

Ukraine Strikes \$2.4-bln Arms Deal With Iraq

By [Global Research](#)

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Moscow: Ukraine will deliver a variety of military equipment to Iraq under a recent deal worth an estimated \$2.4 billion, a Russian newspaper reported.

According to the Nezavisimaya Gazeta daily, the deal between the state arms exporter UkrSpetsExport and the Iraqi defense ministry is the largest in Ukraine's history and could lift the ex-Soviet republic to the 4th or 5th place among the top arms dealers in the world from the current 14th.

The new contract will ensure orders for over 80 Ukrainian firms, including the state-run Progress machine-building plant in Berdichev, which produced T-80UD tanks for Pakistan in the 1990s, the paper said in an article published on Wednesday.

Nezavisimaya Gazeta cited Sergei Zgurets, head of research at the Kiev-based Center for Army, Conversion and Disarmament Studies (CACDS) as saying the deal could have been influenced by Washington as the U.S. has allocated up to \$3 billion in military aid to ready the Iraqi police and armed forces for the task of policing the country after the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq.

Sources close to the Ukrainian Defense Ministry told the newspaper that the deal included the delivery of an unspecified number of armored vehicles, transport planes and high-precision weaponry.

Ukraine will also provide repair and maintenance services for the sold equipment.

Although the Ukrainian sources refused to comment on the political aspect of the deal, the newspaper suggested it could have a negative impact on the relations between Ukrainian and Russian arms manufacturers because Russia was actively seeking arms contracts with Iraq.

"This deal will certainly cause concern in Russia as Ukraine, which has always been one of Russia's main competitors on global arms markets, is now reestablishing its positions in this sphere," Nezavisimaya Gazeta cited a source in the Ukrainian military.

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