



## Lockheed Wants Ukraine's War to Expand Into Russia

### Description

*On January 25th, the Financial Times headlined "Lockheed ready with F-16s as Kyiv allies revive debate over fighter jets", and reported that:*

*Lockheed Martin has said it stands ready to meet demand for its F-16 aircraft as some of Ukraine's closest European allies revive efforts to provide fighter jets to Kyiv. ...*

*Frank St. John, chief operating officer of Lockheed Martin, the largest US defence contractor, told the FT that there was "a lot of conversation about third party transfer of F-16s". ...*

*St. John said the company was "going to be ramping production on F-16s in Greenville [South Carolina] to get to the place where we will be able to backfill pretty capably any countries that choose to do third party transfers to help with the current conflict". ...*

*EU member states re-exporting F-16s directly to Ukraine is one of a series of options, European officials said, pointing out that the US-made jets could also be sent by western states to former Warsaw Pact countries that could then send their Soviet-designed aircraft to Kyiv. ...*

*Dutch foreign minister Wopke Hoekstra said last week that the Netherlands would consider any requests to send F-16s with "an open mind" and that there were "no taboos" on military support. The Netherlands has around 40 F-16s. ...*

*In addition to the Netherlands, seven other European Nato countries fly F-16s, including Poland, Norway and Romania. ...*

Though that newspaper called Lockheed Martin "the largest US defence contractor," it is actually the world's largest one.

As-of 2021, F-16s were selling for \$64 million apiece. However that was for only the fully-equipped model, As "Executive Flyers" phrased the matter, on 23 January 2023, under the title "How Much Does a F-16 Cost?"(presumably this would be for use by an "executive"), "The F-16 costs anywhere between \$12.7 to \$80 million, depending on the variant and the country purchasing the fighter jet. ... The exact

price charged per F-16 largely depends on the plane's variant, the country buying it, and when it is bought." Lockheed's now inviting countries to buy it for use against Russia — and perhaps to bomb Moscow so as to kill Russia's Government — could open a bidding-war for these planes, and the prices that each country would be paying might not be made public in some cases. (Of course, that wouldn't be for use by an "executive," but it might nonetheless be a use that would be on behalf of an executive; and, if that executive has personal reasons to want to kill Russia's Government, then whatever the price might be would be "an investment" by that person. The F-16's range extends "more than 500 miles (860 kilometers)", and therefore includes considerably beyond Moscow, especially if it takes off from the many parts of Ukraine that are as little as 300 miles from Moscow. Whether Russia might shoot down that F-16 and perhaps invade the country that owned the plane, should be considered by any such buyer, but might not be. It could be just a commercial transaction.)

Furthermore: side-benefits to the head-of-state or other public official who will be the most crucial person to grant approval for the deal could substantially increase the per-plane price that will be paid. Whether the actual price that would be paid for the plane would reflect the legally authorized price might never be able to be known.

For any country to accept Lockheed's offer, many levels of prior approval would be necessary by the Governments in many countries. The negotiations would almost certainly become completed after the war in Ukraine has ended. Perhaps Lockheed is trying to accumulate as big an order-backlog list as possible while the time to do it is as hot as it now is.

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### **Category**

1. Army-Wars-Conflict Zones-Military Tech.
2. Main

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