

NATO PARTNERSHIP FOR PEACE TRUST FUND PROJECT IN SERBIA – GENERATING EMPLOYMENT FOR WOMEN

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The NATO Partnership for Peace Trust Fund has sponsored two projects in Serbia. The first project successfully destroyed 27.000 Small and Light Weapons in Čačak, in 2003.

The second project in Serbia is reaching its peak by demilitarizing 1.250.000 mines up to date, from the total stockpile of 1.380.000 antipersonnel landmines. Mines are subjected to the disassembly by using reverse engineering methods at the Ministry of Defense Technical Repair Bureau in Kragujevac (TRZK), central Serbia. High explosives recovered from the anti-personnel landmines are being downgraded to explosives for the civilian use at “Prva Iskra” Barič explosive factory and “Trayal” Kruševac. The final 140 tonnes of explosives will no longer have a potential for killing or maiming, instead it will find its use in road building, the mining and the oil industry, thus benefiting further economic development of Serbia. Over 1.000 tonnes of metal and plastic from the mine components are also converted to civilian products from which the local communities greatly benefit. All phases of the demilitarization will successfully be finished by the end of May 2007. Both projects were initiated under South Eastern Europe Initiative of the NATO because Serbia has only recently become a PfP member.

The NATO PfP projects in Serbia provided much needed employment for the Technical-Repair Bureaus of the Serbian Defense Sector, located in the regions of Serbia that yet need to be more evenly developed as well as to the other production facilities with capacities for demilitarization or recycling. This came at the time when considerable downsizing posed serious challenges before them.

It was estimated that over 500 people have been involved with the project to demilitarize the anti-personnel landmines in Serbia, either directly or indirectly at different phases of the process, be it in the supporting or executing role, for various periods of time.

The anti-personnel landmines demilitarization project in Serbia directly engaged 160 personnel for the period of 27 months. In Kragujevac alone, 80 workers have continually been employed within the project, for the period of 27 months on a day to day basis. With the support personnel, the number exceeds 100. The two explosive factories employed another 60 workers on a part time basis.

The ongoing NATO PfP project in Serbia owes much of its success to the qualified and dedicated work force where majority are women.



“We are proud to work as one”. Part of the women team in Kragujevac



Mrs. Biserka Garić, mother of 2, a qualified pyro-technian with 33 years of experience at work.



Mrs. Živka Jovanović (front), a mother of one, qualified pyro-technician with 21 years of work experience. Precision and team work in operating of a hydraulic press



Mrs. Sunčica Đurić, mother of two, 27 years of work experience. A respirator mask hides a smile. A precise feminine approach to work, resulting with dedication, discipline, thoroughness at every step, radiate throughout the project.

WHAT DO THE MEN SAY?

Lt.Col. Draško Milosavljević. Head of Production at TRZ Kragujevac: *„The women are very good performers. They are focussed, cautious and safety aware and we have absolute trust in their quality of work! We owe much of our success to them.*

From the project workforce at TRZ Kragujevac, 60 % are women, each in average with 20 years of work experience in working with ammunition and pyrotechnics. From the workforce employed at the explosive factories about 20 % are women, mostly engaged in the research, development and quality control. TRZ Kragujevac traditionally employs a large number of women and from the total number of employees, 50 % are women.

Women perform some of the most challenging tasks and are trusted with most responsible duties in the NATO PfP project in Serbia.

Women are employed at all phases of anti-personnel landmines demilitarization in Kragujevac, except in the destruction of explosives or components by open burning or open detonation or extensive field work.

Mira



Mrs. Mirjana Milojević, a senior engineer at TRZ Kragujevac.

Mira is one of the key pyrotechnical engineers in Kragujevac, with the background in mechanical engineering and ammunition technology. She was tasked with the development and application of complex machine demilitarization technologies in the project. The solutions she developed worked superbly; up to the highest standard and most importantly they were safe.

She put in hundreds of hours working out a myriad of details. No one knows better from Mira, that the devil is in the detail when working with explosives. Her colleagues would all say “we trust Mira with our lives!”. Mira is a mother of 3 and a very modest woman. Outside of her workplace in Kragujevac, no one would ever guess she is one of the top ammunition experts in Serbia! She takes great pride in having the work with the ammunition and explosives done at the end of the day, but most of all - in seeing that all of her colleagues return home from the production halls every day safe!

WHAT DO THE MEN SAY?

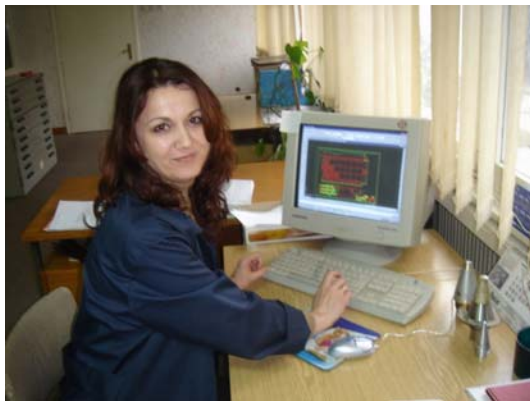


Fedja and Mira. A team with a proven track record. "There is no ammunition or technology issue that we can not successfully handle together!"

Engineer Fedja Stojanovic: *"women engineers are not just our peers, they are colleagues with whom we work hand in hand and in whom we trust"*

"Quality of their work and their expertise is not just equal to any of the men engineers – in many cases they present challenges to us and we have to work hard if we don't want to fall behind. We are all engineers, but we are so grateful for the feminine approach and sense our fellow engineers – the women bring to the pyrotechnics and explosive technology work in Kragujevac!"

Jasmina



Mrs. Jasmina Kovačević, a mother of 2, is a mechanical engineer majoring in ammunition technology, with 15 years of work experience. She is one of the key technologists in Kragujevac. When one type of anti-personnel landmines was characterized as potentially unsafe for transport and handling, Jasmina soon developed, together with her colleagues a quick solution, meaning safety for everyone involved. She projected and proof tested a new explosive packaging saving the day. Her solution worked superbly and most importantly it was 100 % safe.

Rajna



Mrs. Rajna Milosavljević is a qualified pyrotechnician and a mother of 2, with 25 year of experience in working with ammunition. For the last 25 years, she worked shoulder by shoulder with the men at most sensitive operations in ammunition handling and maintenance. She operates specialized purpose made machines. Rajna is due to retire later this year.

More than 50 highly customized, purpose made machines or special tools have been designed and are used within the NATO PfP anti-personnel landmines demilitarization project in Kragujevac. Such tools were essential for the productivity, efficiency and were always designed with safety features in mind. "Prva Iskra" Barič explosive factory, developed technology for recycling of the explosives. The machines and technology developed for the NATO PfP Trust Fund project, would continue to serve future demilitarization efforts in Serbia.