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US approves major weapons sale to Afghanistan worth \$60 million

August 19, 2016

The United States Department of State has approved a major weapons sale to Afghanistan in a bid to help the Afghan forces fight the growing menace of terrorism.

The Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) said “The State Department has made a determination approving a possible Foreign Military Sale to Afghanistan for individual and crew served weapons, equipment, training, and support. The estimated cost is \$60 million. The Defense Security Cooperation Agency delivered the required certification notifying Congress of this possible sale on August 17, 2016.”

According to DSCA, the request Afghanistan includes Major Defense Equipment (MDE), consisting of four thousand, eight hundred and ninety-one (4,891) M16A4 5.56mm Rifles, four hundred and eighty-five (485) M240B 7.62mm Machine Guns, and eight hundred (800) M2 .50 caliber Machine Guns.

The Non-Major Defense Equipment includes M249 Light Automatic Machine Guns; M110 7.62mm Sniper Rifles; MK-19 40mm Grenade Launchers; MK-93 40mm Machine Gun Mounts; M3 Tripod Machine Gun Mounts; Spare Barrels; spare and repair parts; lot validation; publications and technical documentation; personnel training and training equipment; Quality Assurance Team; U.S. Government and contractor technical and logistics support services; and other related elements of logistics and program support.

The estimated cost is \$60 million, the agency said, adding that the proposed sale will enhance the foreign policy and national security objectives of the United States by helping to improve the security of a strategic partner by providing weapons needed to maintain security and stability, as well as to conduct offensive operations against an ongoing insurgency.

DSCA further added that Afghanistan has an urgent requirement to increase its stocks of crew-served weapons for ongoing counter-insurgency operations and enduring threats to its national sovereignty.

The Afghan National Army (ANA) will use these weapons and equipment in both offensive and defensive operations against insurgents and terrorists within their borders.

“Without these defense articles, the ANA will not have the military capabilities that are necessary to maintain security and stability. The ANA is thoroughly trained and prepared to use the proposed defense articles. Afghanistan will have no difficulty absorbing this equipment into its armed forces,” DSCA added.