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US General Wants to Hike Intervention in Somalia

By Jason Ditz
March 24, 2017

US African Commander Gen. Thomas Waldhauser today confirmed that he is still seeking increased authority to carry out attacks in Somalia, seeking President Trump’s permission for more “flexibility” in carrying out airstrikes and using ground troops in the country.

It was reported last month that the Pentagon was looking to expand involvement in Somalia, though Waldhauser today confirmed that the White House has not granted them the permission that they were seeking, leaving unclear what the holdup is, as the Trump Administration is sending more and more forces across Africa.

According to Waldhauser, the changes would not just open up an increase in operations in Somalia, but also allow the pentagon to provide increased direct aid to the Somali National Army, including potentially putting embedded troops in with them in areas close to combat forces.

At the same time, Waldhauser downplayed exactly how much the US would expand its Somalia involvement, insisting that he has no intention of turning the country into a “free fire zone.” Still, it appears direct US involvement is going to be substantially more than it has been.