

# Lockheed Martin and Turkey's Roketsan sign F-35 missile deal (Reuters)

Lockheed Martin and Turkish missile manufacturer Roketsan signed an agreement Wednesday to produce and sell Turkey's SOM-J air-launched cruise missile for the F-35 Lightning II combat jet, the companies said.

The agreement, signed in the Turkish capital Ankara, envisages the development, production, marketing, selling and supporting the SOM-J for internal carriage on the F-35 or external carriage on other aircraft.

"Lockheed Martin has a long history of partnership with Turkey, and we look forward to working closely with Roketsan on this very important project," said Rick Edwards, executive vice president of Lockheed Martin Missiles and Fire Control.

Edwards also said the agreement aimed to meet the increasing demand for long-range, survivable cruise missile technology.

"Within the (F-35) Joint Strike Fighter project there is no other cruise missile with the capabilities of the SOM-J," Ismail Demir, Turkish Under-Secretary of Defence Industries said. "I think the SOM-J will be an important option for other countries in the project including the United States."

Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) is a development and acquisition programme intended to replace a wide range of existing fighter, strike, and ground attack aircraft for the United States, the United Kingdom, Italy, Canada, Australia, the Netherlands, Norway, Denmark and Turkey.

"We believe this joint effort will increase awareness of the SOM-J and present an excellent opportunity to fulfill the requirements of the anti-surface warfare capabilities on the F-35 aircraft," said Roketsan's chairman, Eyup Kaptan.

The SOM System is an autonomous, long range, low observable, all weather, high precision air-to-surface cruise missile, the joint statement said. (Reporting by Tulay Karadeniz; Writing by Ece Toksabay; Editing by Greg Mahlich)

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