

**UKRAINE:
RESUMPTION OF SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS DESTRUCTION**

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From L to R:

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A contract for the demilitarization of 54,502 Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW), including Assault Rifles, Heavy Machine Guns, Rocket-propelled Grenade Launchers and Handguns, was signed between NAMSA, the Ukraine Ministry of Defence and the State Enterprise Ukroboronleasing (UOL) in Kiev on Friday 11 December 2009. This is a vital element of the NATO PfP Trust Fund project for the destruction of MANPADS, SALW and conventional ammunition in Ukraine.

The contract was signed by Mr S Novosyolov, Acting Director of the Ministry of Defence Economics Department, and Mrs H Levkivska, General Director of Ukroboronleasing, in the presence of the Head of the NAMSA Project Office in Ukraine.

This marks the resumption of the destruction process, by which Ukraine has committed to destroy 400,000 SALW as part of the project, which was suspended in April 2008 after 132,000 weapons had been destroyed. In addition, Ukraine has committed to offer the balance of 212,000 weapons for destruction in 2010, although this has yet to be ratified by the Government of Ukraine.

The continuation of this phase of the project followed extensive and delicate negotiations between several Ukraine Government Ministries, the Lead Nation, NAMSA and the European Union, who is the main donor for the SALW destruction component of the project. It marks a further constructive step forward in joint Ukraine-NATO efforts to address the threat from the large stockpiles of surplus weapons and unserviceable ammunition that exist on the territory of Ukraine.