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BiH destroys 1,972 pieces of small arms and light weapons and their components

On 18 September 2021, the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) destroyed 1,972 pieces of small arms and light weapons (SALW), including 891 SALW parts and components, at the Jelisingrad smelter near Banja Luka.

This event was organized by the SALW Coordination Board and different police agencies in BiH, with the support of the UNDP Office in BiH and UNDP SEESAC through funding provided by the EU. The synergy of all partners involved in this activity clearly demonstrates their long-standing cooperation and commitment to delivering a sustainable solution to the problem of safekeeping of confiscated and surplus firearms.

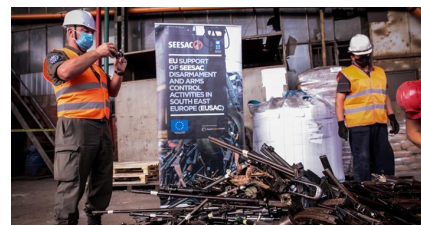
The disposal of said amount of SALW represents another important step of BiH authorities in increasing public safety and security and diminishing the risk of SALW proliferation, but also a step forward towards the achievement of goals set out in the Roadmap for a sustainable solution to the illegal possession, misuse and trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons and their ammunition in the Western Balkans by 2024.

The SALW was collected by the local police agencies through regular law enforcement activities as well as through the voluntary surrender by the citizens of BiH.

The destruction event was closely followed by Ms. Andreja Elzner-Kujača, Head of Section for General Security in Sector for Border and General Security of the Ministry of Security of BiH, Ms. Biljana Barović, Political Advisor in the EU Delegation to BiH and Mr. Slobodan Tadić, Justice and Security Sector Leader in the UNDP Office in BiH.

During her official statement to media representatives Ms. Barović emphasized that the SALW control and the suppression of the illegal arms trade are among the security priorities of the European Union as well as a priority indicated in the Analytical Report accompanying the Opinion of the European Commission on BiH's application for EU membership.

The disposal of SALW and their components on 18 September was accomplished within the currently implemented EU Council Decision (CFSP) 2019/2111 in support of SEESAC disarmament and arms control activities in South East Europe, as a continuation of the long-term assistance that has resulted in more than 20,000 pieces of SALW, parts and components destroyed by the BiH authorities since 2017.



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