

Thursday, 7 July 2016

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Kosovo* destroys over 2382 SALW to mark the International Gun Destruction Day

Kosovo* joined the annual International Gun Destruction Day on 7 July 2016 by destroying over 2382 pieces of small arms and light weapons (SALW), including 888 short firearms and 1494 long firearms. The weapons marked for destruction have been confiscated by the Kosovo Police during their crime investigation work. The destruction is conducted with support from the German Foreign Office and United Nations Development Programme.

The event was also used to launch social media campaign "Celebrate with your heart, not your gun" on dangers of celebratory gunfire as part of the cooperation with UNDP SEESAC and supported by the European Union, through the COUNCIL DECISION 2013/730/CFSP, dated 9 December 2013, in *Support of SEESAC Disarmament and Arms Control Activities in South East Europe (EUSAC)*, in the framework of the EU Strategy to Combat the Illicit Accumulation and Trafficking of SALW and their Ammunition.

By organizing national destructions and raising public awareness about the dangers posed by SALW, safety and security is strengthened at home and abroad. The destruction of illicit and surplus SALW constitutes an important element of Kosovo's comprehensive SALW Programme. It is an effective method of reducing the actual number of weapons on the illicit market, as well as the potential supply of weapons to the illicit market. In contrast to other methods of disposal such as sale or gift, destruction ensures that SALW does not return to the illicit market and can thus build confidence in overall efforts to prevent, combat, and eradicate their illicit trade.

The destruction event was opened by the Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs of Kosovo, Mr. Valdet Hoxha, UNDP Deputy Resident Representative, Ms. Alessandra Roccasalvo, Representative from German Embassy in Kosovo* Henriette Kötter and Deputy General of Kosovo Police, Mr. Naim Rexha.

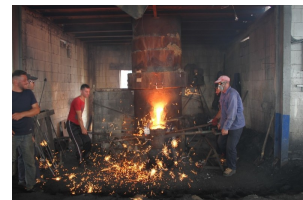
The 7th July destruction is an activity implemented within the framework of Kosovo Arms Control Strategy and Action Plan, by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and is supported by the UNDP - Firearms and Explosives Risk Minimization (FERM) project.

Social media campaign is implemented under Component 5 of the **EU Support of SEESAC Disarmament and Arms Control Activities in South East Europe (EUSAC)** project, initiated through the Council Decision 2013/730/CFSP.

ABOUT EUSAC

The **EUSAC** builds directly upon SEESAC's decade-long SALW Control work, particularly achievements made through the previous EU funded SALW Control project, conducted during the 2010-2012 period under the Council Decision 2010/179/CFSP. Designed in close cooperation with national authorities, the project works on the following five interrelated streams of activities:

- Increased security of stockpiles: through the renovation and security improvements to storages of arms and ammunition.
- Stockpile reduction: through the destruction of surplus arms and ammunition held in storages.
- Improved marking, tracing and registration of SALW: through the provision of support to the establishment or enhancement of existing weapons registration and record-keeping systems.
- Improved regional cooperation on awareness raising, information sharing and knowledge transfer: through the facilitation of regional cooperation between national institutions tasked with arms control.
- Implementation of collection and awareness raising campaigns.



* References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

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