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United States to Unveil Plans to Bolster NATO Alliance

By **THOM SHANKER**

WASHINGTON — President Obama on Sunday will unveil a new package of NATO initiatives that includes the alliance purchasing a fleet of surveillance drones, sharing weapons and training facilities, and sustaining nuclear deterrence in Europe even as disarmament efforts continue with an often belligerent Russia, according to senior administration officials.

Although debate on winding down the Afghan war will dominate the NATO summit meeting in Chicago, Mr. Obama will also disclose agreements designed to guarantee mutual security in an era of global austerity that includes sharply reduced military spending across the alliance.

A central element of Mr. Obama's announcement will be the hand-over to NATO of control for the components of an emerging European missile-defense system built by the United States.

A radar station in Turkey will become permanently under alliance command. In times of crisis, American Navy Aegis warships — with radar and interceptor missiles — would be transferred to NATO command. When interceptor missiles planned for Poland and Romania are in place, they would also be placed under NATO command in time of crisis.

Another major agreement is that the alliance will purchase and maintain five Global Hawk surveillance drones, said one administration official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to describe the initiatives in advance of the meeting.

Although NATO carried out an offensive that toppled Libya's Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi, the campaign revealed a critical gap in the alliance's war-fighting capabilities: The United States had a near monopoly on surveillance and reconnaissance aircraft, and NATO needed its own remotely piloted vehicles.

As the Pentagon reduces the number of Army brigades permanently in Europe, the United States will pledge to rotate units through training facilities on the Continent so the ability for

allied and American troops to fight side-by-side is sustained even after withdrawing from Afghanistan.

Mr. Obama also will describe the results of NATO's review of its defense and deterrence posture, and how the alliance will field a combination of **nuclear weapons**, missile defenses and conventional forces to guarantee the security of all members.

No reductions in NATO's nuclear arsenals will be announced, although the door remains open to negotiations with Russia on shrinking stockpiles.

NATO nations in Central and Eastern Europe remain particularly nervous about aggressive talk from Russia's returning president, Vladimir V. Putin, and want continued assurances of an alliance nuclear umbrella.

Similarly, the alliance will pledge to continue air patrols over the territory of Baltic nations in NATO, so those states do not have to invest in fighter jets. The alliance will also announce initiatives to share maritime patrol aircraft, route-clearance vehicles and medical facilities, as well as pool maintenance costs for helicopters and armored vehicles.