

Trump Threatens Turkey: Pull Out of S-400 Deal with Russia, Or Else. Ankara Intimates Pulling out of NATO

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Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#), [Russia and FSU](#), [USA](#)

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In December 2017, Turkey agreed to buy Russian S-400 air defense systems, categorized by military analysts as the world's best, able to destroy multiple hostile aircraft, ballistic missiles, and other aerial targets up to 250 miles away at high and low altitudes.

China was Russia's first foreign buyer, its military saying it "saw that the S-400 system by its capabilities today is unparalleled in the world in its armament class" — able to overcome heavy enemy fire and electronic countermeasures while effectively intercepting hostile aerial targets.

Nothing in the West matches it. On June 4, Turkish President Erdogan said it's "out of the question" to back out of the deal, earlier saying purchase of Russian S-500s may follow when they're available next year.

Turkish **Foreign Minister Melvet Cavusoglu** made similar remarks, stressing that

"(t)he deal with Russia on S-400s remains in force and these defensive systems will be delivered to Turkey" as planned, advance payment made in 2017.

On Thursday, acting Trump regime deputy assistant secretary of defense for European and NATO policy **Andrew Winternitz** lied, saying

"(t)he (S-400) radar system would provide Russia with military sensitive information on the F-35, which is our top-quality fifth-generation aircraft," adding:

"From our perspective, there are no measures that can mitigate our concerns on this."

Months earlier, State Department official **Wes Mitchell** warned Ankara of "consequences" if it buys Russian S-400s.

US war secretary **Patrick Shanahan** warned his Turkish counterpart Hulusi Akar by letter that Ankara "will not receive the F-35 if Turkey takes delivery of the S-400," adding:

“Turkey’s procurement of the S-400 will hinder your nation’s ability to enhance or maintain cooperation with the United States and within NATO, lead to Turkish strategic and economic over-dependence on Russia, and undermine Turkey’s very capable defense industry and ambitious economic development goals.”

The Trump regime gave Turkey until end of July to pull out of the S-400 deal, pressing Erdogan to buy the inferior US Patriot missile system instead.

Ankara stressed that the S-400s won’t be integrated into NATO operability so will not pose a threat to the alliance.

US opposition to the purchase is all about serving corporate America’s interests, along with opposing anything benefitting Russia’s economy.

If the Trump regime blocks Turkey’s purchase of F-35 warplanes and imposes other “consequences” on the country for buying S-400s, bilateral relations could be more ruptured than already, especially if sanctions are imposed.

While playing the Russia and US cards simultaneously, Erdogan increasingly shifted his allegiance East, away from the West, his chief advisor Yalcin Topcu earlier saying:

“It is time to reconsider our membership in NATO, an organization that shows its hostile attitude to its member in every way.”

Erdogan earlier threatened to remove US radar systems from Turkey if Washington fails to deliver F-35 warplanes contracted for.

Turkey’s military is second only to the US in troop strength. Pulling out of NATO would be a significant body blow to the alliance.

If unacceptable US demands and threats continue, it may be inevitable.

A Final Comment

According to Russia’s state defense company Rostec on Friday, deliveries of S-400s to Turkey will begin “within two months.”

Training Turkish personnel to operate them was completed. Installation appears set for late July or early August.

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