

Russia says it's cut chemical stockpile

by UPI

MOSCOW -- Russian officials said Tuesday the country has destroyed more than a quarter of its chemical weapons arsenal, amounting to 10,500 tons of material. The government claim, reported by the RAI Novosti news agency, came from Lt. Gen. Valery Kapashin, head of Russia's Federal Department for the Safe Storage and Destruction of Chemical Weapons. Kapashin said the move to destroy the chemical weapons was the third part of a four-phase commitment to ultimately remove Russia's entire chemical weapons stockpile of 40,000 tons by 2012. The country is a signatory to the Chemical Weapons Convention, a 1997 pact designed to eliminate the world's stockpiles. "With the proper financing we will certainly be able to fulfill all our obligations (under the convention)," Kapashin told Novosti, which reported that Russia has committed \$7.2 billion to implement the stockpile reduction program.

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