

Scraping the Barrel

The Trade in Surplus Ammunition

Introduction

Small arms and light weapons need ammunition. Government forces and armed groups cannot wage battle or train their troops without a sustained supply of ammunition, and its availability determines the type of weapons used in most of the conflicts around the world.

In this regard, surplus¹ represents the most convenient source of readily available supplies. Surplus ammunition transfers offer pragmatic solutions at both ends of the procurement chain. Supplying countries can reduce potentially obsolete national stockpiles, benefit from revenues from surplus sales, and reinvest the proceeds to modernize their arsenals. Buyers benefit from cheaper, compatible equipment obtained via quick and flexible procurement channels.

Selling and purchasing surplus ammunition are established practices that are not exclusive to developing or conflict-ridden countries. The term 'surplus' should not be systematically associated with old, rusting, or poor-quality items. Indeed, numerous national governments procure quality surplus ammunition on a regular basis.

Surplus ammunition is nevertheless cheaper than new cartridges and attracts buyers and end users with lower purchasing capacity. Among them are poor developing states, states in conflict with urgent ammunition requirements, and even non-state armed groups. Surplus ammunition transfers meet the needs of combatants particularly well.

This *Issue Brief* focuses on the relevance of the trade in surplus ammunition to transfer controls by drawing on a selection of recent case studies. The first section explains the significance of the international surplus ammunition business, with examples of surplus transfers involving Europe, the United States, Afghanistan, and Iraq. These examples are drawn from recent open-source reports. The second section discusses more detailed case studies of surplus transfers in African conflict zones—including West Africa and the Great Lakes region—that featured prominently in recent reports of the UN Groups and Panels of Experts. These examples were corroborated by additional open-source accounts and confidential documents obtained by the authors. The findings and examples discussed in this *Issue Brief* are in no way intended to imply, however, that the trade in surplus ammunition is limited to Europe and Africa.

Whenever possible, the cases reviewed disaggregate approximate volumes and values of surplus ammunition from the bulk of the weapons shipment. Most of these transfers were authorized by both the supplying and the purchasing governments—yet some were carried out in violation of applicable international law, such as legally binding embargoes or moratoria.

The presented case studies illustrate two main categories of transfers: government-to-government, and those between national agencies and governments. While transfers involving commercial actors (both as government suppliers and as transfer recipients) are less common in this selection, their

role in the surplus ammunition market is not necessarily less significant.

The main findings are as follows:

- The stockpiles of East and South-east European countries still feed a large part of the international demand for surplus ordnance, including ammunition.
- Some Western states pursue contradictory policies. They officially encourage transitioning countries to destroy their surplus stockpiles, but simultaneously procure surplus ammunition from them to support local security forces in Iraq and Afghanistan. This approach provides East and South-east European countries with a material incentive to keep and export their surpluses.
- Surplus transfers commonly involve a mix of small arms, light weapons, ammunition, and larger conventional weapons systems.
- It is difficult to determine in advance how buyers will use acquired ammunition. Countries engaged in conflicts and suffering from long-lasting political instability usually demonstrate lower standards of stockpile management, increasing the risk that ammunition will be diverted.
- In some African countries, surplus weapons are often procured regardless of calibre standards or national strategic requirements. The result is a rise in demand for appropriate—and usually surplus—ammunition.
- The significance of the surplus parameter is not sufficiently taken into account by international or regional reporting tools.

The surge of surplus

The arms cascade

Wealthy states typically procure major weapons systems every 10–20 years to renew their national small arms and light weapons arsenals. Ammunition procurement cycles tend to be shorter, however, because governments replenish supplies more often to meet training and operational requirements. Yet most governments do not adopt a systematic policy of destroying the surplus stockpiles created by their procurement initiatives. Instead, they offset the costs of modernization by selling excess defence articles or donating them to reduce storage costs (Pineo and Lumpe, 1996; Gonzalez, 2010, slide 5). The quality surplus stockpiles generated by such procurement programmes are financially attractive to poorer countries, which acquire them through sale or gift without any requirement to destroy their own existing stockpiles on a one-to-one basis. Major weapons system procurement cycles thus create a cascade of surplus weapons procurement, which consequently generates a demand for corresponding ammunition.

This trend also explains the rationale behind the recommendation that ‘any small arms identified as surplus to national requirement should, by preference, be destroyed’ (OSCE, 2000, s. IV, C1). Similarly, the UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (Programme of Action) contains explicit references to the destruction of surplus. Although the majority of its articles identifying the destruction of surpluses as an appropriate means to reduce illicit trade only refer to small arms and light weapons, the agreement also requests states to take ‘into account . . . the report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations on methods of destruction of small arms, light weapons, *ammunition* and explosives (S/2000/1092) of 15 November 2000’ (UN, 2001, s. II, art. 19; emphasis added).

Two other factors that trigger procurement are military downsizing and changes in calibre standards. Drastic troop reductions in Ukraine, for instance,

have rendered an estimated 85 per cent of the country’s former arsenal obsolete (Griffiths and Karp, 2010, p. 213). In Europe, new or aspiring NATO members are seeking to procure standardized weapons and ammunition, making their previous stockpiles of Warsaw Pact-calibre ammunition very attractive to potential importers. Even well-funded destruction initiatives such as NATO’s Partnership for Peace programme cannot compete with the financial incentive to sell surplus arms, spare the expense of storage or destruction, and contribute to government income. According to Small Arms Survey research carried out in 2006, the trade in surplus small arms and light weapons to militaries across the globe could reach 14 million units over a 50-year period—a figure that excludes millions of units of ammunition (Bevan et al., 2006, p. 7).

