



Albania Surplus Ammunition Stockpile Disposal NATO Trust Fund Project

Milestones

- Apr 2008: US PMWRA and Albanian Mission to NATO request NSPA develop a plan to destroy 85,000 tonnes of surplus munitions over a 4 year period.
- Dec 2009: Project Proposal published: 35 MEUR project at three Albanian facilities.
- Mar 2010: NATO PPC committee approves a NATO Trust Fund.
- Apr - Jul 2010: US PMWRA only donor forthcoming. Project reduced in scope to 10.2 MEUR.
- Apr-Nov 2010: Legal and other formal agreements drafted and implemented.
- 17 Jan 2011: Contract signed between NSPA and ULP Mjebes for development and production on four munitions disposal lines. Full production by March 2011.
- 1 Aug 2011 : Second US grant received allowing second contract with ULP Mjebes.
- 25 Apr 2012: RASR Conference visit to ULP Mjebes
- 1 Aug 2012: Third US grant allowing continued high rate demilitarisation at ULP Mjebes.
- 15 May 2013: Albanian Def Min addresses NATO Foreign Minister's meeting, thanking NATO and US for assisting in a remarkable achievement in reducing the huge surplus.
- 1 Aug 2013: Fourth US Grant \$1.6M subsequently increased to \$1.8M including SALW.
- 26 Feb 2014: KM Gramsh begins demilitarisation of 70,000 SALW (increased to 100,000)
- Aug 2014: Final quantities of surplus munitions being identified, project end anticipated Dec.

Background

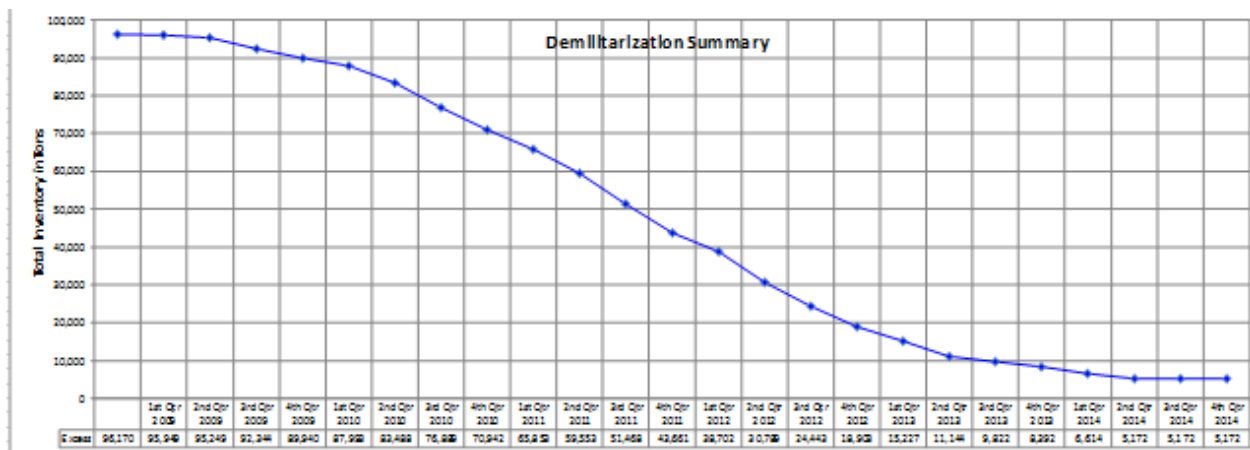
The risks associated with maintaining large surplus ammunition stockpiles were vividly illustrated by a series of fatal accidents in Albania associated with the civil unrest of 1997 and, in March 2008, by the tragedy at the ammunition depot at Gërdec, as a result of which 26 people were killed and more than 300 injured. Over the last decade Albania had been disposing of large quantities of surplus munitions. Even with international support, it had been estimated that it would take until around 2018 to dispose of the excess munitions. Some of the munitions had become unstable through age and there had been a series of incidents both in the storehouses and during the disposal operations.

