

SEESAC

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

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SEESAC ACTIVITY REPORT SUPPORT TO REPUBLIC OF MONTENEGRO 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

On 12 March 2003 the Government of Montenegro proclaimed a limited two month general amnesty for illegal weapons possession, to encourage voluntary surrender of illegally held arms. During this period anyone voluntarily surrendering illegal weapons to the nearest police station or military facility were not prosecuted, and they had the opportunity to stay anonymous. A significant public information campaign was conducted by USAID, in partnership with a local NGO network, 'Akcija'.

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 Montenegrin Ministry of the Interior and USAID during the amnesty initiative. Technical advice was provided on public awareness and legislative issues.

SEESAC has recently provided significant technical and financial support for the physical destruction of weapons and ammunition.

WEAPONS AND AMMUNITION DESTRUCTION

The physical destruction of 5,028 weapons took place on 27 May 2003 at the **Zeljezara-Niksic** industrial smelting facility in **Niksic**. The weapons were converted into approximately 16 tonnes of molten steel. This has resulted in drawing valuable public attention to the 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.

SEESAC used 'seed funding' to develop the capacity of the Ministry of Interior's destruction agencies, and signed the Memorandum of Understanding for purchasing a computer equipment for the Ministry. The cost per weapon destroyed, including transport and security costs, was five US dollars per weapon (US\$ 5.00), but future destruction costs are predicted to be



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lower as capacity development has now taken place, and economies of scale will begin to apply. The destruction was attended by the Republic of Montenegro Minister of Internal Affairs, Mr Milan Filipovic, the Head of the United Nations Development Programme Liaison Office, Mr Garret Tankosic-Kelly, the United States Consulate Representative, Hoyt Yee and diplomatic representatives from the European Union, EUMM, OSCE and USAID.

Also on 27 May 2003 approximately 63,777 rounds of small arms ammunition, and over two tonnes of assorted ammunition natures, were destroyed by either firing or detonation at the **Niksic** military polygon. The destruction operation was also monitored by SEESAC technical staff. Future SEESAC support, in the form of training and equipment, will be provided to the Montenegrin Interior Ministry technical personnel in order to improve the efficiency of future ammunition destruction operations.



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