The global rise of small arms ammunition transfers

One of the most striking trends in transfers of small arms and light weapons over the past ten years has been an increase in the value of the documented international trade in small arms ammunition. Small-calibre cartridge (<14.5 mm) transfers reported to UN Comtrade² increased in value from USD 552 million in 2000 to USD 735 million in 2006 (Dreyfus, Marsh, and Schroeder, 2009, p.14). UN Comtrade data for 2007 indicates that the value of documented small arms ammunition transfers (small-calibre cartridges, shotgun shells, and parts) was USD 1.6 billion. For the same year, 26 countries documented exports of ammunition for small arms worth more than USD 10 million (Herron, Marsh, and Schroeder, 2010, pp. 20–22).

For the period 2006–09, the Small Arms Survey estimates that the average annual value of authorized international transfers of ammunition for small arms and light weapons was USD 4.3 billion. Of this total, small arms ammunition accounted for USD 1.8 billion and light weapons ammunition for USD 2.5 billion (Herron, Marsh, and Schroeder, 2010, p. 7). These figures undoubtedly include a

sizeable amount of surplus ammunition, although it is impossible to determine their share, as reporting tools seldom disaggregate surplus from newly manufactured ammunition.

More specifically, the *military* ammunition market involves a significant volume of cartridges used by countries that are not necessarily waging war. Regular armies and security forces procure hundreds of millions of rounds on a yearly basis simply for training purposes and peacekeeping operations. The volume of surplus ammunition transfers discussed in the following sections should be considered in this context.

Not a priority: reporting on surplus ammunition

The normative framework regulating small arms and light weapons transfers revolves around principles contained within the Programme of Action, adopted in July 2001.³ Yet despite concerted efforts from states and civil society organizations, general consensus did not include ammunition in the scope of the Programme of Action. This lacuna has prevented ammunition from gaining priority status on the international agenda. Analysis of international small arms and light weapons transfer figures has shown that it is particularly difficult to disaggregate data on ammunition from overall information on national exports. Sources that provide statistics on ammunition transfers often combine data related to small arms and light weapons with data on major conventional weapons (Herron, Marsh, and Schroeder, 2010, p. 7). The Small Arms Survey estimates that unreported authorized transactions of small arms ammunition are worth at least USD 169 million (Herron, Marsh, and Schroeder, 2010, p. 20). Little is known about the magnitude of undocumented ammunition transfers in high-intensity conflict countries such as Afghanistan, Iraq, and Somalia. Yet, as the following sections indicate, surplus ammunition may represent a substantial proportion of the cartridges fired in these conflicts.

While states and multilateral organizations may acknowledge the impor-

tance of effective surplus management,⁴ export reports and international instruments do not specifically emphasize the significance of surplus ammunition data. As a result, surplus ammunition is seldom disaggregated from the bulk of surplus weapons being transferred, and quantities are difficult to establish. The 1998 EU Code of Conduct on Arms Exports (EU, 1998) and the 2002 Wassenaar Best Practice Guidelines for Exports of Small Arms and Light Weapons (WA, 2002) do not contain operative provisions for member states to regulate transfers from stockpiles of surplus arms. The UN Register of Conventional Arms' national submission template does not request states to provide data on ammunition transfers, nor to indicate whether they are surplus (UNODA, 2006). Nor does the *EU Annual Report on Arms Exports*, which uses categories based on the Wassenaar Arrangement's Munitions List, mention surplus as a defining category (CoEU, 2009).

Surplus ammunition is only mentioned in a few arms export reporting templates, such as the one SEESAC⁵ developed to help South-east European countries comply with the reporting requirements of the EU Code of Conduct. Similarly, an assistance package template was jointly elaborated under the auspices of the Coordinating Action on Small Arms mechanism, the UN Development Programme, the UN Institute for Disarmament Research, and the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs to help member states prepare their national Programme of Action reports (UNDP, 2005). The Programme of Action reporting mechanism is voluntary, however; countries display reporting inconsistencies⁶ and seldom report their ammunition destruction data (Cattaneo and Parker, 2008).

In December 2009 UN General Assembly Resolution 64/48 launched negotiations for a legally binding Arms Trade Treaty that would establish common international standards for the transfer of conventional arms. The first rounds of negotiations, held in July 2010 and February–March 2011, did not yield agreement on whether or how ammunition would be included in the scope of the treaty.

Transferring surplus ammunition: a common practice in Western countries

Western countries often sell or donate their surplus military logistics equipment, including vehicles and aircraft, via dedicated agencies. Far from being exceptions, agencies such as the UK's Disposal Services Authority, which runs the eDisposals portal, even organize online auctions in order to identify potential customers.⁷ Likewise, states can also procure and sell surplus *ammunition*. In fact, the 2008 report of the UN Group of Governmental Experts states that '[t]he transfer of surplus conventional ammunition is a cost-efficient option for States, if the ammunition is of good quality and States abide by adequate transfer controls' (UNGA, 2008, para. 39).

