

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

February 4, 2022

Hon. Antony Blinken  
Secretary of State  
U.S. Department of State  
2201 C Street NW  
Washington, DC 20520

Hon. Lloyd Austin  
Secretary of Defense  
U.S. Department of Defense  
1300 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20301

Dear Secretaries Austin and Blinken,

We strongly urge you to reject the recent Turkish proposal to purchase Block 70 F-16s and mechanical upgrades from the United States to modernize its air force. Approving this proposal would reward President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan for ignoring both Turkey's alliance commitments to the United States and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the vast human rights abuses his regime continues to commit at home and abroad.

In November, Turkey requested 40 Block 70 F-16 fighter jets and 80 modernization kits for their current fleet from the U.S. The request comes after the Erdoğan regime has repeatedly used its military power to destabilize the Eastern Mediterranean, Middle East, South Caucasus, and North Africa for years. Turkish and Turkish-backed forces have utilized American-made weaponry and components during these incursions to commit war crimes, including purposefully bombing civilian targets like hospitals and schools in Iraq, Syria, and Nagorno Karabakh.

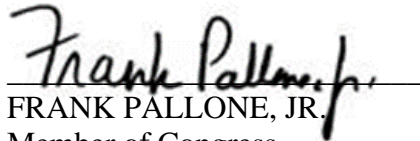
The purchase of advanced fighter jets from the United States for Turkey's military arsenal will not incentivize Erdoğan to change course and become a good actor. It will more likely lead to further death and destruction in the region at the hands of his military. Turkey also continues to utilize S-400 missile defense systems, which potentially exposes important tactical information about U.S. weaponry and military operations to Russia. While this is antithetical to their commitments as a NATO ally and jeopardizes American national security, Erdoğan uses this tactic consistently to pit the U.S. and Russia against each other to achieve his desired goals.

At home, the Erdoğan regime also continues to promote unfair elections, suppress civil society, and abuse human rights to maintain its grip on power. Just last week, a Turkish journalist was arrested for reportedly insulting Erdoğan, a common occurrence under this repressive government that does not respect freedom of speech or the press.

We strongly urge you to reject Turkey's request for new F-16s and modernization kits and take immediate action to hold the Erdoğan regime accountable. The United States must not provide any further support to Turkey's military until President Erdoğan takes tangible steps to halt his destabilizing actions and violations of international law at home and abroad. Precedent shows that he will not change his behavior until the United States uses all its diplomatic tools, including targeted economic sanctions.

Thank you for your attention to these concerns, and we look forward to your timely response.

Sincerely,

  
FRANK PALLONE, JR.  
Member of Congress

  
GUS M. BILIRAKIS  
Member of Congress

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
CHRIS PAPPAS  
Member of Congress

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
NICOLE MALLIOTAKIS  
Member of Congress

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
CAROLYN B. MALONEY  
Member of Congress

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
JACKIE SPEIER  
Member of Congress

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
DAVID G. VALADAO  
Member of Congress

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
ADAM B. SCHIFF  
Member of Congress

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
JAMES P. MCGOVERN  
Member of Congress

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
DAVID N. CICILLINE  
Member of Congress

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
TONY CÀRDENAS  
Member of Congress

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
ANNA G. ESHOO  
Member of Congress

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
BRAD SHERMAN  
Member of Congress

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
GRACE F. NAPOLITANO  
Member of Congress

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
JOHN SARBANES  
Member of Congress

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
ALBIO SIRES  
Member of Congress

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
TED DEUTCH  
Member of Congress

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
DINA TITUS  
Member of Congress

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
MARIO DIAZ-BALART  
Member of Congress

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
LOUIE GOHMERT  
Member of Congress

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
JUDY CHU  
Member of Congress

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
RAJA KRISHNAMOORTHY  
Member of Congress

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
LINDA T. SANCHEZ  
Member of Congress

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
RO KHANNA  
Member of Congress

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KATHERINE CLARK  
Member of Congress

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JOSH GOTTHEIMER  
Member of Congress

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
KATHY MANNING  
Member of Congress

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
JAKE AUCHINCLOSS  
Member of Congress

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
JIMMY GOMEZ  
Member of Congress

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ZOE LOFGREN  
Member of Congress

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GRACE MENG  
Member of Congress

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BARBARA LEE  
Member of Congress

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
KATIE PORTER  
Member of Congress

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
JIM COSTA  
Member of Congress

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
JAN SCHAKOWSKY  
Member of Congress

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
RAÚL M. GRIJALVA  
Member of Congress

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
BRADLEY S. SCHNEIDER  
Member of Congress

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON  
Member of Congress

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
CHELLIE PINGREE  
Member of Congress

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH  
Member of Congress

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD  
Member of Congress

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
ALAN LOWENTHAL  
Member of Congress

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PETER WELCH  
Member of Congress

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DANNY K. DAVIS  
Member of Congress

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JAIME RASKIN  
Member of Congress

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SUSAN WILD  
Member of Congress

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JIM LANGEVIN  
Member of Congress

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
THOMAS R. SUOZZI  
Member of Congress

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LORI TRAHAN  
Member of Congress

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
MARK POCAN  
Member of Congress

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
MARK TAKANO  
Member of Congress

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
BOBBY RUSH  
Member of Congress

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
BONNIE WATSON COLEMAN  
Member of Congress