

Orban: Contract for multirole corvettes construction to be signed as soon as disputes are over

Prime Minister Ludovic Orban declared today in Paris that the contract with the winner of the tender for the construction of the four multirole corvettes that are part of the Army's endowment program will be signed as soon as the tendering disputes are settled.

"As regards military cooperation, we tackled topical subjects such as the corvette contract. And here we presented our point of view. Several lawsuits have been filed by a competitor against the commission's contract award decision. As soon as these disputes are settled in court, we are ready to sign the contract, because we are keen on signing and carrying out this contract for the construction of the four corvettes, which are extremely important for Romania's strategic position at the Black Sea," the Prime Minister said in a statement made at the premises of the Romanian Embassy in Paris.

He mentioned that other details related to possible military cooperation were also discussed during the day.

"We appreciate the interest in participating in the Army endowment program, but of course there are competitive procedures where the quality of the bid is paramount and the decisions are made based on the tendered bids," Orban said.

In July 2019, the then Minister of Defense Gabriel Les announced that the association between the French company Naval Group and the Constanta Shipyard had won the tender for the construction of the multirole corvettes.

A few days later, the Dutch group Damen filed a complaint with the National Council for the Settlement of Appeals, continuing a dispute previously initiated by Italy's Fincantieri, and also turned to court, citing multiple irregularities that had allegedly affected the outcome of the "Multirole Corvette" endowment program.

In a ruling handed down this July, the Bucharest Court of Appeal definitively rejected Damen's request to cancel the award of the 1.6 billion euro contract to the Naval Group - Constanta Shipyard association, and upheld a relevant decision delivered by the Bucharest Tribunal in October 2019.