

Russia to Eliminate All Chemical Weapons by End of Next Year



Moscow, October 27 (RHC)-- Russia says it plans to eliminate all of its remaining chemical weapons by the end of 2017 -- one year earlier than previously scheduled.

Colonel General Valery Kapashin, who is the head of Russia's Federal Department for the Safe Storage and Destruction of Chemical Weapons, said on Thursday that a decision had been made to eliminate the country's chemical stockpiles by the end of next year, Russia's Interfax news agency reported.

The report added that the destruction was to be carried out at only one facility, near the settlement of Kizner in Udmurtia, located in western Russia. Back in August, Kapashin had declared that some 94 percent of the country's chemical weapon stocks had been eliminated.

In April, the official announced that over 37,000 tons of chemical warfare agents, around 93 percent of the stocks, had been destroyed to date, promising that Russia would "get rid of" the remaining stock by December 2018.

The elimination of the stockpiles began in December 2002. By the end of 2014, Moscow announced that it had destroyed 84.7 percent of its air-delivered chemical munitions.

In January 1993, Russia signed the Chemical Weapons Convention, which bans the production,

development, possession, sharing or use of chemical weapons. At the time, Moscow declared that it possessed some 40,000 tons of toxic ammunition, including nerve agents Sarin, Soman and VX-type chemical agents.

Moscow says it uses completely safe technologies to eliminate chemical weapons, and since the commencement of the elimination process 14 years ago, no single emergency situation has occurred during the processes of destroying the toxic substances.

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