

U.S. BARS TURKEY FROM F-35 PROGRAMME OVER S-400 DEAL

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The White House confirmed on Wednesday that Turkey would be excluded from the F-35 stealth fighter jet programme after it purchased a Russian missile defense system in defiance of warnings from Western allies.

“Unfortunately, Turkey’s decision to purchase Russian S-400 air defense systems renders its continued involvement with the F-35 impossible,” White House spokeswoman Stephanie Grisham said in a statement.

The U.S.-made F-35 Joint Strike Fighter “cannot coexist with a Russian intelligence collection platform that will be used to learn about its advanced capabilities,” she added.

Turkey’s Foreign Ministry termed the move “unfair,” saying that “this one-sided step neither complies with the spirit of alliance nor is it based on legitimate reasons.”

Ms. Grisham said that the U.S. had made “multiple” offers of its Patriot missile defence system to Turkey, but Ankara acquired the S-400, running counter to a NATO pledge to avoid Russian systems. “This will have detrimental impacts on Turkish interoperability with the Alliance,” she said.

The U.S. action will lock out a number of Turkish manufacturers that were producing parts and components for the F-35.

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