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Fort Riley Soldiers Deploying to Middle East Fort Riley soldiers deploying to Middle East

FORT RILEY, Kan. (AP) - The Defense Department says about 200 soldiers from the 1st Infantry Division at Fort Riley will deploy to Iraq to advise Iraqi forces confronting Islamic State militants.

The soldiers are among about 500 members of the division's Headquarters and Headquarters Battalion being deployed to the U.S. Central Command's area of operations. Thursday's announcement did not specify where the other 300 will be stationed, but a Pentagon spokesman in Washington said there were no immediate plans for them to go into Iraq.

President Barack Obama said earlier this month he would send 475 U.S. troops to Iraq to advise and assist the Iraqi military. The U.S. teams are not authorized to go out with Iraqi units for direct ground combat with Islamic State group militants.

Associated Press