

US to deliver eight F-16 aircrafts to Egypt

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Cairo: The United States will deliver eight F-16 fighter jets to Egypt as a part of its ongoing military support to the country.

This was announced by the US embassy in Cairo on Thursday, Xinhua news agency reported.

The statement on the US embassy website said the eight F-16 Block 52 aircrafts will be flown in directly from the US and arrive at an air base outside Cairo by Friday. Four more F-16s will be delivered to Egypt later this year, it added.

The embassy's senior defence official Major General Charles Hooper said "the F-16s provide a valuable capability that is needed during these times of regional instability. Extremists threaten regional security and these weapon systems provide a new tool to help Egypt fight terrorism."

The announcement was made days ahead of US Secretary of State John Kerry's Middle East tour on Sunday. Kerry and Egyptian Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry will co-chair a strategic dialogue in Cairo.

The statement also said the US will continue providing follow-on support, maintenance and training for Egyptian pilots and ground crews.

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