

## EU Defense Chief Seeks Clarity on U.S. Military Commitment

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European Union Defense Industry Chief Andrius Kubilius heads to Washington this week to request detailed assurances regarding U.S. military backing, including air defense systems, European troop deployments, and contingency protocols. His visit reflects growing concern in Brussels about potential security gaps. Should the U.S. rebalance toward the Indo-Pacific?

Kubilius will meet senior U.S. defense officials to underscore the need for sustained cooperation and transparency. The focus lies on ensuring NATO-aligned allies are briefed on any adjustments in American defense posture, especially as the U.S. shifts strategic emphasis westward.

Key agenda items include U.S. plans to reinforce Europe with advanced missile systems, such as Tomahawk cruise missiles and Dark Eagle hypersonic weapons, beginning in 2026, under commitments dating back to the Biden administration. European leaders are also pressing for clarity on how Patriot missile batteries, pledged to Ukraine and coordinated via Berlin, will be integrated or backfilled.

Another critical concern is a planned review of U.S. troop levels in Europe, home to roughly 80,000 servicemembers. European defense ministers fear any uncoordinated reduction could expose vulnerabilities in deterrence and weaken regional stability.

Germany's Defense Minister Boris Pistorius, in particular, seeks confirmation of the Pentagon's continued support for NATO's defense architecture. He aims to solidify cooperation on Patriot missile deployments to Kyiv, funded by EU allies, as well as maintain long-range strike capabilities on European soil.

While NATO has committed to raising defense spending, Germany alone plans to grow its defense budget from €95 billion in 2025 to €162 billion by 2029, the alliance remains anxious about the reliability of U.S. assurances following recent presidential statements indicating a tilt toward Indo-Pacific priorities.

Kubilius's trip will test transatlantic cohesion at a strategic inflection point. Brussels hopes to lock in clear benchmarks for U.S. support while aligning future deployments with emerging threats, ensuring that Europe remains adequately defended even as U.S. strategy evolves.

**Bottom line:** As Washington balances global commitments, Kubilius's mission is to demand transparency and guarantees, to avoid strategic surprises and preserve transatlantic defense readiness.