In the early 1990s Germany chose to export the weapons inherited from the former East German army. This stockpile was estimated to include approximately 300,000 metric tons of ammunition, of which the German Armed Forces kept only around 14,000 tons in service. By 31 December 1993 a total of 60,500 tons of surplus ammunition had reportedly been exported (Beeck, 2008, pp. 60–61). This policy progressively changed to one of systematic surplus destruction. According to Beeck, '[s]ince 2000, no military [small arm or light weapon] categorized as surplus has been exported, even though [Germany's] interoperability within NATO would permit these sales' (Beeck, 2008, p. 53).⁸ More recently, Denmark offered surplus weapons and ammunition for sale; cold war-era items included 'various forms of ammunition' (*Copenhagen Post*, 2010).

Surplus ammunition can be transferred in the framework of standard government-to-government contracts, or regional or international military alliances. Such surplus transfers usually involve high-quality military-grade ammunition, which is cheaper to purchase rapidly from an ally's surplus stockpile than to procure from manufacturers via a lengthy tender process. In fact, NATO allies standardized their ammunition calibres to facilitate logistical procurement and to guaran-

tee interoperability. Moreover, the Ammunition Support Branch of NATO's Maintenance and Supply Agency can facilitate ammunition transactions between NATO countries to support urgent operational needs.⁹

Surplus ammunition can also be transferred under the terms of bilateral military cooperation agreements—with the latter often taking the form of unpaid assistance (Parker, 2009, pp. 65–66). For instance, in 1999 Belgium and Benin signed an Agreement of Bilateral Military Cooperation aimed at supporting Benin's contingents in UN peacekeeping operations. The terms of this agreement included the supply by Belgium of military equipment to the Beninese National Armed Forces. These procurements—involving mainly surplus equipment—were undertaken as donations, loans, or temporary transfers that were ultimately donated. In November 2009 the Belgian government announced that the agreement was due to cease on 30 June 2010 (Massouhoudou, 2009; PANAPRESS, 2009). Similarly, in 2009 and 2010 the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) received a wide range of military equipment—including several million rounds of 7.62 × 39 mm ammunition—as part of bilateral military training programmes.¹⁰

This policy has often been decried by the industry, which sees the flood of excess surplus as unfair competition undermining the trading system. Major ammunition producers have openly criticized the donation of surplus ammunition to other countries and have promoted destruction as the preferred strategy for disposing of surplus ammunition (DeClerq, 1999, p. 26; Pineo and Lumpe, 1996). To compensate for the loss of such 'niche' markets, some Western ammunition manufacturers started producing 'non-standard' or 'non-NATO' ammunition, including small-, medium-, and large-calibre rounds, mortar shells, and rocket-propelled grenade (RPG) launcher munitions destined for allied security forces in Afghanistan. In October 2010 the company ATK reportedly received additional orders worth USD 10 million for non-standard ammunition in support of its current multi-year contract with

Box 1 Why the United States is the world's largest importer of small-calibre cartridge ammunition and parts

US troops stationed in Afghanistan and Iraq have been consuming the majority of US domestically produced cartridges. While military contracts are given priority by manufacturers and importers, supplies to the large US civilian market have been squeezed. Shortages were partly compensated for by purchasing foreign—often surplus—ammunition. This is corroborated by specialized documents such as Croatia's 2009 ammunition technical assessment, which finds that 'the destruction of small arms ammunition (SAA) (<14.5 mm) calibre [sic] is not a major issue as most can be legitimately sold to the USA for reprocessing for civilian use' (UNDP Croatia, 2009, p. 7). The Florida-based company Century International Arms, for instance, presents itself as 'North America's largest importers of surplus firearms and accessories' (Century International Arms, n.d.; Allen and Edwards, 2004) and is a major interlocutor for countries wishing to export surplus ordnance to the United States (Schmitt and Young, 2011). Specialized US-based websites such as 'AIM Surplus' and 'Impact Guns' routinely advertise 'surplus military ammo' for sale from a range of countries. In 2010 the United States confirmed its role as the world's largest importer of small-calibre cartridge ammunition and parts, accounting for 29 per cent of global imports, valued at more than USD 277 million. No other country is reported to have imported more than five per cent of the global total (Herron, Marsh, and Schroeder, 2010, p. 24).

the US Army Contracting Command in Rock Island, Illinois (ATK, 2010).

Eastern Europe: a reservoir of surplus ordnance

In many states, arms manufacturers produce weapons mostly for the internal market and are directly affected by decisions concerning national defence. When drastic military reform reduces personnel numbers in Eastern European countries, national demand for ammunition drops, while manufacturers seek to maintain their output. The peak in surplus exports corresponds to a drop in national demand, with the arms industry aiming to survive by exporting whatever has not been sold to domestic forces. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, for instance, the Federation's nine armament factories report-

edly made BAM 12 million¹¹ profit on exports during the first half of 2001; the profit rose to BAM 23 million in the first half of 2003 (CSS, 2003, pp. 53–57).¹²

Recent Small Arms Survey research highlights the lack of a clear policy by which to determine what is surplus to strategic and operational ammunition requirements, and suggests that there is the desire to generate as much profit as possible from serviceable surplus equipment before a transparent system of stockpile management is introduced (Lazarevic, 2010, p. 1). Governments try to sell whatever equipment is redundant, leaving surplus destruction as the final option if no commercial opportunities remain. Croatia's long-term development plan for 2008–15 for the national forces foresees an ammunition surplus of approximately 21,000 tons, while combined national disassembling and destruction capacities are estimated at 2,000 tons per year (Bakija, Bogović, and Lončarić, 2009). In view of these figures, it is conceivable that Croatian authorities may not want to bear the financial burden of stockpiling the surplus ammunition for ten years until destruction is completed, preferring to keep trade channels as active as possible.

