

Politics

State Department Backs \$39 Million 'Javelin' Package For Ukraine

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► Formal notice to come as soon as this week after Hill approved

► Ukraine requested anti-tank weapons weeks before Trump call


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Soldiers fire a Javelin anti-armor missile during training.

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informally signed off on a \$39 million sale of additional Javelin anti-tank weapons to Ukraine, according to three officials familiar with the decision.

The sale of 150 anti-tank missiles and two additional missile launchers could be announced later on Tuesday, according to one of officials, all of whom asked not to be identified since the decision hasn't been announced. Ukraine requested the weapons early this past summer. The U.S. sold Ukraine over 200 missiles and 37 launchers in 2018.

This sale is separate from the \$250 million of congressionally authorized military aid to Ukraine that was held up by the Trump administration for months until after President [Donald Trump's](#) heavily scrutinized July 25 call with Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskiy that's at the center of a Democratic impeachment inquiry in the House.

Defense Department officials said \$214 million of that aid has been obligated to buy equipment for Ukraine but the Pentagon Comptroller's office declined to give a list of equipment bought. The potential equipment includes .50-caliber sniper rifles capable of disabling armored vehicles, night vision goggles, shoulder-fired grenade launchers and additional radar to pinpoint Russian artillery, according to documents.

The Javelin is the U.S. Army and Marine Corps' premier anti-tank weapon that allows a soldier or Marine to fire and move quickly because the missile guides itself to the target. Assuming the U.S.

Congress gives formal approval within 30 days, the new Javelin sale would be paid for with Ukrainian funds.

The officials said there's no evidence the proposed Javelin sale was held up by the administration after the Ukrainian request, which appeared to be going through the normal channels. Ukraine has sought to bolster its capabilities since Russia annexed Crimea in 2014 and backed forces in eastern Ukraine.

The weapons system took a star turn during the July 25 call when Zelenskiy told Trump that "we are ready to continue to cooperate for the next steps, specifically we are almost ready to buy more Javelins." The president, according to a partial transcript released by the White House last week, then replied: "I would like you to do us a favor though."

(Updates to add potential additional new gear for Ukraine in fourth paragraph)

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