

Massive Recycling of Middle East Oil Revenues Toward US Weapons Producers

By [Global Research](#)

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\$60B U.S.-Saudi Arms Deal To Be Proposed

WASHINGTON: U.S. President Barack Obama's administration will soon notify Congress of plans to offer advanced military aircraft to Saudi Arabia in a massive deal worth up to \$60 billion, congressional sources said September 13.

The officials, speaking on condition of anonymity because the transaction has not yet been formally announced, confirmed a Wall Street Journal report about the deal but warned that key U.S. lawmakers would block the move.

"You can fully expect that a hold will be placed on this deal," thought to be the largest ever arms sale of its kind, said a senior congressional source.

"There is serious concern about some sensitive material which is expected to be included in the deal," said another source, who told AFP that Obama aides would brief congressional staff on the deal on Monday.

A "hold" would come from the chair or ranking member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee or Senate Foreign Relations Committee, which typically must sign off on arms transfers, and could change what is in the package.

The Journal, which cited unnamed officials, said the administration was also in talks with the kingdom about potential naval and missile-defense upgrades that could be worth tens of billions of dollars more.

The administration sees the sale as part of a broader policy aimed at shoring up Arab allies against Iran, the report said.

The \$60 billion in fighter jets and helicopters is the top-line amount requested by the Saudis, even though the kingdom is likely to commit initially to buying only about half that amount, the paper said.

In its notification to Congress, expected to be submitted this week or next, the administration will authorize the Saudis to buy as many as 84 new F-15 fighters, upgrade 70 more, and purchase three types of helicopters - 70 Apaches, 72 Black Hawks and 36 Little Birds, The Journal said.

The notification will set off a congressional review. Lawmakers could push for changes, try to impose conditions or block the deal altogether, though that is not expected, the paper said.

Another congressional source confirmed the broad outlines of the Journal's report but cautioned "the exact dollar amounts in these things is always iffy."

Earlier media reports said that to assuage Israel's concerns, the Obama administration has decided not to offer Saudi Arabia so-called standoff systems, which are advanced long-range weapons that can be attached to F-15s for use in offensive operations against land- and sea-based targets.

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