

# Lockheed Martin And Slovakia Usher In New Era Of European Air Defense With Ceremonial Delivery Of First F-16 Block 70 Jets

**GREENVILLE, S.C., Feb. 29, 2024** – In a ceremony today at Lockheed Martin's Greenville facility (NYSE: LMT), Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence of the Slovak Republic, Robert Kaliňák, along with esteemed delegates from the United States and Slovakia, commemorated the delivery of Slovakia's first two F-16 Block 70 aircraft. This event marks a new era in European air defense, underscoring the deepening partnership between the two allied nations. F-16 Block 70 fighter jets will help the Slovak Republic to once again ensure the protection of its airspace with its own capacities.

The two aircraft, a single-seat C-model and a two-seat D-model, will remain in Greenville for maintenance training. This training is crucial for Slovak Air Force personnel to ensure the smooth integration and effective operation of the F-16 fleet. More jets are slated for completion by 2025, with the first group of aircraft anticipated to arrive in Slovakia by mid-2024.

OJ Sanchez, vice president and general manager of the Integrated Fighter Group at Lockheed Martin, emphasized the milestone's strategic importance: "Slovakia is at the forefront of adopting Europe's most advanced 4th generation fighter, the F-16 Block 70. These jets not only represent a stronger alliance between Slovakia, the United States, and NATO allies but also equip the Slovak Air Force with advanced capabilities to face 21st Century Security challenges."

Sanchez added: "As Slovakia joins the ranks of nations operating the F-16, a benchmark NATO fighter, they bolster their defense capabilities and readiness for global operations. With 11 more Slovak F-16s under production and testing, we are committed to delivering a total of 14 state-of-the-art jets, further solidifying our partnership."

The F-16 Block 70 jets are equipped with the Northrop Grumman APG-83 AESA Radar, advanced avionics, an extended structural service life of 12,000 hours, and critical safety features like the Automatic Ground Collision Avoidance System (Auto GCAS). Since its integration into the U.S. Air Force in late 2014, the Auto GCAS has been instrumental in saving 13 pilots across 12 F-16 incidents, exemplifying the aircraft's unparalleled safety and performance standards.

Lockheed Martin has a backlog of 133 F-16 Block 70/72 jets to be produced in Greenville, with seven total jets delivered to-date for international partners.

Download more [Slovakia F-16 Block 70 Delivery Ceremony photos](#).

## About the F-16

The [F-16](#) is a strategic and valuable choice for many customers around the world seeking advanced fighter aircraft capabilities, regional and worldwide partnerships, and affordable lifecycle costs. More than 3,100 F-16s are operating today in 25 countries. The F-16 has flown an estimated 19.5 million flight hours and at least 13 million sorties. Today's latest version, the Block 70/72, offers unparalleled capabilities and will be flown by six countries and counting.

## About Lockheed Martin

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