



CENTRE FOR SECURITY COOPERATION

## Cooperative Security Environment with Focus on Arms Control Pillar

**“Physical Security and Stockpile Management Seminar”**

**CSE-B1-S-17**

**06-09 November 2017, Rakitje, Zagreb  
and Potkop Ammunition Storage,  
Trbounje, Republic of Croatia**

### **Introduction**

The aim of this Seminar was to elaborate further on the possibilities regarding a comprehensive capacity building programme aiming to raise national capacities as well as national ownership. The event provided a forum for the countries of the region to discuss problematic issues in and possible solutions in capacity building as well as to reveal further possible areas of enhancement. The focus was on the best practices and examples were given on some of the less appropriate ones. A discussion on the best practices was reinforced by a site visit to one of the most advanced, model-like facilities of the region, the Potkop Ammunition Storage Site in Trbounje.

The event was organized by RACVIAC and financially supported by the Federal Republic of Germany.

It consisted of two parts: one-and-a-half day was devoted to the theoretical discussion, and one day to a site visit.

On the first, theoretical day (07<sup>th</sup> November) as well as on the last day (09<sup>th</sup> November) the event was organized in the form of a Seminar. It was attended by 27 participants, lecturers and RACVIAC staff. RACVIAC Members that attended the event came from the following countries: AL (3), BA (2), HR (1), ME (2), MK (2), RS (2), and SI (3).

On the second day (08<sup>th</sup> November) a site visit to the Potkop Ammunition Storage Site (Trbounje) took place. This facility is the most advanced, model-like facility in the region. A detailed introduction was given on the safety and security measures as well as about the Site itself. One of the storages was shown to the visitors on the occasion.

### **Execution**

The Seminar was opened with a Welcome address by RACVIAC Director Ambassador Haydar Berk who pointed out that the safe storage and disposal of surplus, ageing weapons and munitions is a matter of serious concern for the South East European (SEE) region as well as for the whole world. He went on to say that RACVIAC is devoted to assist in recognizing the capacities as well as the shortcomings that each country possesses in this field, and to facilitate the sharing of experiences, thus contributing to the enhancement of regional cooperation and assistance for the benefit of the SEE region as a whole. The Ambassador said that this year's topic was designed to take the participants back to the 'field', to the storage places, in order to be better able to elaborate on the capacity building issues related to them. Special gratitude was

extended to the Federal Republic of Germany for its sponsorship.



*Welcome address by Ambassador Haydar Berk,  
Director of RACVIAC*

The Welcome address was followed by a very comprehensive introductory presentation by the moderator of the event, Mr Blaž Mihelič (ITF Enhancing Human Security), on PSSM in general, including the safety and security principles, systems, and standards. He elaborated in detail on the good and poor practices. He also pointed out that stockpiles in the region are at a reasonable level but that there are still problems with special types of ammunition surpluses. Therefore, physical stockpile management still presents an issue. Mr Mihelič highlighted the importance of a comprehensive approach.

Next to address the audience was Mr Andrew Grantham from the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining who provided an overview of the International Ammunition Technical Guidelines (IATG). He explained the importance of IATG and the ways how it can be used to improve the sites. Furthermore, he emphasized the need to establish national standards.

In the afternoon the introductory presentations were followed by more concrete examples and case studies on how to meet the international standards and set up national ones. Also, further examples of good and poor practices were presented and elaborated on.

The afternoon part was opened by Mr Arben Kotobelli, UNDP-SEESAC, who reviewed the process of disposal of excess weapons and surplus ammunition in the

Republic of Albania over the course of the last fifteen years as a result of which it eliminated 102,765 tons of ammunition between 2009 and 2017 within the framework of the Demilitarization Program and destroyed 141 000 SALW (Small Arms and Light Weapons). He highlighted the keys to Albanian success.

Ms Tamara Svircev, UNDP-SEESAC, shared with the audience the practical experiences and the lessons learned by SEESAC in upgrading the Security of SALW and Ammunition Storage Infrastructure in SEE. She emphasized the importance of a desired outcome at a reasonable cost and that of a holistic approach. She pointed out the preconditions for a successful intervention. She also touched upon the International Small Arms Control Standards (ISACS), a tool developed by UN. ISACS and IATG are mutually reinforcing and can be cross-referenced where appropriate.

Mr François Garraux (Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (CH)), provided an overview of the Swiss Initiative on the Safe and Secure Management of Ammunition (SSMA). He explained the relevance of life-cycle management of ammunition and how crucial it is to re-address it. He also pointed out the global challenges. The ultimate aim is to achieve a common understanding of a comprehensive approach towards sustainable management of ammunition in accordance with the international norms and standards. International standards should be transformed into national ones, he underlined.

The first day was closed by Mr Andrei Sarban (OSCE BA), who gave an insight into SALW and CA (Conventional Ammunition) Stockpile Management issues in Bosnia and Herzegovina. He described OSCE's support to Bosnia and Herzegovina that has resulted in the upgrading of four prospective weapon storage sites. He elaborated on the demilitarization process between 2006 and 2016. A lot has been achieved, he said, but there are still 10 000 tons of ammunition to be disposed of. He pointed out the efforts and achievements of Bosnia and Herzegovina, significant element of which were the creation of a

National Strategy on SALW, the improved legal framework, and training.

On the second working day a site visit was conducted at the Potkop Ammunition Storage Site (Trbounje). The welcome extended to the participants by the Commander of the Site and a detailed presentation on the safety and security measures as well as of the equipment was followed by a visit to one of the storages.

On the third working day the theoretical part as well as the Seminar itself was closed with an evaluation session.



*Site visit to Potkop Ammunition Storage Site, Trbounje*

*Compiled by CSE Pillar*  
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