

## Are the F-16s Obsolete?

Region: Europe, USA

In-depth Report: [UKRAINE REPORT](#)

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insists that Washington DC is supposedly “reluctant to do so to avoid escalation with Moscow”. However, this is a moot point, as the US has so far done everything in its power to antagonize Russia through [a series of moves that have pushed the world dangerously close to a world-ending thermonuclear conflict](#). Still, this doesn’t seem to stop Washington DC from going ahead with such plans, at the very least covertly. National Security Council coordinator John Kirby recently admitted this, stating that “the US has been forward-looking about future capabilities and needs”.

Kirby later added that “F-16s were not on the agenda at the G7”, but hinted that “the fighter jet would certainly come up on the sidelines of the summit”. [According to CNN](#), this issue is expected to be one of the main topics of the upcoming NATO summit in Lithuania’s Vilnius in July. To avoid directly implicating the belligerent alliance, some have even suggested that the training of Ukrainian pilots could be relegated to the F-16 manufacturer, Lockheed Martin. Still, several high-ranking US officials insist that the process would require a great deal of the Pentagon’s participation, particularly in terms of providing weapons for the jet. In essence, there is simply no way for the US to provide F-16s without getting involved directly, a move that Russia won’t forget or leave unanswered.

According to CNN, back in March, the US hosted two Ukrainian pilots at a military base in Tucson, Arizona, where USAF has been evaluating their skills to assess how much time they would need to learn to fly various American military aircraft, including the F-16. However, the infamous neoliberal mouthpiece, citing yet another unnamed senior US official, insists that “the US has no plans as of now to expand that training”.

But, according to their own admission, Congress has already set aside funds in the 2023 budget precisely for such training. Once again, this is a clear indicator that Washington DC is only pretending to care about “avoiding escalation with Moscow”. Still, this leaves the obvious question of how effective the F-16 would be against clearly superior Russian jets, such as the Su-35S or MiG-31BM, [to say nothing of the Su-57](#).

[CNN admits that even US officials are skeptical in this regard](#), noting that “Russia also has extensive anti-aircraft systems that could easily shoot down the F-16s”, adding that “Ukraine has not been conducting many air missions with the fighter planes it already has for precisely that reason”. Indeed, while [the mainstream propaganda machine will surely present F-16s as yet another “wunderwaffen”](#), the jet is a light single-engine platform dating back to the late 1960s/early 1970s. Since the end of the (First) Cold War, Russia has been operating exclusively heavier classes of fighter jets, including several variants and iterations of its legendary Su-27, in addition to other top-of-the-line fighter jets, such as the superfast, high-flying MiG-31BM. [The F-16’s chances of survival against such opponents are minimal](#).

In the virtually guaranteed case that any Russian jet shoots down an F-16, this could easily destroy its reputation, which the American war propaganda has been building for decades, primarily based on its usage against [largely helpless opponents during countless US aggressions and invasions](#). This could also translate to major financial losses for the manufacturer, [as was the case for Raytheon, whose stocks plummeted](#) after its much-touted “Patriot” was destroyed in a recent Russian airstrike. Such a loss could also affect the sales of newer variants of the F-16, particularly the Block 70/72 model which has been earmarked for delivery to China’s breakaway island province of Taiwan. In addition, as already mentioned by the “unnamed US officials”, Russia’s second-to-none air defenses would make short work of even much heavier and more advanced targets, let alone an F-16.

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*[Drago Bosnic](#) is an independent geopolitical and military analyst.*

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