U.S. Plans to Double Warplane Presence in the Persian Gulf

By John F. Harris

WASHINGTON

The United States plans to nearly double the number of combat aircraft from Iraq to the Persian Gulf region, a move intended to counter Russian and Chinese efforts to increase their military presence in the region. The plan, which includes nearly 50 fighter and attack aircraft, is in response to Russia’s deployment of its new SS-26 anti-ship cruise missiles and to China’s testing of its new anti-ship ballistic missile. The plan will more than double the number of U.S. forces in the region, from 2,000 currently to over 30,000 by the end of 2019.

The United States is also considering deploying additional forces to the region to counter Russian and Chinese efforts to increase their military presence in the region. The plan, which includes nearly 50 fighter and attack aircraft, is in response to Russia’s deployment of its new SS-26 anti-ship cruise missiles and to China’s testing of its new anti-ship ballistic missile. The plan will more than double the number of U.S. forces in the region, from 2,000 currently to over 30,000 by the end of 2019.

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