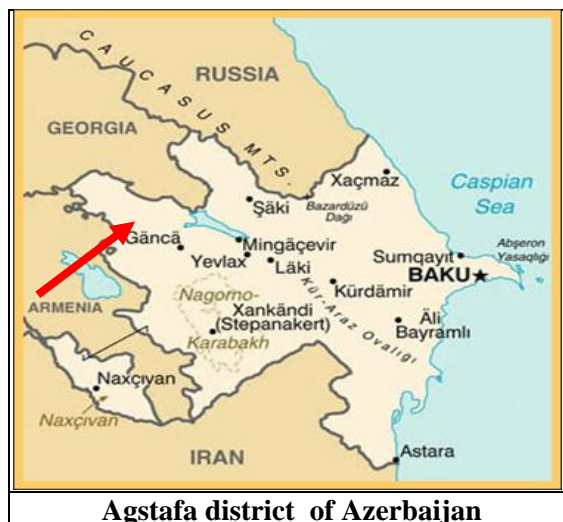


THE UXO CLEARANCE PROJECT IN AZERBAIJAN TO BE EXTENDED FOR 16 MONTHS

The joint NATO and ANAMA project on the identification and destruction of all surface and immediate subsurface UXO and explosive hazards in the former military base at Saloglu village, Agstafa district of Azerbaijan, started in January 2006. The Project also covers checking, clearance and removal of stockpiled UXO located at the towns of Agstafa and Poylu, Agstafa district of Azerbaijan.

The military ammunition warehouse located in Agstafa region, consisting of 138 bunkers, was the largest soviet warehouses in the South-Caucasus region. In 1991, when Azerbaijan regained independence, the warehouse was destroyed by the soviet army before departing. As the result of the explosion thousands pieces of UXO were scattered over a large area of 4,400 hectares continuously posing a serious humanitarian, socio-economic and environmental threat to the local population. Since the explosion, 152 UXO-related accidents with 32 people killed were reported.



Agstafa district of Azerbaijan

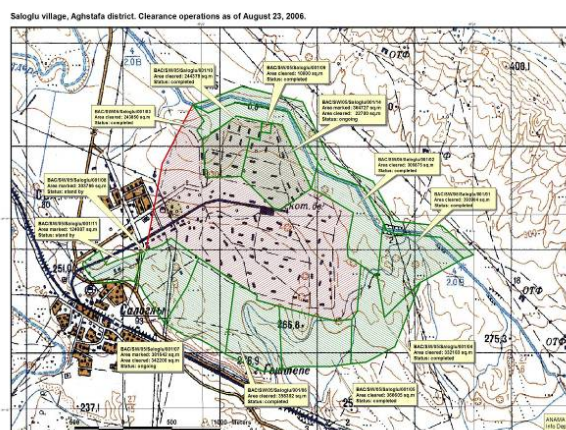
The Saloglu Project envisages the clearance of 568 hectares of the most contaminated land in 16 months. The Project is supported by the number of donor countries such as Azerbaijan, Turkey, Norway, Luxembourg, Finland, Slovenia, Switzerland, USA, Australia and UNDP. The Lead Nation for the Saloglu Project is Turkey. Since the beginning of the Project in January 2006 - 526 hectares have been cleared, 215,785 UXO have been located and 72,664 UXO destroyed.

After the practical implementation of the Project started, it has become clear that the problem is more serious than it seemed initially and its solution would be more difficult than it was initially considered by international experts during their assessment missions to Azerbaijan.

The main challenge is that the real level of contamination at these areas is much higher and the problem is more complicated than it had been anticipated. As a consequence the clearance of the land is to be more difficult and time-consuming. Therefore, the Project was revised and the new proposal covering revealed aspects of the problem was developed.



The reassessment mission to Saloglu comprised of the NATO/NAMSA experts and ANAMA specialists have been organized. The results of the mission confirmed the necessity of launching the Second Phase of Saloglu Project to provide the required safety level of the clearance in accordance with the international standards.

Number of meetings and negotiations in Luxemburg and Baky involving the NATO/NAMSA and ANAMA specialists finished with the acceptance of the addendum to the Saloglu Project Proposal which stipulates the new work schedule for ANAMA. All the territory intended for clearance has been divided into two zones in accordance with the level and complicacy of the impact. The First Phase of Saloglu Project covers the surface and subsurface clearance of the less contaminated Green Zone and the surface clearance of the heavily contaminated Red Zone.



Red and Green Zones in Saloglu area



Amended contract envisages the Second Phase of the Saloglu Project which will cover the subsurface clearance operations in Red Zone with funding requirements of EUR 440,000. The Second Phase is expected to start in June 2007 and extend for another 16 months. The Government of Azerbaijan being deeply concerned with the situation in Saloglu has covered 10% of the total required sum (EUR 131,000). We would like to express our deepest appreciation to the Government of Bulgaria contributed EUR 15,000 euros and to Turkey, the Lead Nation, for its contribution in amount of EUR 50,000.

	
<p>May 2007: last steps of clearance in Green Zone. On the border between UXO-free area and contaminated one</p>	<p>Red Zone: surface clearance is finished but territory is still waiting to be totally cleared</p>

The Government of Azerbaijan makes every effort to find donors for the Second Phase of the Project and is inviting other nations to kindly consider possible input.

ANAMA has proposed to the EAPC meeting on 7-8 February, 2007 to combine two NAMSA projects in Azerbaijan – Clearance of Unexploded Ordnances in Saloglu and Mélange Disposal Project in Alat by using the Alat calcium nitrate as a soil enhancer as part of the landscaping and remediation process at Saloglu. This practical and symbolic gesture was fully supported by NAMSA and well received by the EAPC.

Following talks between ANAMA and Azerbaijan Academy of Sciences and the subsequent approval of the Azerbaijan Deputy Prime Minister and Cabinet of Ministers, it has been agreed that recovered calcium nitrate from Alat will be used as a soil enhancer as a part of land remediation following the clearance of the Saloglu UXOs. NATO IS and the Lead Nations of the Saloglu Project enthusiastically received and fully supported this initiative. It is planned to hold significant media event for the inaugural spraying what will be an outstanding cooperative conclusion to the Azerbaijani projects.

<p align="center">Saloglu and Mélange Projects: Joint efforts to give first fruitful effect</p>	
	
<p align="center">First farming in the released area in Saloglu...</p>	