
ROMANIAN PARLIAMENT VOTES PATRIOT MISSILE PURCHASE FROM US

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Romanias Chamber of Deputies approved yesterday the draft project for acquiring the first Patriot missile system with 278 positive votes, one negative vote and an abstention.

This was the last approval needed to go on with this strategic purchase. Romania will most likely sign the contract with the United States Government by December 1.

The vote on the Patriot acquisition was postponed last week, after PSD and ALDE senators from the defense committee failed to attend a meeting that had this bill on the agenda. This determined a surprise visit by US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson to Bucharest. Tillerson had a meeting with Romanian foreign affairs minister Teodor Melescanu at the airport. He asked about the delay in adopting the Patriot bill and Melescanu assured him that it was just a matter of lack of quorum, which sometimes happens in the Parliament.

The opposition parties, however, suggested that the governing coalition wanted to block the project. PSD leader Liviu Dragnea dismissed these allegations yesterday saying that the MPs missed that meeting because they were invited to visit a shooting range of the Romanian secret service SPP. However, he hinted that it was a big coincidence that someone scheduled that visit on that day and that he would look into it.

The first Patriot missile system, for which Romania has already received the acceptance letter from the US part, is worth USD 764.7 million, without VAT. The whole program amounts to USD 3.9 billion.

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