Much like Western states, Eastern European governments have set up private but state-controlled companies to facilitate transaction and export surplus military equipment. These companies have strong ties to the ministries of defence (MoDs) and are authorized to utilize or sell state assets, but are expected to generate income, as their profits are often taxed by national authorities.

In Albania, the MoD-based company MEICO¹³ was established in 1992. Its main task is to decrease the Albanian Armed Forces' arms and ammunition surplus through international transfers, thus creating revenue for the modernization of the MoD (Saferworld, 2005, p. 77). The company reportedly keeps a percentage of the proceeds from sales, while the remaining profit goes to the government (BICC and SEESAC, 2003, p. 23).

In Bulgaria, the Supply and Trade Agency of the MoD is responsible for foreign sales of surplus military equip-

ment via licensed arms exporters and manufacturers, such as Arsenal and Arcus. Between 2002 and 2004, however, another company—Bulgaria Metalika AB—played an instrumental role in negotiating and delivering large shipments of arms to the Government of Côte d'Ivoire (UN GoE CI, 2005; 2008). Profits are shared between the commercial companies and the MoD; the Bulgarian Parliament expects the MoD to raise its own funds to complement its annual budget (Faltas, 2010, p. 92).

Other examples are those of Serbia, where state-owned companies such as SDPR Yugoimport sell surplus arms (Griffiths, 2010, 182); Romania, where the state-owned company Romtehnica disposes of surplus military equipment;¹⁴ and Ukraine, where surplus exports are negotiated by subsidiaries of the state firm Ukrspecexport (Griffiths and Karp, 2010, p. 216) and the MoD has advertised surplus military equipment for sale on the Internet (Ukraine MoD, n.d.).

Donations and sales to Iraq and Afghanistan

A number of South-east European governments have donated ammunition to Afghan military or Iraqi security forces. These transfers helped to reduce the donors' own surplus stockpiles. According to media reports, Croatia sent USD 2 million worth of ammunition to Afghanistan in 2003 and provided 300,000 small-calibre cartridges in January 2007 (Rudovic, 2007). In 2002 Albania reportedly sent 10,000 rounds of ammunition to equip the Afghan military (Saferworld, 2005, p. 80), while in 2004 and 2005 it transferred several million cartridges to Iraqi security forces (Saferworld, 2005, p. 80). In July 2003 the Bosnian Federation MoD reportedly donated 200,000 rounds of 7.62 x 39 mm¹⁵ ammunition to the Afghan National Army. The ordnance was transported by a US Air Force aircraft from Tuzla to Afghanistan. The Bosnian MoD allegedly donated 5.7 metric tons of small-calibre cartridges to the National Army of Afghanistan from 2003 to 2007 (Kauer, 2007, p. 95). In August 2007 Montenegro reportedly

donated 250,000 small-calibre cartridges to the Afghan army (Rudovic, 2007).

In addition to donations, Iraq and Afghanistan have proven to be lucrative markets for surplus ordnance. Serbia was apparently a significant supplier of surplus small arms, light weapons, and ammunition to the Iraqi security forces in 2004, 2005, and 2006 (Griffiths, 2010, p. 198). In 2007 the Serbian government also secretly negotiated a USD 833 million deal with the Iraqi defence minister for the delivery of both new and surplus conventional weaponry and ammunition. Concerns over the quality of the equipment reduced the contract to an estimated USD 236 million in March 2008 (Moore, 2008). In Bosnia and Herzegovina, despite the MoD's June 2004 moratorium on the sale of small arms and ammunition, figures on transfers made in 2004 and 2005 show that 64,620,647 rounds of small arms ammunition were exported to final destinations, including Iraq, the Russian Federation, Switzerland, and the United States (Kauer, 2007, pp. 91, 102), allegedly with EUFOR¹⁶ oversight (Danssaert and Johnson-Thomas, 2009, p. 39; Danssaert, Cappelle, and Johnson-Thomas, 2007). Apparently a few contracts, concluded with buyers before the moratorium, were exceptionally allowed to follow through.

In 2006, at a time when most US law enforcement agencies were experiencing severe shortages of ammunition, the *Daily Telegraph* reported the Bush administration's intention to spend an estimated USD 400 million to purchase vast amounts of stockpiles of Russian-manufactured ammunition from Rosoboronexport to supply the Afghan National Army.¹⁷

In March 2008 the *New York Times* exposed a USD 300 million procurement contract involving the US-based company AEY and tens of millions of surplus, 40-year-old, Chinese-manufactured 7.62 mm rounds sourced from Albanian stockpiles. The Albanian government reportedly received USD 22 per 1,000 rounds of the ageing ammunition (Chivers, 2008). The contract awarded to AEY in January 2007 specifically permitted the trans-

fer of 'surplus' ammunition (COGR, 2008, p. 19).

