
US APPROVES THE SALE OF USD 3.9 BLN PATRIOT MISSILES TO ROMANIA

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The US State Department has approved the possible sale of Patriot air defense systems to Romania, the estimated value of this deal amounting to USD 3.9 billion.

The Defense Security Cooperation Agency delivered the required certification notifying the Congress of this possible sale on July 10, 2017, after the Romanian Government had previously asked US to approve the possible sale of seven Patriot missile systems and the related support and equipment. This possible acquisition is part of Romanias efforts to modernize and improve its defense.

Romania will use the Patriot missile system to strengthen its homeland defense and deter regional threats. The proposed sale will increase the defensive capabilities of the Romanian military to guard against aggression and shield the NATO allies who often train and operate within Romanias borders. Romania should have no difficulty absorbing this system into its armed forces, reads a press release of the US Defense Security Cooperation Agency.

The systems will be delivered by Raytheon Corporation and Lockheed-Martin. Implementation of this proposed sale will require approximately 30 U.S. Government and 40 contractor representatives to travel to Romania for an extended period for equipment de-processing/fielding, system checkout, training, and technical and logistics support.

The Patriot missiles are a long-range, all-altitude, air defense system designed to intercept other missiles. A Patriot system is made of four elements: the radar system, the command center and the electricity generator, the communications tower and the rocket launchers installed on trucks.

Thirteen countries own Patriot missiles: U.S., The Netherlands, Germany, Japan, Israel, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Taiwan, Greece, Qatar, Spain, South Korea, and the United Arab Emirates.

The State Departments announcement comes a month after Romania President Klaus Iohannis visit to US, during which he met President Donald Trump at the White House. Trump praised Iohannis for Romanias commitment to increase military spending to 2% of the GDP.

Romanias overall defense budget for this year is little over USD 4 billion.

Officials from Romanias Defense Ministry announced in April that the country planned to buy Patriot missile systems from the US. However, the governing coalition leader Liviu Dragnea criticized the statement saying that such a purchase should be announced after all the procedures are finalized.

Major defense contracts need to be approved by the Parliament.

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