

DefMin Ciuca: We are looking into possibility of purchasing another squadron in upcoming period

Minister of National Defense Nicolae Ciuca told a press conference held alongside Portuguese counterpart Joao Titterington Gomes Cravinho on an official visit to Romania that he is considering the possibility of purchasing "in the upcoming period" another squadron of aircraft that must be interoperable with those already in the Army's endowment.

"We are certainly looking into the possibility of purchasing another squadron in the upcoming period and, depending on the possibility we can identify with those who want to sell these aircraft, we will start this procurement process as soon as possible. One thing is for certain, no matter where we buy these aircraft, they must be interoperable with those we already have," Minister Ciuca said.

He added that he is currently in the process of completing the operationalization of the first F16 squadron.

"At the moment, we are in the process of completing the operationalization of the first F16 squadron, Minister Cravinho has mentioned that next year the 17th aircraft will also be received. Next, it follows that declaring the final, operational capability to occur when all the aircraft go through the modernisation process and are upgraded. As such, at the same time as this process, the possibilities and opportunities to continue this process of endowing the Romanian Air Force with F16 aircraft are under consideration," Nicolae Ciuca underscored.

As for the MIG-21 planes, the Romanian Minister of Defense mentioned that they are "kept alive" because they are needed to defend the airspace.

"We need this capability, we need to cover the entire spectrum of Romanian air force missions to defend the airspace. As such, I use this opportunity to thank the pilots of the Romanian Air Force and the technicians, for the efforts they make, so as to keep the MIG-21 planes operational," pointed out Minister Ciuca.