Efforts to equip the Afghan security forces with weapons and ammunition have been adversely affected by limited end-user accountability (USGAO, 2007, p. 15). An examination of ammunition found in a sample of rifle magazines taken from Taliban insurgents' corpses revealed that more than half of them contained rounds with markings identical to ammunition¹⁸ that the United States had provided to Afghan government forces (Chivers, 2009).

Surplus transfers in violation of international embargoes

The massive stockpiles of surplus hardware held by several Central and Eastern European countries include small arms and light weapons ammunition that, over the years, has progressively saturated the market. Consequently, countries that seek to sell their surplus are pushed towards a 'grey zone' in which ammunition is sold in accordance with the minimum authorization requirements, neglecting standards of responsible arms transfers, such as end-user certification or post-delivery verification (Kryvonos and Kytömäki, 2010, p. 38). In addition, the variable quality of South-east European surplus ammunition also reduced the possibility of finding 'acceptable' and legitimate end users for surplus stockpiles (in accordance with the EU Code of Conduct, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe [OSCE] Guidelines, and UN sanctions) (BICC and SEESAC, 2003, p. 24).

Over the past decade, a number of shipments from Ukraine provided concrete examples. In 1999 the Ukrainian government transferred 68 tons of ammunition to Burkina Faso. The shipment was then routed to Liberia and reportedly ended up in the hands of Sierra Leone's Revolutionary United Front.¹⁹ The cargo aircraft belonged to the notorious broker Leonid Minin, who holds Ukrainian and Israeli passports (UNODC, 2010, p. 143; Chivers, 2005). In the following years, Minin was reportedly responsible for a shipment of 113 tons of Ukrainian Kalashnikov

rifles, rocket-propelled grenades, and ammunition to Liberia via Côte d'Ivoire (Traynor, 2001; Chivers, 2005). A few months later, Spanish authorities seized 20,000 crates of 7.62 mm rounds and rocket-propelled grenades—a total of 636 tons of arms—en route to Angola aboard a vessel owned by a Ukrainian company (IRIN, 2001). In June 2009 Nigerian authorities detained a Ukrainian cargo plane loaded with 20 crates of arms and ammunition, allegedly heading to Equatorial Guinea. Ukrspesexport, however, denied any involvement in the transfer (Alechenu and Fabiyi, 2009; Bennett, 2009). In 2010 the Russian newspaper *Vremya Novostei* revealed that Ukrspesexport had shipped military equipment²⁰ with a reported commercial value of USD 70 million to the Government of South Sudan (Obaji Ori, 2010).

In the late 1990s and early 2000s Serbia transferred surpluses to countries under EU, OSCE, and UN sanctions and to conflict zones such as Burundi, the DRC, Liberia, Libya, Myanmar, and Rwanda (Griffiths, 2010, p. 196). Similarly, in June 2010 the Israeli media reported that US authorities had arrested two individuals for organizing unauthorized shipments of surplus Bosnian AK-47s to Somaliland in violation of the UN arms embargo on Somalia (Ravid and Melman, 2010; Rozen, 2010).

Africa: a preferred destination²¹

West Africa: the case of Côte d'Ivoire

Côte d'Ivoire and the pre-embargo arms race

The Ivorian example illustrates the perceived advantages of procuring surplus ordnance, and particularly ammunition, to meet the intense logistical demands of armed conflict. In the aftermath of independence, Côte d'Ivoire faced a major political crisis that began in December 1999 and worsened in September 2002, when rebels simultaneously attacked Abidjan, Bouaké, and Korhogo. The conflict

Figure 1 Boxes of Bulgarian ammunition in a FANCI facility



Boxes of Bulgarian-manufactured anti-tank (top) and RPG (bottom) ammunition stored in a FANCI facility in 2007.
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reached its climax in November 2004, when government forces violated the ceasefire agreement and youth groups sparked off riots in the government-controlled south, compelling the UN Security Council to impose an arms embargo on the country.²²

From 2000 onwards the internal crisis and the risk that it would spread to the region—two criteria conditioning the authorization of exports under the framework of the EU Code of Conduct—drastically reduced the Ivorian government's chances of negotiating new procurements from France (a major, long-term provider of military equipment for the Ivorian national security forces) and other EU countries. Threatened by the rebellion, the Ivorian government sought to identify new suppliers capable of rapidly undertaking deliveries; between September 2002 and November 2004 it acquired significant volumes of military equipment. Yet most of this equipment met former Warsaw Pact standards, with which the Ivorian army was not familiar. This procurement thus generated a demand for corresponding types of ammunition, previously not available in the national stockpiles, and encouraged the procurement of surplus equipment and ammunition.

Angola immediately made several deliveries of conventional and light weapons to Côte d'Ivoire from October to the end of December 2002, plus an unconfirmed amount of ammunition.²³ The lack of manufacturing facilities in Angola, the rapid delivery of the consignments, and the absence of similar acquisitions by that country in the period preceding the transfers suggest that the equipment was taken from state stockpiles (*Jeune Afrique l'Intelligent*, 2003; *Global Security*, 2002).

