

U.S. selling \$8.4 billion worth of fighter jets and other weapons to Germany



Two U.S. Air Force F-35 Lightning II aircraft assigned to the 34th Fighter Squadron at Hill Air Force Base, Utah, arrive at Amari Air Base, Estonia. (U.S. Air Force photo)

Washington, July 29 (RHC)-- The United States will sell \$8.4 billion worth of fighter jets and other weapons to Germany, according to the Pentagon.

The U.S. Defense Department said on Thursday that the U.S. State Department approved the possible foreign military sale to Germany of F-35 Lightning II stealth fighters, munitions and related equipment, Reuters reported.

The potential sale for the advanced stealth fighter came after German Chancellor Olaf Scholz vowed to upgrade to the country's military following Russia's military action in Ukraine.

The Pentagon said the main contractors for the deal include Lockheed Martin Corp (LMT.N), Boeing Co (BA.N) and Raytheon Technologies Corp (RTX.N).

The US military's Defense Security Cooperation Agency informed Congress of the possible deal on Thursday. The notification however does not indicate a contract has been signed or that negotiations have reached a conclusion.

The German leadership has said that they would purchase 35 US F-35 fighter jets to replace its aging Tornado. German Defense Minister Christine Lambrecht said his country was interested in buying 35 of the warplanes.

Writing in the Responsible Statecraft, Dan Grazier said "no one is sure" if the F-35 can operate in the kind of high-threat environment Russian forces have established in Ukraine.

"It is difficult to make the case that the United States needs to bankrupt itself by spending \$1.7 trillion to purchase and operate a fleet of F-35s when one of the giants it is designed to slay turns out to be a less than average mortal," he wrote.

The US deployed a total of six F-35 Lightning II stealth fighters to bases in Estonia, Lithuania and Romania after Russian President Vladimir Putin announced in February a "special military operation" in Ukraine's Donbas region to "defend people" subjected to "genocide" there against government forces, stressing that Moscow has "no plans to occupy Ukrainian territory."

Days before, the United States deployed F-35 fighter jets to Germany as part of a plan to bolster NATO forces amid rising tensions in Eastern Europe.

The jets were sent to Spangdahlem Air Base with pilots, maintainers and support personnel, the Air Force Reserve Command announced. It said that the deployment "is being conducted in full coordination with the German government and NATO military authorities."

The U.S. said the deployment is part of a broader shuffling of troops- and equipment announced by U.S. President Joe Biden. The president claimed that the deployment was defensive in nature and that the United States has "no intention of fighting Russia," but vowed to defend "every inch of NATO territory with a full force of American power."

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