
Erdogan hopeful NATO summit advances Türkiye's F-35 bid



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ANKARA: Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan expressed confidence that the NATO Leaders' Summit would bring progress on Türkiye's long-standing bid to acquire F-35 fighter jets from the United States, saying the issue remains part of bilateral discussions.

Speaking after meeting US President Donald Trump on the summit sidelines, Erdoğan said

Türkiye had received commitments regarding five F-35 aircraft and hoped those assurances

would lead to a favorable decision.

Erdogan said he trusted Trump to honor earlier commitments, adding that recent talks had strengthened optimism over defense cooperation between the two NATO allies.

He also confirmed discussions would cover possible US support for Türkiye's indigenous KAAN fighter jet project, including proposed General Electric F110 engine supplies. Reports indicate the Trump administration has informed Congress of plans to proceed with an engine sale worth over \$700 million.

Türkiye was removed from the F-35 programme in 2019 after purchasing Russia's S-400 missile defense system. Ankara has rejected US concerns, insisting the systems are compatible and maintaining its suspension was unjustified. Turkish officials argue that restoring participation would strengthen both national defense and NATO security.

Erdogan said talks with Trump would also address Ukraine, regional diplomacy, Iran-US relations and Gaza's humanitarian situation. He expressed hope the summit would support peace efforts.

Highlighting Ankara-Washington ties, Erdogan said both countries would demonstrate solidarity at the summit while working for regional stability, security and lasting peace.