

Turkey May Rethink Boeing Plane Orders, Erdogan Says



Turkey's president said his government may have to "rethink" existing orders for Boeing Co. airplanes worth about \$10 billion, in comments that reflect the country's strained ties with the U.S.

Turkey's hesitation on the Boeing order adds to tension created when the country ordered a missile defense system from Russia, spurning an offer for Ankara to buy U.S. air-defense missiles.

"I've told Mr. Trump in Osaka that even if Turkey's not buying Patriots, it's buying Boeings. We're good customers," President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said Friday in Ankara, referring to Raytheon's Patriot systems. "But if it goes on like this, we'll have to rethink about this issue."

Erdogan spoke with U.S. President Donald Trump at the G-20

summit, during which he reminded him of existing orders for 100 Boeing jets by Turkish Airlines, the nation's flagship carrier where the government holds a 49% stake. Turkey has since begun receiving the S-400 missile defense systems from Russia, which the U.S. has long said is incompatible with the its role as a NATO member and purchases of U.S. F-35 fighter jets.

Turkish Airlines in March 2018 said it'll buy 25 of Boeing's 787-9 jets, scheduled for delivery by 2023. In 2013, it had announced a decision to purchase 75 of the 737 MAX jets, the grounded airplanes involved in two fatal crashes. Five of these were delivered in the first quarter this year, with the rest set to be delivered by the end of 2023.