

## Three Asian Countries to Get U.S. Missiles

- [Arms Control Today](#)

The U.S. government has approved the delivery of advanced air combat missiles to Taiwan, Thailand, and Singapore after agreeing to sell the missiles to the three countries a few years ago. When the missiles will actually be transferred is confidential.

The Clinton administration announced plans to sell AIM-120C Advanced Medium Range Air-to-Air Missiles (AMRAAMs) to Taiwan and Singapore in September 2000. Thailand reportedly made a similar deal, but no public record of it exists because the value of the possible sale did not cross the \$14 million threshold required for the Pentagon publicly to inform Congress of the proposed transaction.

In all three cases, the United States conditioned the delivery of the AMRAAMs, which independently home in on a target beyond the distance that a pilot can see, on neighboring countries in Asia acquiring a comparable missile. U.S. policy holds that the United States will not be the first to introduce advanced beyond-visual-range missiles into a region.

In its annual report on Chinese military power released July 28, the Pentagon reported that China now possesses the Russian-made AA-12 Adder missile, which is comparable to the AMRAAM. The report marked the first public acknowledgement of a finding the United States made last year. The determination set in motion this past spring the delivery of the AMRAAMs to Taiwan, Thailand, and Singapore.

Thailand and Singapore are not considered to be within the same region where China is thought to have deployed its AA-12 missiles. But the Bush administration told Congress earlier this year that Beijing's ability to relocate the missiles and Russian offers to sell Adders to Malaysia create an imminent threat justifying AMRAAM deliveries to Thailand and Singapore.

Taiwan could receive up to 200 AMRAAMs and Singapore as many as 100. Thailand is believed to have purchased less than 10 missiles. Japan and South Korea, which are classified as being in a different region than the three above countries, have previously purchased and received AMRAAMs.

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