



## Turkish Rhetoric On Acquiring Russian Fighter Jets



T-50 (Su-57).

Source: Dmitry Terekhov from Odintsovo, Russian Federation via Wikimedia, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:T-50\\_\(Su-57\)\\_36349482491.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:T-50_(Su-57)_36349482491.jpg), CC BY-SA 2.0

**OE Watch Commentary:** Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan attended the opening of Russian MAKS-2019 international aviation and space fair that showcases the best of Russian aviation and security products. While the reason for the Turkish president's visit was to discuss the developing situation in the Syrian town of Idlib, Russian President Vladimir Putin chose a strategic location for the meeting. The Turkish and Russian Presidents watched the performance of Russian fighter jets and posed with the SU-57, Russia's fifth-generation fighter jet. According to reports, Erdoğan asked if the jet was available for sale and President Putin noted that Russia was ready to supply the SU-57 to Turkey and expressed Russia's willingness to jointly manufacture some weapons systems. The accompanying passages shed light on expanding Russian and Turkish security cooperation.

According to the first article, the two leaders' meeting on the sidelines of the Russian aviation and space fair, particularly as the second battery of the S-400s was being delivered to Turkey, "marks the joint devotion of two countries seeking more enhanced cooperation in the defense industry." The Turkish President noted the growing multi-dimensional relations with Russia, saying "I believe that the synergy we have with Russia regarding aviation and space sectors will deepen our bilateral relations." In addition, President Erdoğan reportedly suggested a partnership with Russia to develop an upgrade to S-400s. According to the author, the Turkish President's statements "could be regarded as a direct message to Washington" indicating that "Turkey is not without alternatives for finding" new defense weapons system suppliers. The author further notes that "[t]he fact that Putin has promoted the SU-57 to Erdoğan at the aviation fair makes the latter's message even stronger." While Turkey's purchase of the SU-57 is not certain, given the experience of acquiring S-400s, the author claims that Turkey may follow through in adding SU-57s to its military arsenal.

The second article discusses Turkey's talks with Russia to acquire the SU-57 (or possible SU-35) fighter jets, reporting that negotiations started on September 2nd. After Erdoğan's visit, the President of Turkey's Defense Industries İsmail Demir stayed in Russia to discuss undertaking joint projects and the possibility of purchasing these Russian fifth-generation fighter jets equipped with an advanced avionics system and a variety of high-precision weaponry. The most important announcement came from Dmitry Shugayev, the Director of Russia's Federal Service for Military-Technical Cooperation, who stated that officials from both countries were at the negotiating table for the sale of not only SU-57s, but also for the SU-35s. This seems to be a pattern; each time Turkish President Erdoğan engages with Russia because of an urgent development in Syria, Russian President Putin manages to draw Turkey's attention to another product from Russia's defense industry. **End OE Watch Commentary (Gündüz)**

*"I believe that the synergy we have with Russia regarding aviation and space sectors will deepen our bilateral relations..." -Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan*

**Source:** Serkan Demirtaş, "Erdoğan's message to Washington from Moscow," *hurriyetdailynews.com*, 28 August 2019. <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/opinion/serkan-demirtas/erdogans-message-to-washington-from-moscow-146108>

*President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and Russian President Vladimir Putin met in Russia yesterday on the sidelines of an important aviation and space fair in which the newest products of the Russian defense industry are being exhibited.*

*...the venue of their meeting was quite significant and spoke for itself. This marks the joint devotion of two countries seeking more enhanced cooperation in the defense industry.*

*The fact that Erdoğan has attended the opening ceremony of the defense industry fair along with Putin is symbolic devotion...*

*During his speech, Erdoğan hailed growing ties between the two nations in a multidimensional form that includes the defense industry. "I believe that the synergy we have with Russia regarding aviation and space sectors will deepen our bilateral relations," he stated.*

*The message [of Erdoğan] is clear: Turkey is not without alternatives in finding new suppliers if excluded from U.S.-led international projects and denied procuring American weapons. This can also include Russia's fifth-generation SU-57 aircraft...*

*The fact that Putin has promoted the SU-57 to Erdoğan at the aviation fair makes the latter's message even stronger. It's, of course, very premature to speculate whether Turkey would choose to buy SU-57s from Russia, but our experience concerning the purchase of the S-400 systems proves that this option may be on the table.*

**Source:** "Erdoğan'la Putin üzerinde poz vermişti: Satış görüşmesi resmen başladı (Erdoğan and Putin posed on it: Sales negotiations officially started)," *ahvalnews.com*, 5 September 2019. <https://ahvalnews.com/tr/turkiye-rusya/erdoganla-putin-uzerinde-poz-vermist-satis-gorusmesi-resmen-basladi>

*The negotiations over the sale of fighter jet SU-57 to Turkey has officially started...*

*The statement came from Shugayev, head of the Russian Federal Service for Military-Technical Cooperation. Shugayev said that negotiations are not only for sale of the SU-57, but also are for the sale of SU-35 fighter jets.*

*Speaking to Russian state television Rossiya-24, Shugayev said, "Erdoğan, who met with Russian President Vladimir Putin in MAKS-2019, expressed his interest in the SU-35 and SU-57 fighter jets. Then the first round of negotiations started, [but] experts need to work on many issues first," he said.*