

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

November 19, 2025

The Honorable Pete Hegseth
Secretary
U.S. Department of Defense
1400 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20350

The Honorable Marco Rubio
Secretary
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Hegseth and Secretary Rubio,

We write to express our deep concern and request more information about President Trump's recent announcement of his plans to sell F-35 fighter jets to Saudi Arabia. If this deal is completed, Riyadh will gain full access to some of the United States' most prized, cutting-edge military technology. Given Saudi Arabia's deepening military ties with the People's Republic of China (PRC), such a sale has the potential to severely jeopardize U.S. national security if Riyadh were to share any of the F-35's technology or operational know-how with Beijing. It is essential that such an outcome be avoided, and we urge extensive consultation with Congress as well as an in-depth interagency process before a final decision to sell the F-35 to Saudi Arabia is made.

Just this month, the Pentagon's intelligence arm, the Defense Intelligence Agency, reportedly warned that selling F-35s to Saudi Arabia could compromise the jet's technology due to concerns over PRC espionage and Beijing's security partnership with Riyadh.¹ The PRC has sold ballistic missiles to Saudi Arabia for decades, and military ties between the two have deepened in recent years as Beijing has sold Riyadh more capable systems and reportedly helped it develop its own indigenous ballistic missile manufacturing capacity.² Since upgrading their relationship to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership in 2016, Saudi Arabia and the PRC have also greatly deepened their cooperation on digital infrastructure, with Huawei opening a cloud facility in Riyadh in 2023 that supports government services and artificial intelligence (AI) and China Telecom launching a project in 2024 to deliver 5G, cloud computing, and AI services to Saudi government institutions.³ The Chinese Communist Party's well-documented control over Huawei and China Telecom therefore presents considerable risk that Beijing could access sensitive data about the F-35 through its companies' provision of these services.

There is precedent for excluding potential customers from the F-35 program on the basis of their security partnerships with or acquisitions from U.S. adversaries. During his first term, President Trump made the decision to remove Turkey from the program and stop production work because of its decision to acquire Russian-made S-400 air defense systems.⁴ This decision was made even though Turkey is a member of the NATO alliance—a status Saudi Arabia does not possess. Clearly, that precedent should guide the U.S. government to exercise the highest and strictest scrutiny to protect our national security. As the PRC and Saudi Arabia deepen their security

¹ [U.S. Officials Raise Concerns About Saudi Arabia's Bid for F-35 Jets - The New York Times](#)

² [Democratic Lawmakers Urge Biden to Ensure Saudi Ties Serve U.S. - The New York Times](#); [CNN Exclusive: US intel and satellite images show Saudi Arabia is now building its own ballistic missiles with help of China | CNN Politics](#)

³ [Huawei opens new cloud data center in Saudi Arabia | CIO](#); [China Telecom launches Saudi subsidiary - People's Daily Online](#)

⁴ [Turkey officially kicked out of F-35 program, costing US half a billion dollars](#)

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and infrastructure cooperation, we remain skeptical that U.S. military technology will be duly protected. The F-35 reflects the technological achievement of countless U.S. companies and suppliers to provide the United States with the world's most capable 5th-generation fighter. U.S. air supremacy is a zero-sum game and any advantage our adversaries gain on our capabilities, whether intended or not by purchasers of U.S. weapons systems, puts that status at risk.

Given these serious risks, we request answers to the following questions by December 3, 2025:

1. What consultations with Congress and what interagency process has the Administration undertaken to ensure that security concerns about Saudi Arabia sharing F-35 technology with the PRC, including concerns expressed by the Pentagon's own intelligence agency, are fully accounted for before finalizing a sale?
2. To what extent does the Saudi Ministry of Defense use communications and digital services provided by PRC companies, including Huawei and China Telecom, and how does the Administration plan to ensure Beijing is not able to steal sensitive F-35 technology via its significant presence in Saudi Arabia's digital infrastructure?
3. What risk do the Departments of Defense and State assess there is that Saudi Arabia could transfer F-35 technology to the PRC in exchange for Beijing's provision of ballistic missiles and other advanced technology to Riyadh?
4. Has the Administration requested Saudi Arabia terminate its military and digital cooperation with the PRC as a provision of the United States agreeing to sell it the F-35?

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Representative Raja Krishnamoorthi
Ranking Member
House Select Committee on the CCP



Representative Joe Courtney
Ranking Member
House Armed Services Subcommittee
on Seapower and Projection Forces



Representative Donald Norcross
Ranking Member
House Armed Services Subcommittee
on Tactical Air and Land Forces