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SUBJECT: UKRAINE: LAUNCH OF NATO PFP TRUST FUND PROJECT FOR ELIMINATION OF MANPADS, SA/LW, AND MUNITIONS

REF: A. KIEV 2279

B. KIEV 2249

C. KIEV 2207

D. KIEV 2190

Classified By: Acting Political Counselor George Kent for reasons 1.4(b),d)

1. (U) Summary: The NATO Pfp Trust Fund project to eliminate MANPADS, small arms/light weapons, and excess munitions began June 20 with the ceremonial destruction of two MANPADS before an audience of government officials and media. Actual operations are expected to begin at the Shostka site in northeastern UKRAINE during the week of June 26 at an estimated pace of 40-50 MANPADS missiles destroyed per day. Publicity surrounding the event helped to counter the recent anti-NATO agitation carried out on the Crimean peninsula (reftels) by pro-Russian Ukrainian political parties and groups. The Ministry of Defense must still put in place procedures and arrangements to destroy small arms/light weapons and excess munitions. End summary.

2. (U) DATT and PolOff participated in June 20 ceremonies to mark the start of the USG-led NATO Pfp Trust Fund project to destroy 1,000 MANPADS (Man Portable Air Defense Systems), 400,000 small arms/light weapons (SA/LW), and 133,000 tons of excess munitions. The Trust Fund has accumulated more than U.S. \$5 million, of which USG contributed \$2.142 million, or more than halfway to the total projected Phase I project cost of \$9.843 million. DATT and PolOff also participated in a June 19 "Joint Seminar on Destruction Technologies."

3. (U) NATO International Staff Arms Control and Coordination Section Chief Michael Miggins and Pfp and Cooperation Programs Chief Susan Pond led a five-person delegation from NATO headquarters (note: Pond was the senior person at the



June 20 ceremony, since Miggins could not remain in Kiev the additional day). Program manager Bulent Tudes from the NATO Maintenance and Supply Agency (NAMSA), implementer of the

Ukrainian Trust Fund project, gave a presentation on other NAMSA projects at the seminar and attended the Trust Fund opening ceremony. MFA Arms Control and Military-Technical Cooperation Director Volodymyr Belashov also attended. Other participants in one or both events included Kiev-based diplomats and military attaches of NATO members (Bulgaria, Slovakia, Slovenia, UK, and Austria) and visiting officials (from Germany, Lithuania, and Russia). Private business and NGO representatives also participated.

4. (U) After making opening and closing remarks at the June 19 seminar, Deputy Defense Minister Volodymyr Tereshchenko traveled by ground to the MANPADS destruction site in the town of Shostka (located 50 miles from the UKRAINE-Russia border in Sumy region) to greet the officials, members of the press, and others who traveled by helicopter to witness the destruction of the first two MANPADS by the project. (Note: Twelve additional MANPADS, not to be counted against the 1,000 total, were destroyed in trials in late 2005 to determine the best destruction procedure.) He described the day's program and then showed a short film of the destruction procedures that emphasized measures to maintain safety and accountability of the missiles (Note: Pond is coordinating with the Ukrainian MOD to obtain a copy of the film to post to NATO's website.) After the film, participants proceeded to the demolition site, saw a set of two missiles being unpacked from a crate, then heard the explosion either from a safe distance or in a nearby bunker. Pond initiated the blasting device to set off the explosion.

5. (U) The Kiev-based NATO Documentation and Information Center (NIDC) ensured good press coverage of both the June 19 signing of a contract between NAMSA and MOD and the project kick-off June 20. Channel Five and Tonis television covered the events; radio and print journalists were also present. We congratulated the Ukrainian government and NATO and thanked responsible officials during the June 19 contract signing. On June 20, during an impromptu media briefing, we emphasized that the USG undertook the responsibility to be Trust Fund lead nation out of genuine friendship for UKRAINE and concern that the existence of such large stockpiles posed a safety and security threat, particularly to the Ukrainian people but also to the region. Tereshchenko and Pond, responding to journalists' other questions, underscored that the project was concrete evidence of the benefits of UKRAINE-NATO cooperation.

6. (SBU) Pond has suggested creating a second media event

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around the destruction of the last of the 1,000 MANPADS scheduled for elimination under the Trust Fund. Such an event could provide greater momentum for the Ministry of Defense to complete preparations for the SA/LW and munitions destruction, if not already under way by then, and help attract additional contributions to the Trust Fund. Pond said a NATO Assistant Secretary General might visit for such

an event. When we met Pond at MFA's Embassy in Kiev, Ambassador might be interested, his schedule permitting, in attending a ceremony to mark destruction of the 1,000th MANPADS, Belashov speculated that the Defense Minister, Foreign Minister, or both might also join Ambassador.



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7. (U) NAMSAs in-country project manager Steve Brown later informed us that MOD is now transporting MANPADS to the Shostka site. After data on the missile serial numbers have been verified, actual destruction operations should begin during the week of June 26. NAMSAs and MOD expect the operation to proceed at a rate of 40-50 missiles destroyed per day.

8. (C) Comment: With the recent events surrounding the Sea Breeze exercise in Crimea and public opinion polls showing two-thirds of the Ukrainian public opposed to NATO membership, the Trust Fund project's inauguration comes at a propitious moment. Party of Regions leader Viktor Yanukovich has advised us in past meetings that NATO should provide concrete benefits and has favorably recalled an earlier NATO Trust Fund that destroyed anti-personnel land mines in Donetsk when he was Donetsk governor. The positive media coverage of Trust Fund events helped to underscore that NATO is not about aggressive or hostile military actions but instead contributes to strengthening regional security. The Trust Fund was also the perfect answer to the hostile propaganda directed by Regions members against U.S. military and NATO contributions and interactions with the Ukrainian military.

9. (U) Visit Embassy Kiev's classified website:
www.state.gov/p/eur/kiev.
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