

SEESAC

South Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons

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27 June 2003

SEESAC ACTIVITY REPORT SUPPORT TO REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA WEAPONS DESTRUCTION

SEESAC FUNCTIONAL AREA	FA 6 - Weapons Destruction Programmes
SEESAC OPERATIONAL ACTIVITY	SG 1 - Capacity Building SG 4 - Project Support SG 5 - Resource Mobilisation

BACKGROUND

During 2002 the Government of the Republic of Bulgaria requested UNDP and SEESAC assistance and support to develop and implement a project for the destruction of 4,500 AK 74 Assault Rifles and a significant quantity of small arms and anti-tank ammunition.

The Belgrade-based South East Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SEESAC) supported by UNDP and the Stability Pact maintained liaison and co-operation with the Bulgarian Ministry of Defence and UNDP Sofia, and provided 'seed funding' and technical assistance for the development of this project.



WEAPONS DESTRUCTION



A competitive tender took place in Bulgaria during early 2003, and the Bulgarian 'joint stock' company TEREM SHC was successful in their bid. The physical destruction of 4,500 weapons took place during 20 - 27 June 2003 at the **Veliko Tarnovo** industrial facility of TEREM SHC. The weapons were dismantled, physically cut and then hydraulically deformed. The resultant scrap metal will be converted into approximately 16 tonnes of molten steel.

SEESAC used 'seed funding' to develop the capacity of TEREM, with further finance being made available to UNDP Sofia from the UNDP Thematic Trust Fund for Crisis Prevention and Recovery. The cost per weapon destroyed, including transport and security costs, was **US\$ 6.59 per weapon**, (US\$29,655.00), but future destruction costs are predicted to be lower as capacity

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development has now taken place, and economies of scale will begin to apply. The destruction was monitored and verified by the UNDP Ammunition and Demilitarization Consultant, Mr Ian Munro and the Project Officer Mr Krassimir Benevski.

The project has resulted in drawing valuable public attention to the micro-disarmament process, has contributed towards maintaining the political momentum of the amnesty initiative and has provided tangible evidence to the civil population that recovered weapons will be destroyed and permanently taken out of circulation.

The ammunition demilitarization process is currently ongoing and when completed will be the subject of a separate SEESAC Activity Report.



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