To reduce these risks, significant quantities of surplus and obsolete ammunition have been destroyed over the past decade, often with support from international donors and international organizations, including NATO. The surplus stockpile in late 2009 was 85,000 tonnes. The

Albanian Government was fully committed to the resolution of the surplus munitions issue by mid 2013 and this was largely achieved. There were around 10,000 tonnes of surplus, much of which in a usable condition and available for sale, towards the end of 2013. During 2014, smaller quantities of the unsold surplus were demilitarised. In addition, US PMWRA offered to fund the destruction of up to 100,000 SALW under the existing NSPA management arrangements. As at August 2014, only relatively small quantities of munitions remain with the possibility of some additional stocks that remain unsold requiring demilitarisation. There are also some UXO contaminated ‘HotSpots’ to be cleared including some inside the two government owned munitions facilities.

MoD Coordination

In 2010 the MoD established a Demilitarisation Board to coordinate all activity, including international donors, and maintain a National Action Plan directing priorities and resources. Munition demilitarisation activity was undertaken at three industrial demilitarization facilities: ULP Mjekës, KM Poliçan and UM Gramsh. Combined with a significant Range Disposal programme, MoD disposed of some 26,000 tonnes in each of 2010, 2011 and 2012 and is on target to substantially complete all industrial disposal by the end of 2014. Large quantities of fit surplus are being sold or donated and the remaining stocks will still have to be demilitarised. Beyond this, there will be an enduring demilitarisation requirement of some 300-1,000 tonnes per year from routine disposals.



NATO Trust Fund Project

The Ammunition Support Branch of NSPA’s General Services Programme is managing the project assisted by NSPA’s specialist procurement and finance staffs. An in-country project team monitors the day-to-day aspects of the project. Independent verification of all contracted activities and related expenditure are conducted. Safety and environmental aspects are strongly monitored. The project is focussed primarily at the existing ULP Mjekes facility.

Achievements to date

- Development and maintenance of the production lines including the Explosive Waste Incinerator. Enhancement of existing Mortar, Anti-Tank Mine and Small Arms Ammunition lines.
- 12,000 tonnes (87M individual items) demilitarized since the project started in January 2011
- 65,000 SALW demilitarised at Gramsh since February 2014.



120mm mortar prepared for demil



Cutting mortars by remote operation



Fuzes ready for incineration



Large calibre being cut in half



Large calibre after being cut in half



Large calibre autoclave



Large calibre being cut in half



Large calibre after being cut in half



Large calibre autoclave



14.5mm processing line



Preparing 14.5mm for the EWI



The EWI incinerator



Anti-Tank mine demil line



Removing mine handle



Cutting mine in half on bandsaw



Removal of combustible material



Driving band bldg before



Driving band bldg after refurbishment



New Admin Building



Utilisation of old wooden boxes for refurbishment



Defence Attaches at new Admin Building

Project Budget

The customer (Albanian MoD) required demilitarisation at the fastest rate commensurate with capacity, safety and the environment. The only donor required the grant to be evenly ‘spread’ throughout the period through a series of annual grants.

Despite the efforts of the Albanian Delegation to NATO and others, the only financial contributor was the US, which has provided \$7.8M (appr 5.7M EUR). US Department of State Bureau of Political-Military Affairs Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement (PMWRA) have indicated that the Aug 2013 grant will be the final grant although the period of performance was recently extended to 31 December 2014. The grant will be used at MoD’s priorities to assist with the remaining demilitarisation of ammunition and SALW. and for the necessary investments to support the longer term plans for the MoD’s enduring demilitarisation facility.

The ULP Mjekes facility now has spare capacity that in principle could be used as a regional demilitarisation facility. This would leverage donor investment made to date and could provide a cost effective option for the disposal of certain types of munitions from the region. A pilot to demonstrate the political and administrative commitment to process surplus ammunition is being managed by NSPA. A relatively small quantity (18 tonnes) of cannon ammunition from Montenegro is due to be processed at Mjekes in October 2014 under this project.

Summary

The Trust Fund continues to support demilitarisation and essential maintenance at ULP Mjekes within available funding. This has made a significant contribution to the MoD’s overall programme over the period 2010 - 2014.

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http://www.nspa.nato.int/Demil/news_e.htm