Belarus made deliveries between 2003 and 2005.²⁴ The procurements were negotiated by the brokering companies Darkwood²⁵ and Elite Africa Ltd²⁶ (UN GoE CI, 2005, paras. 114–144, annexes IV–IX; 2006a, paras. 29–31; 2006b, paras. 40, 41). As reported in the 2005 Group of Experts' report, on 1 March 2004 the Ivorian government issued an end-user certificate addressed to Ordan Ltd²⁷ requesting the acquisi-

tion of a large consignment of ammunition.²⁸ The report also presents a pro forma invoice dated February 2004 that the company sent to the Ivorian MoD and by which it offered to deliver the requested equipment—a total weight of 56 tons—upon payment of approximately USD 586,000. The delivery was suspended as a result of the imposition of the UN embargo and the advance received from Ivorian authorities subsequently used to purchase UAZ 4x4 light vehicles.

Bulgaria also proved to be a reliable procurement source for Côte d'Ivoire until November 2004, when the UN embargo was established and pending contracts suspended (UN GoE CI, 2005, para. 97; 2008, paras. 19–32). From December 2002 onwards the brokering company Metalika AB Ltd delivered aircraft and light weapons,²⁹ while subsequent contracts were signed for the procurement of small arms, light weapons,³⁰ and ammunition.³¹ The negotiating parties estimated the value of this consignment at EUR 550,849.80 (USD 700,642). While it is impossible to determine the exact number of rounds and pieces of equipment delivered to Côte d'Ivoire,³² at least 21.7 tons were delivered in 2004.³³ UN-led inspections conducted at FANCI storage facilities in Abidjan from 2005 onwards revealed large amounts of Bulgarian-marked sealed ammunition boxes, confirming prior deliveries of significant volumes of small arms, light weapons, and artillery ammunition (see Figure 1).

Some of this surplus equipment did not meet the operational requirements of the security forces and could not be properly maintained and used, since FANCI lacked the technical capacity to handle non-NATO equipment. The T-55 tanks acquired from Angola, and aircraft and helicopters delivered by Belarus and Bulgaria, presented a particular problem; the latter were subsequently operated by foreign pilots and maintained by foreign technicians. The UN Security Council's embargo on military equipment and the Ivorian security forces' ensuing shortage of ammunition—especially for pistols and revolvers—further accentuated the inadequacy of FANCI's procurement practices.

Illicit circulation of ammunition in Côte d'Ivoire

A 2008 UN report on Côte d'Ivoire refers to the discovery of two separate lots of 7.62 x 39 mm ammunition containing 20 and 120 rounds, respectively. In both cases, the ammunition was discovered unattended and did not belong to national security agencies. Analysis of the markings only allowed the identification of five different manufacturing countries—Bulgaria, China, the Russian Federation, Ukraine, and Zimbabwe—and the years of production. While this information was not sufficient to determine how the lots made their way into Côte d'Ivoire, the headstamps did reveal that a significant proportion of the rounds had been manufactured before 1999 and were therefore likely to have originated from surplus stockpiles (UN GoE CI, 2008, paras. 95–98). In 2009 the UN Group of Experts on Côte d'Ivoire observed large quantities of 7.62 mm and 14.5 mm ammunition in Force Nouvelles³⁴ depots, stored in the cocoa bags in which the ammunition was allegedly purchased on the local market. Analysis revealed that some of this ammunition had been manufactured in the former Soviet Union and Sudan. A significant number of the rounds appeared to be have been manufactured in the 1980s, and some of the cartridge markings suggested production in 1959 and 1960. The Group of Experts concluded that these lots probably originated from a single or a few suppliers, and that they were sourced from surplus stockpiles. Visual checks of Forces Nouvelles' individual weapons and magazines showed that these types of cartridges represent more than 70 per cent of the 7.62 x 39 mm ammunition deployed. The Group of Experts observed increasing volumes of such ammunition throughout 2009 and estimated the overall number of these transfers to exceed 500,000 rounds (UN GoE CI, 2009, paras. 135–51).

Great Lakes region

Democratic Republic of the Congo

The eastern part of the DRC has been a battlefield for the past 15 years.

Figure 2 Ammunition in DRC



Top: Mortar ammunition collected in Goma (North Kivu, DRC) during a civilian disarmament programme in 2010. © Saferworld
Bottom: A sample of 7.62 x 39 mm ammunition involved in an attempted diversion from FARDC stockpiles in South Kivu, DRC, in 2009. © Saferworld

Military equipment was transferred into the country by a number of actors and through a wide range of networks and supply chains. Since Congolese state authorities encountered difficulties in equipping their armed forces, they opted to procure surplus equipment, which allowed access to a more convenient and regular supply. The opacity of most of these deliveries prevents any accurate estimate of their total volume, contents, and value. The surplus transfers cover a wide range of ordnance and raise serious concerns of potential diversion to non-authorized armed actors. In fact, several UN Expert reports confirm that stockpiles in the custody of the DRC's armed forces—the Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo (FARDC)—appear to be the main source of supply for weapons and ammunition used by armed groups in the region.³⁵

The analysis of ammunition samples recovered under the framework of disarmament programmes, both for former combatants and for civilians, also found that much of the ammunition circulating in the local illicit markets appeared to have been manufactured in Eastern Europe and China. Such findings suggest that huge volumes of surplus ammunition were probably transferred to the region and subsequently trafficked in smaller volumes. Direct observation of collected weapons also indicated that a significant proportion of weapons (and therefore most probably ammunition) disseminated in the region had previously belonged to national stockpiles in the region and had probably been transferred—as surpluses—within it (UN GoE DRC, 2008a, paras. 43, 55, 56; 2008b, paras. 61–68, 143, box 2; 2009, para. 69). Observations regarding ammunition recovered after its diversion from the DRC army's stockpiles also seem to confirm that recent acquisitions from the Congolese MoD involved ammunition manufactured several years previously (see Figure 2).

