

US To Sell Saudis 355 Missiles to be Used in the War on Yemen

By [Press TV](#)

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Image: A US-made AGM-154 air-to-ground missile being brought to the flight deck of an aircraft carrier

The US Defense Department has awarded major weapons maker Raytheon to provide the Persian Gulf Kingdom of Saudi Arabia with 355 air-to-ground missiles amid its persisting campaign of aerial strikes against civilian and economic targets in neighboring Yemen.

According to a Pentagon announcement cited Saturday by the Russia-based Sputnik News, in a \$180-million contract assigned to the arms manufacturer, Raytheon is to deliver the AGM-154 series missiles to the Saudi regime in a move clearly regarded as a bid to support the aerial strikes against Yemen.

The AGM-154 is described as a Global Positioning System and infrared guided air-to-ground missile with stand-off capability.

The contract, the report adds, also includes the delivery of 200 AGM-154C-1 missiles to the US Navy.

Washington, the report adds, has justified the missile sales to Riyadh as part of an agreement by Persian Gulf Arab dictatorships to expand their military cooperation with Washington amid “concerns” over the recent nuclear talks conclusion with Iran as well as the Islamic Republic’s persisting influence as a major power and the most stable nation in the strategic region.

Meanwhile, the oil-rich Saudi Arabia, widely regarded as a US client in the Persian Gulf region, has been among the world’s largest importers of lethal weaponry over the years and has significantly expanded its purchase of armaments in recent months, becoming the world’s top importer in 2015 so far.

This is while Riyadh signed major arms deals worth billions of dollars with France last month for the purchase of patrol ships, border guard helicopters and aircraft as it escalated its war effort against Yemen.

The announcement of the deals came during a visit by Saudi Deputy Crown Prince and Defense Minister Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud to Paris.

French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius defended the selling of French patrol boats to Riyadh, claiming that they are meant “to enhance the capability of the Saudi Coast Guard, which is today facing growing threats.”

Saudi Arabia has been carrying out airstrikes against Yemen since March 26 without a UN mandate. The strikes are meant to undermine the Houthi Ansarullah movement and restore power to fugitive former President Abd Rabbuh Mansour Hadi, a staunch ally of the Al Saud regime.

Thousands have been killed and at least 11,000 more injured in the airstrikes.

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