and 30 combat vessels ready for deployment within 30 days

Plan would allow for substantial troop deployment should NATO's four rotating battalions along its eastern border need back-up, and would reportedly be in addition to alliance's current 40,000-strong rapid reaction force

■ New commands

More than 1,200 new staff covering Atlantic Ocean – based in Norfolk, Virginia – and in Ulm, Germany, handling logistics during any conflict in Europe

■ Naval operations

Focus on strengthening capability of NATO task forces, particularly in Mediterranean Sea, where Russian ships have been shadowing allied vessels

■ Fighting terrorism

Ministers to agree details of new training mission in Iraq to prevent return of so-called Islamic State, and discuss support for Jordan and Tunisia

■ Defence expenditure: NATO expected to announce that, by July 11-12 summit, eight members will be spending target of two percent of GDP on military budgets. 15 members have action plans to close in on target by 2024