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Turkey Will Produce S-400 Systems With Russia, Erdogan Says

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Mikhail Metzel / TASS

Turkish will cooperate with Russia on the production of advanced missile defense systems, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has said as the country continues to defy its NATO allies with purchases of Russia's S-400 system.

Turkey's purchase of the S-400 from Russia has raised tensions with NATO and the United States, which has warned Turkey that it will respond to the move with sanctions. Parts of the system have been delivered to Turkey in recent days.

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"Now our goal is co-producing with Russia. We'll do this. We'll go even further," Erdogan told supporters Monday on the third anniversary of a 2016 attempted coup.

"The S-400s are the strongest defence system against those who want to attack our country,"

he said, adding that the Russian system would be fully deployed by April 2020.

The U.S. says the S-400s are not compatible with NATO's defense network and could compromise its Lockheed Martin F-35 stealth fighter jets, an aircraft Turkey is helping to build and planning to buy.

Under possible U.S. sanctions, Turkey could face expulsion from the F-35 program, a move Erdogan has dismissed. But Washington has already started the process of removing Turkey from the F-35 program, halting training of Turkish pilots in the United States on the aircraft.

The Trump Administration could announce sanctions against Turkey sometime this week, Bloomberg reported, citing sources familiar with the matter.

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