

RUAG hand grenades possibly found in Syria

Berne, 2 September 2018. It is reported that hand grenades manufactured by RUAG have been found in Syria. Similar cases came to light in 2012 and 2016. These grenades could be from the batch delivered to the United Arab Emirates in 2003/2004, which may well, by way of a breach of contractual warranties, have found their way to Syria. The SECO investigated the incident in 2012, and actions were taken by the Federal Council. RUAG has not supplied any hand grenades to Arab countries since 2003/2004.

On 2 September 2018, the newspaper “Sonntagsblick” ran a report on hand grenades in Syria. The hand grenades that have now come to light may have been manufactured by RUAG and they may be from the consignment supplied to the UAE in 2003/2004 and may have been transported from there to Syria. RUAG condemns the passing on of hand grenades by its customers, which is contrary to the law and to their obligations.

However, no final assessment of this state of affairs will be possible until the series numbers or other details identifying the grenades beyond doubt are known. Physical examination of the material would be required to obtain detailed information. The material in this case cannot be conclusively identified on the basis of a photograph.

RUAG sees the following points as important:

- Weapons have no place in the hands of terrorists. It is for that reason that RUAG supplies war material only to the armies or security forces of states to which their supply is permitted by Swiss export regulations. The SECO’s written consent is required in each individual case.
- There was indeed a case in 2003/2004 of a RUAG customer having made false end-user declarations and having failed to comply with the requirements it had accepted. The SECO investigated this incident, and actions were taken by the Federal Council. RUAG fully and actively supports the Federal Council’s actions. Further information may be found in the SECO’s official press release of 21 September 2012:
<https://www.seco.admin.ch/seco/de/home/seco/nsb-news/medienmitteilungen-2012.msg-id-46075.html>.
- RUAG strictly adheres to Swiss export regulations, both at its Swiss locations and at its locations abroad. In doing this, RUAG liaises closely with the SECO. RUAG has for many years had its own Trade Compliance Officers in place in all its divisions and at Group level. Checks are also carried out by the Swiss Federal Audit Office.
- RUAG has not delivered any hand grenades to Arab countries since 2003/2004. No similar cases have occurred since the delivery to the UAE in 2003/2004, which is a matter of record.

In 2012, hand grenades from among those supplied in 2003/2004 were found to be in the possession of the rebels of the Free Syrian Army (SRF Rundschau, 15 August 2012). In

2016, it became known that RUAG hand grenades had been seized from Cendrim R., who was sentenced to imprisonment in Turkey for terrorism (Sonntagsblick, 31 July 2016).

This press release may be found here: <https://www.ruag.com/en/news>

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