



## Poland's Offer Of Jets For Ukraine "Raises Serious Concerns For Entire NATO Alliance": Pentagon

### Description

**USA/POLAND/UKRAINE: Update(20:45ET):** Some sharp words and a swift rejection from the Pentagon Tuesday evening: "The prospect of fighter jets '*at the disposal of the Government of the United States of America*' departing from a U.S./NATO base in Germany **to fly into airspace that is contested with Russia over Ukraine raises serious concerns for the entire NATO alliance,**" Pentagon press secretary John Kirby said of the Polish announcement which caught the Biden administration by surprise.

Kirby described the Pentagon perspective on Poland's earlier in the day declaration that it would send all its Russian-produced MiG-29 jets to Ramstein Air Base in Germany for the United States to be able to transfer them to Ukraine [further as follows](#):

- "It is simply not clear to us that there is a substantive rationale for it," he added, stressing that the proposal "shows just some of the complexities this issue presents."
- "We will continue to consult with Poland and our other NATO allies about this issue and the difficult logistical challenges it presents, but **we do not believe Poland's proposal is a tenable one.**"

One insightful online commentator quipped of Tuesday's inter-NATO confusion: "No, one wants to take the responsibility. Poland passed it to the US, and now the US says this is all Poland. What a farce."

In Senate hearing on Ukraine, Murphy calls it "a curious decision" by Poland to offer planes to US instead of directly to Ukraine.

Victoria Nuland, the undersecretary of State for political affairs, also called it "a surprise"

— Igor Bobic (@igorbobic) [March 8, 2022](#)

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**Update(17:24ET):** This level of huge contradiction among allies on such a big development is just a bit awkward and even embarrassing. The Biden administration is saying it was **caught completely by “surprise” at Poland’s declaration hours ago** that it would send all its Russian-produced MiG-29 jets to Ramstein Air Base in Germany for the United States to be able to transfer them to Ukraine.

While the possible plan was reportedly under consideration for days, it doesn’t appear the White House was notified of Warsaw’s final decision prior to the announcement being declared as a ‘done deal’ via the Polish [Ministry of Foreign Affairs website](#). Apparently for Washington, there was no done deal at all.

“Poland’s decision to put all its MIG-29 jets at the disposal of the United States was not pre-consulted with Washington,” State Department Undersecretary Victoria Nuland said Tuesday in the wake of Poland’s statement. And more:

“To my knowledge, **it wasn’t pre-consulted with us that they planned to give these planes to us,**” she said at a hearing of Senate Foreign Relations Committee. “I look forward when this hearing is over to getting back to my desk and seeing how we will respond to this proposal of theirs to give the planes to us,” [she said](#).

Here’s how the exchange [began](#):

**“I was in a meeting where I ought to have heard about that just before I came (to a Senate hearing), so I think that actually was a surprise move by the Poles,”**  
Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs Victoria Nuland told US lawmakers.

Asked by a senator whether US officials coordinated ahead of time with Poland before Warsaw made its announcement, Nuland said: “Not to my knowledge.”

The official statement from Poland had said, “The authorities of the Republic of Poland, after consultations between the President and the Government, are ready to deploy – **immediately and free of charge – all their MIG-29 jets to the Ramstein Air Base** and place them at the disposal of the Government of the United States of America.”

Elsewhere during her Senate testimony remarks, Nuland said that the US is currently **considering placing Patriot missile batteries in Poland**.

Statement from [@BenSasse](#) urging [@POTUS](#) to send MiGs from [#Poland](#) to [#Ukraine](#) as soon as possible. [pic.twitter.com/d6cDG6qzz0](https://pic.twitter.com/d6cDG6qzz0)

— Steve Herman (@W7VOA) [March 8, 2022](#)

The bizarre back-and-forth over the “surprise” MiG fighter jet agreement gave rise for some in Congress to demand the White House see it through, now that the offer has apparently already been made by Poland. It would require, according to the statement from Warsaw, for Washington to supply

in place of the depleted MiGs new F-16s at a future date.

All of this possibly just brought Warsaw into Russia's crosshairs, or at least some in Poland might now be worrying... After all, the logistics alone of such a major transfer during a war inside Ukraine would be perilous and difficult, to say the least. Russia has also warned it could target such externally supplied major weapons systems entering from abroad.

And then there was this deeply alarming scenario floated on Tuesday in the Senate hearing with Nuland:

Ukraine has "biological research facilities," says Undersecretary of State Victoria Nuland, when asked by Sen Rubio if Ukraine has biological or chemical weapons, and says she's worried Russia may get them. But she says she's 100% sure if there's a biological attack, it's Russia. [pic.twitter.com/uo3dHDMfAS](https://pic.twitter.com/uo3dHDMfAS)

— Glenn Greenwald (@ggreenwald) [March 8, 2022](#)

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In the latest major development in what's become a "[huge operation](#)" mounted by individual NATO member states to assist Ukraine's military, Poland has announced it is **ready to transfer all of its Russian-made MIG-29 jets to the Rammstein Air Base in Germany.**

A statement posted Tuesday to its Ministry of Foreign Affairs website indicated the jets will be placed "**at the disposal of the Government of the United States of America**" which in turn is expected to send them to Ukraine, after President Zelesnky has issued a series of urgent appeals for fighter planes.

"The authorities of the Republic of Poland, after consultations between the President and the Government, are ready to deploy – **immediately and free of charge – all their MIG-29 jets to the Rammstein Air Base** and place them at the disposal of the Government of the United States of America," [it said](#).



*Polish MiG fighter file*

It's part of a controversial deal which had in the last days emerged and which was widely reported as being in the works, despite Poland as recently as Sunday [greatly downplaying it](#) – perhaps not wanting to prematurely provoke Russia's wrath. It was previously confirmed that the other side of the deal would **see Washington quickly replace Warsaw's depleted MiG-29 jets with F-16 fighters.**

The statement from Poland's government [followed with](#): "At the same time, Poland requests the United States to provide us with used aircraft with corresponding operational capabilities. **Poland is ready to immediately establish the conditions of purchase of the planes.**"

**"The Polish Government also requests other NATO Allies – owners of MIG-29 jets – to act in the same vein,"** the statement concluded.

Days ago Secretary of State Antony Blinken said the US is "very actively" looking at resupplying Poland if it can quickly transfer its own Russian-made aircraft to Ukraine.

"We are looking actively now at the question of airplanes that Poland may provide to Ukraine and looking at how we might be able to backfill should Poland decide to supply those planes," Blinken previously from in Moldova, while on a trip that highlighted the growing refugee crisis from the war.

*"A perilous delivery" it will be, ABC's chief Washington correspondent observes, given Russia has threatened to militarily block major external weapons shipments...*

Major development — Poland says it will hand over all its MIG-29 jets – immediately and free of charge.

But the jets are to be turned over to the US to be delivered to Ukraine – a perilous delivery.  
<https://t.co/IVI94EOf4h>

— Jonathan Karl (@jonkarl) [March 8, 2022](#)

Crucially, there was also this recent statement from an unnamed Polish official [given to FT](#): “I can’t speak to a timeline but I can just say we’re looking at it very, very actively.” The official said further, “**Poland is not in a state of war with Russia, but it is not an impartial country, because it supports Ukraine as the victim of aggression.** It considers, however, that all military matters must be a decision of Nato as a whole.”

Already many NATO nations have been supplying Ukraine with anti-tank and anti-air should fired missiles, but if a large-scale movement to get more fighter jets to Kiev gains momentum, this will certainly mark a huge escalation, and the Kremlin has **recently warned it could attack such provocative military supplies coming from the West.**

by Tyler Durden

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