



US State Department Looking to Scrounge Up Soviet S-300s to Deliver to Ukraine: Report

Description

USA: The United States and its allies have already delivered well over \$3 billion in military equipment to Ukraine in recent years, and committed to send hundreds of millions of dollars more after Russia and its Donbass allies began an operation to demilitarise the country late last month.

The State Department is ‘working to identify’ which countries have access to Soviet-made S-300 air defence system and brainstorming how they can be sent to Ukraine, sources said to be familiar with the matter have [told](#) CNN.

Sources further indicated that Washington was not sure at the moment where they would get the missiles used by the S-300. The latter are manufactured only by Russian defence companies.

The Biden administration has faced requests from Congress to transfer a variety of heavy Soviet-built military equipment to Ukraine, including the aforementioned S-300s, as well as MiG-29 jet fighters.

An aide to an unnamed Senate Republican told the outlet that the White House should be working “with allies and partners, not just in Europe but potentially around the globe, who are in a position to deliver more munitions for things like the S-300 or other advanced air defence systems that we can work with to backfill [Ukraine’s] own capabilities.”

The Pentagon shut down a proposal by Poland to send 28 MiG-29s to Ukraine via the US, saying the idea was not “tenable” due to the risks of provoking an open conflagration with Russia. Poland proposed sending its 30+ year-old Soviet MiGs to Ukraine in exchange for newer F-16s from Washington. US officials initially expressed support for the idea, but their eagerness cooled after Warsaw indicated that it would like to see direct US involvement – with the MiGs supposed to be shipped to Kiev through the US-operated Ramstein Air Base in Germany, instead of being sent directly across the Polish-Ukrainian border.

First introduced into service with the Soviet military starting in the late 1970s and early 1980s, the S-300 was considered one of the most cutting-edge air defence system in the USSR's arsenal at the time of the country's destruction in 1991. Moscow exported the system to several allies in Eastern Europe, including Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia and East Germany. From the 1990s onward, the system has also been sold to a range of countries across Asia and the Middle East, as well as Greece and Venezuela. Within NATO, the system is currently operated by Bulgaria, Greece and Slovakia. East Germany's S-300s were returned to the USSR prior to the country's annexation by the Federal Republic in 1990.

Ukraine inherited about 250 S-300 launchers from the USSR, but by the early 2010s only six complexes had been overhauled, with one additional unit repaired in 2012. The Russian military has reported on the destruction of [at least 18](#) Ukrainian S-300 radar systems and [one](#) S-300 complex in the course of its ongoing military operation in Ukraine. Last Wednesday, the defence ministry said 137 Ukrainian air defence systems, including S-125s, S-300s and Buk-M1s, had been destroyed in Russian strikes, with these losses said to constitute over 90 percent of Ukraine's air defence capability.

by Ilya Tsukanov

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