Ukraine–DRC: a regular route

Between 2000 and 2010 Ukraine made several deliveries of equipment to the

DRC. The UN Group of Experts reported that these consignments had been notified to the Security Council's Sanctions Committee on the DRC and therefore did not represent embargo violations.³⁶

In July 2006 Ukraine delivered a large shipment of ammunition³⁷ to the port of Matadi, while Ukrainian shipments of other weapons and equipment have also been reported.³⁸ These items were purchased by the Congolese MoD from Ukroboronservice, the Ukrainian state-owned enterprise (UN GoE DRC, 2007, p. 17 box; Ukraine, 2006; UNROCA, n.d.).

Another set of transfers between the two countries was announced in 2010.³⁹ Observers recorded some of these items in June 2010, during the military parade organized in Kinshasa to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the DRC's independence, suggesting that they were delivered in the first half of the year.⁴⁰

These deliveries most probably involved surplus equipment, given that similar items appear in the above-mentioned list of available surplus that Ukrainian authorities posted on the Internet (Ukraine MoD, n.d.). While weapons systems are not systematically delivered with their corresponding ammunition, exporting such volumes of surpluses to one country (in this case, the DRC) inevitably creates a long-term demand for corresponding ammunition.

These DRC imports from Ukraine also raise questions about the efficiency of the former's procurement mechanism and the appropriateness of the equipment. Given the Congolese army's technical capacities and the geographical characteristics of the country, for instance, the FARDC is not likely to take full advantage of the dozens of imported T-55 and T-72 tanks.

Deliveries from China and North Korea

Some Asian countries, especially China and North Korea, supplied surplus ordnance to the DRC in 2006 and 2009.

In early 2009 the Congolese MoD was the consignee of a shipment offloaded from the *Bi Ro Bong*, a ship registered in North Korea. While the

exact nature of the equipment could not be determined, evidence gathered by the UN Group of Experts showed that the vessel transported 3,434.60 tons of goods defined as 'military weaponry' that probably included ammunition (UN GoE DRC, 2009, paras. 257–58). The profiles of the provider and the purchaser indicate that a portion of the consignment, if not all, may have been surplus. This state-to-state transaction was conducted in violation of UN Security Council provisions. The delivery had not been announced to the Sanctions Committee on the DRC—in clear violation of paragraph 5 of Resolution 1807⁴¹—and may also have violated Resolutions 1718 (2006) and 1874 (2009), which prohibit North Korea from exporting military equipment.⁴²

In May 2009 the Chinese-register vessel *An Xin Jiang* offloaded 190.66 tons of 'training equipment' in Matadi for the Congolese army. The delivery had been notified to the Sanctions Committee. The consignment comprised 16 containers, eight of which were filled with ammunition (UN GoE DRC, 2009, paras. 259–64). In total, China delivered an estimated 3–4 million rounds⁴³ of 7.62 x 39 mm ammunition and other items specifically developed for training. The UN Group of Experts could not establish whether China had notified the Sanctions Committee of all of the cargo aboard the *An Xin Jiang*, nor does the UN Register of Conventional Arms provide any information on the transfers discussed above.⁴⁴

Adding these 3–4 million rounds to the undetermined millions transferred by other countries (as mentioned above) in one year between 2009 and 2010, the DRC army received what seems to be a disproportionate amount of 7.62 x 39 mm ammunition if it was used, as originally intended, solely to train a few units.

Supplies connecting the DRC to neighbouring countries

In its 2008 and 2009 reports, the UN Group of Experts cites military supplies flown to the DRC from Sudan (UN GoE DRC, 2008a, paras. 60–74,

annex III; 2008b, para. 145, annexes 25, 26; 2009, paras. 265–71, annexes 101–05). The first case refers to a number of deliveries recorded between September and November 2007. The Group of Experts mentions a cargo plane that flew from Tripoli (Libya) to Kisangani (DRC) with a stopover in Khartoum (Sudan) on 10 September 2007. Administrative documents confirm the routing of the aircraft and reveal that the company Azza Air Transport (registered in Sudan) had leased the aircraft. Approximately 41 tons of ammunition and military equipment were reportedly offloaded and transferred to the FARDC. On 22 November 2007 a second delivery of an unknown volume of military equipment and ammunition was observed at Kisangani airport (UN GoE DRC, 2008a, paras. 69–72).

The Sudanese government had not notified the Sanctions Committee of any of these deliveries. Nor had the Congolese authorities informed the UN Organization Mission in the DRC (MONUC)⁴⁵ prior to the transfers—in clear violation of the embargo provisions (UN GoE DRC, 2008a, paras. 72–74). Subsequent deliveries were made by aircraft registered for civilian use and specifically requisitioned by the Congolese army. Operating several flights connecting the DRC to Khartoum airport, the FARDC imported dozens of tons of equipment from September 2008 until February 2009. While incomplete, available information suggests that surplus ammunition represented a significant part of the transported equipment and that at least some of the boxes transported from Sudan had been manufactured in China. All these flights also represented a clear violation of the provisions contained in paragraph 5 of Resolution 1807 (UN GoE DRC, 2008b, para. 145, annexes 25, 26; 2009, paras. 265–71, annexes 101–05).

