

Fact Sheet
Office of the Spokesman
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Update on U.S. Efforts to Destroy Excess Small Arms/Light Weapons Worldwide

Many conflicts in recent history have been fueled by small arms and light weapons such as assault rifles, grenade launchers, and mortars. Their proliferation destabilizes countries and regions around the globe. The United States takes this international security and humanitarian threat seriously.

▣ \$58 million: Since 2001, the United States has provided \$58 million worldwide for weapons destruction programs, making it the world's leading donor.

▣ 1 million weapons: U.S.-funded weapons destruction programs have now eliminated more than one million small arms/light weapons, which have a caliber of less than 100 mm. U.S.-supported survey teams often discover caches of these weapons in unsecured stockpiles or simply abandoned. The weapons are destroyed using saws, heavy industrial shears, or other techniques that render them permanently unusable.

▣ 21,000 MANPADS: U.S.-funded programs have also destroyed more than 21,000 man-portable air defense systems (MANPADS). Commonly known as shoulder-fired anti-aircraft missiles, MANPADS have been used by terrorists and insurgents to attack military and civilian aircraft. See the related Fact Sheet, "The MANPADS Menace," at www.state.gov/t/pm/rls/fs/53558.htm.

▣ 90 million pieces of ammunition: Munitions pose a grave danger if stored improperly. Occasionally munitions depots spontaneously detonate, with terrible consequences for nearby communities. Since 2001, U.S.-funded programs have eliminated over 90 million pieces of at-risk ammunition.

▣ In 25 countries: The United States has supported weapons destruction programs in 25 countries on four continents: Afghanistan, Albania, Angola, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, El Salvador, Guinea, Honduras, Lesotho, Liberia, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Philippines, Romania, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Serbia, Sudan, Suriname, Tajikistan, Togo, Uganda, and Ukraine.

▣ Ensuring U.S. weapons aren't part of the problem: The U.S. has comprehensive laws and regulations that control the export of defense articles and services and require registration and licensing of manufacturers, exporters, and

brokers. For more information, visit the website of the Directorate of Defense Trade Controls at www.pmddtc.state.gov.

To learn more about ongoing United States' weapons destruction efforts, visit the Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement's website at www.state.gov/t/pm/wra and consult the related Fact Sheet, "Actions by the United States to Stem the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons," at www.state.gov/t/pm/rls/fs/67700.htm.

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