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U.S. troops still in Europe because of Kosovo fears

KosovoCompromise Staff

Tensions in Kosovo ahead of a decisive phase of international discussions in the United Nations are the main reason behind the U.S. Defence Secretary's decision to keep the rather large force in Europe, despite the acute need for fresh troops in wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the influential Republican Senator Chuck Hagel said on Wednesday.

"We will hit the Kosovo bump on December 10. and that's why Secretary Robert Gates does not want to pull troops from Europe," Hagel said.

What we are looking towards is 90 or so days of decisive talks within the international system and we have to be careful just how we plan to play out that time, said Hagel.

Nebraskan Senator also said he hoped that the U.S will be able to avoid any kind of confrontation with either Serbia or Russia, but underlined the Washington's stance that the supervised independence seems to be the best solution for the Kosovo issue.