



## US to Send 20 Fighter Jets to Egypt Despite Turmoil

By: Stephen Feller – December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2012

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The U.S. government will give Egypt 20 F-16 fighter jets with delivery to start in January as part of American aid to that country despite President Mohammed Morsi's power grab and ties to the Muslim Brotherhood.

The jets are part of Egypt's \$1 billion U.S. foreign aid package, with the shipment dating to a 2010 order when Hosni Mubarak was still in power that has been kept in place since his fall and Morsi's election, reported Fox News.

The \$213 million order was approved by Congress in 2010, with the first Lockheed Martin-constructed jets due to arrive in Cairo on Jan. 22. The new F-16s will join a fleet of more than 200 fighter planes mostly bought and built by the U.S.

"The U.S.-Egypt defense relationship has served as the cornerstone of our broader strategic partnership for over 30 years," said Lt. Col. Wesley Miller, spokesman for the Pentagon. "The delivery of the first set of F-16s in January 2013 reflects the U.S. commitment to supporting the Egyptian military's modernization efforts. Egyptian acquisition of F-16s will increase our militaries' interoperability, and enhance Egypt's capacity to contribute to regional mission sets."

Delivering the planes as ordered to a different Egyptian leadership has been questioned by leaders and analysts because of the recent uprising resulting from Morsi's dictatorial power grab last month.

Among the concerns is an overreaction by Egypt over issues with Israel — given the Muslim Brotherhood's history in the Middle East — and that American built military hardware could be used against the Jewish state or worse.

"The Obama administration wants to simply throw money at an Egyptian government that the president cannot even clearly state is an ally of the United States," said Florida Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen the Republican chair of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs.

And Malou Innocent, a foreign policy analyst at the Cato Institute, pointed out that if the turmoil in Egypt result in another war with Israel, the United States would be "in an embarrassing position of having supplied massive amounts of military hardware ... to both belligerents.