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UK Delegation to the OSCE

FSC Chairmanship's Co-ordinator for Projects on SALW
Colonel Steve Hartnell

SALW Project Update to the 39th Joint Plenary Meeting of the Forum for Security Co-operation and Permanent Council on 17th June 2009

Mr Chairman,

During the 36th Joint Meeting of the FSC/PC on 29th October 2008, the Minister of Defence of the Republic of Cyprus, H.E. Costas Papacostas made a request to the OSCE for assistance with the destruction of 324 surplus man-portable air-defence systems (MANPADS). Following consultations with a number of Delegations an assessment and project development visit was conducted in Cyprus in March 2009 by representatives of the FSC Support Section, the UK and the USA. The aim of the visit was to evaluate the situation on the ground, assess existing national capacities and to define a destruction programme.

I am pleased to be able to report that the destruction phase of the programme was implemented in Cyprus during the period 9-12 June 2009 with assistance from experts from the USA and UK. On 12 June 2009 a ceremony was held in the Republic of Cyprus to mark the conclusion of the destruction of the 324 MANPADS. Representatives of all OSCE participating States were invited by the Republic of Cyprus to observe the destruction process; the Greek OSCE Chairmanship, the FSC Chairperson and a number of pS attended the ceremony. The FSC Support Section will distribute a final Project report and associated documentation to pS.

I would like to thank the FSC Support Section and all those pS that provided assistance, both during the project development, and the implementation phases of this task. I stand ready to assist any pS that either wishes to seek OSCE assistance with future SALW projects, or to become engaged actively in helping the OSCE deliver practical assistance to SALW projects in our Region.

Thank you Mr Chairman.