

Tweede Kamer der Staten Generaal
Vaste Commissie voor Defensie
Postbus 20018
2500 EA The Hague, the Netherlands

Ref: B135601-1853601

Linköping, July 2 2013

Concerns: F16 Replacement Process

Dear Member of Parliament,

In the course of this letter we will take the liberty of giving your Committee our comments on the current procedure executed by the Netherlands Ministry of Defence in the F16 replacement process and on the conclusion concerning our Gripen NG aircraft as it has been presented to us.

But, first of all, we would like to thank you for the recent opportunity your Committee has been given us to brief you on the latest developments with the Saab Gripen NG that we have offered to the Netherlands as a replacement for the F16. We also thank you for the stimulus that your Parliament gave the Ministry of Defence to open up its selection process, against the background of clearly observable preference for the JSF/F35.

Our opinion in this letter is given to you with appropriate respect for the procedures that your Government and your Parliament have chosen for defence procurement processes. We comment on an important part of the current procedure in which Saab Gripen NG is directly involved and in which its interests are being put at risk.

After the hearing in your Parliament, we reacted positively to a public invitation by your Minister of Defence to contact the Ministry in order to set up a briefing. In this meeting, that took place on May 21, 2013, an expert delegation of Saab briefed in The Hague a group of representatives of the Ministry, of the Royal Netherlands Air Force and a representative of the General Accounting Office on the latest developments of the Saab Gripen NG. We gave an overview of the on-going testing and development activities and we informed the participants with details about the

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procurement of the Saab Gripen NG by Switzerland and Sweden, to which countries the first aircraft will be delivered in 2018.

The meeting lasted approximately 1,5 hours.

Already during the meeting, the representatives from the Dutch side made clear that the Ministry had decided not to have a repetition of the 2008 candidate's comparison and that their actual assessments would be made on the basis of this single meeting, and furthermore on the basis of what they called 'open sources'. During this process we were not given the opportunity to provide confidential information to your Algemene Rekenkamer to fact check and compare all the alternatives.

At the end of this meeting, Saab made the following offers to the Netherlands Ministry of Defence:

- Dutch expert group to come to Sweden and conduct a real evaluation
- Meet Swedish authorities including the Swedish air force and the Swedish Ministry of Defence
- Exchange classified information
- Clear and binding offer
- Fixed delivery schedule for all aircraft, with penalties for Saab in case of overruns

A few weeks after the meeting on May 21, we were informed that in its assessment the Ministry of Defence had not come to a different conclusion compared to 2008 and that no further meetings with Saab concerning the Saab Gripen NG were needed. We were provided with a short oral explanation as feedback. That made us fully aware of the fact that the Dutch Ministry of Defence solely relies on open sources.

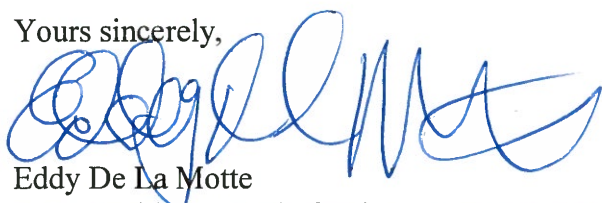
We fully respect the choice of the Netherlands Ministry of Defence, however the conclusion that will be presented to your Parliament will not be on the basis of facts. We are still looking forward to a fair, open and transparent procedure.

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We wish you much wisdom in your further decision-making and thank you for your willingness to listen to our arguments.

Yours sincerely,



Eddy De La Motte
Vice President, Head of Gripen Export, SAAB AB

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