

Bush OKs supplying arms to Kosovo

By [Global Research](#)

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WASHINGTON (AFP) – President George W. Bush authorized Wednesday supplying Kosovo with weapons, signaling the establishment of government-to-government relations after recognizing its independence, the White House said.

In a memo to the State Department made public by the White House, Bush said: “I hereby find that the furnishing of defense articles and defense services to Kosovo will strengthen the security of the United States and promote world peace.”

A senior official said the authorization followed US recognition of Kosovo’s independence and was part of the normal process of establishing relations with a new government.

In a comment apparently meant to allay concerns from Serbia and its ally Russia, the official stressed the military restrictions imposed on Kosovo under a plan by former UN special envoy for Kosovo Martti Ahtisaari.

Under the Ahtisaari plan [!!!!?] , which is the basis for Kosovo’s supervised independence, Kosovo is allowed a lightly armed 2,500-person security force under NATO oversight and training.

Kosovo, an Albanian-dominated Serbian province under UN administration since 1999, unilaterally declared its independence on February 17. The United States recognized it on March 18, despite strong opposition from Serbia and Russia.

The US official, who asked not to be identified, said the US weapons deliveries were preparing the ground for the future, adding that the United States had struck similar relations with other countries in the region.

Furthermore, the official said, provisions of defense equipment and services would be considered on a case-by-case basis.

The official said that providing military equipment to Kosovo would improve security relations and engagement with Kosovo, promote security and stability throughout the Balkans, improve Kosovo’s capacity to take part in peacekeeping activities, to detect, deter and defeat terrorists, and to deal with humanitarian emergencies

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