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Russian Grenade Launchers Roll off Jordanian Assembly Line

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Russian RPG-32 grenade launchers being manufactured at a new plant in Jordan

Jordan began producing Russian shoulder-fired grenade launchers using technology provided by Rostec, the company said Thursday.

Rostec chief Sergei Chemezov and Jordan's King Abdullah II jointly opened a plant that will assemble the RPG-32 launcher from knockdown kits.

The project is Rostec's first technology transfer to the kingdom, the company said. A Rostec subsidiary, Bazalt, developed the multi-use grenade launcher at the commission of King Abdullah II, and Jordan contributed funds for the work.

"Our cooperation with Jordan is moving on to a new stage," Chemezov said in a statement.

Russia earlier supplied Jordan with weapons and military equipment such as battle helicopters, firearms and other types of grenade launchers. The exports total value is $40

million as of this month, Rostec said.

The Jordanian king shot a grenade launcher after the grand opening and said it worked fine, Lenta.ru reported from the scene.

Chemezov said the weapon was the world's first grenade launcher that could fire two calibers of grenades. The larger projectiles are designed to pierce armor, while the smaller ones aim to destroy personnel.

The U.S. Army in 2009 listed the weapon as part of its intelligence brief entitled "Asymmetrical Threats to Current and Future U.S. Forces."

The plant — built and owned by Jordan's Jadara Equipment & Defense Systems — sits just outside the kingdom's capital, Amman. Russia and Jordan originally planned to set up a joint venture to operate the business.

Talks about the project started in 2007.

The plant has the capacity to make 60,000 units annually. Bazalt chief Vladimir Porkhachyov said in February that the plan was to supply Jordan with enough kits to manufacture 20,000 launchers this year, Interfax reported at the time.

The weapon's effective range is 700 meters, Lenta.ru reported.

Chemezov said a representative of the Libyan government contacted him at the ceremony, saying the country wants to resume buying Russian weapons, RIA Novosti reported.

Rostec is a state corporation that the government set up in 2007 in a bid to boost high-tech production by bringing various industrial companies and defense contractors under its umbrella.

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