The 2008 report also mentions that 53 tons of ammunition were transferred from the DRC to Zimbabwe in August 2008, reportedly destined for the Zimbabwean army. Considering that the DRC was experiencing internal conflict at the time, the ammunition most

probably came from surplus stockpiles (UN GoE DRC, 2008b, paras. 146–60).

Surplus transfers to unauthorized users and armed groups

UN reports on the DRC refer extensively to transfers of small arms, light weapons, and ammunition to unauthorized users operating in eastern DRC.⁴⁶ These cases suggest that national stockpiles of some states in the region—mainly the DRC, but also Burundi, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda—serve as sources for unauthorized supplies and that significant and unmonitored volumes of ammunition and small-calibre weapons are circulating in the region (UN GoE DRC, 2008a, paras. 43, 44; 2008b, paras. 146–48; 2009, paras. 68–89).

Small-calibre ammunition deliveries in the Great Lakes region

A number of countries neighbouring the DRC acquired equipment, including small-calibre ammunition, from countries with significant surpluses, including Albania, Romania, Serbia, and Ukraine.

Serbian annual reports on the transfers of controlled goods for 2005–06 and 2007 refer to deliveries to Rwanda. In 2005 Serbia granted 18 export licences valued at a total of USD 8.7 million authorizing transfer requests submitted by Israel-based companies for deliveries to Burkina Faso, Iraq, Israel, and Rwanda.⁴⁷ By the end of 2005 USD 5.9 million worth of these exports had already been completed (Serbia, 2007, annexes 2/05, 6/05). Similarly, the 2007 report cites 11 export licences granted for requests submitted by Israel-based companies and declaring Burkina Faso, Israel, Rwanda, Senegal, and Uganda as final destinations. The financial value of the items exported in 2007 was slightly higher than USD 1.3 million, while the value of licences was reported to be USD 1,789,300 (Serbia, 2009, annexes 2/07, 6/07). In 2006, however, the Serbian government refused to authorize the export of four million rounds of ammunition valued at USD 748,000 to Rwanda, following requests submitted by Israel or an Israel-based company. Exports were

not authorized because of the proximity of conflict zones and potentially related risks of misuse or diversion (Serbia, 2007, annexe 10/06).

In 2006–07 Rwanda also purchased equipment from Romania. According to the Romanian reports on arms exports, five export licences were granted for a total value of EUR 469,716 (USD 620,621), including an unspecified volume of small-calibre ammunition. The absence of references to deliveries to Rwanda in the 2008 and 2009 reports indicates that the items purchased in 2006–07 had been delivered before January 2008 and that there might be a discrepancy in the classification of the items exported.⁴⁸ The speedy delivery of the items and their nature suggests that at least a portion was sourced from available surplus stockpiles (Romania, 2008a, pp. 17, 23; 2008b, pp. 16, 22).

Serbia's annual report on arms transfers identifies Uganda as the seventh most important customer of the national industry in the course of 2005, when export licences worth USD 2.69 million were granted (Serbia, 2007, p. 25). Between 2006 and 2008 the Ugandan MoD also purchased military equipment in Serbia via a Panamanian brokering company.⁴⁹ Reports published by the Serbian government on trading activities in 2005–06 and 2007 partially corroborate this data, but do not reveal whether items were sourced from surplus stockpiles (Serbia, 2007; 2009).

Another significant shipment reportedly delivered in Uganda came from Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2002,⁵⁰ while in 2008 another consignment of military equipment was delivered to the Ugandan MoD from Ukraine.⁵¹

In early 2006 Tanzania also made a purchase from Serbia via an Israeli brokering company, including hundreds of thousands of rounds of small-calibre ammunition and small arms (Serbia, 2007, annexes 2/06, 6/06).⁵² The nature of the items transferred from Serbia suggests that the equipment was sourced from surplus stockpiles.

Smaller volumes of small arms and light weapons and ammunition from Eastern Europe also ended up in

Burundi. According to Montenegrin authorities, five export licences were granted for re-exports to Burundi in 2009.⁵³ Bombs and a portion of the small arms and light weapons originated in Serbia, while the 12.7 mm ammunition and the remaining firearms—transferred via brokering agents operating from Cyprus—came from Albania. The same report also refers to Burundi as the end user of parts, components, tools, and accessories for 82 mm and 120 mm mortars transferred from Bosnia and Herzegovina via a Belize-based company (Montenegro, 2010, pp. 24, 33, 37, 42, 47). Data submitted by Albania to the UN Register of Conventional Arms for 2009 partially captures these transfers and explicitly refers to the export of ammunition (UNROCA, n.d.). The 2009 UN Group of Experts report on the DRC also refers to several deliveries of unspecified small arms-related equipment to Burundi in 2008–09 (UN GoE DRC, 2009, para. 88).

Despite the lack of detailed information on volumes transferred, the UN Panel of Experts on Sudan established that huge volumes of ammunition have been regularly transferred to Darfur since the imposition of sanctions on Sudan in 2005. A significant proportion of this is Chinese made, yet the Panel of Experts also identified a number of other manufacturing countries, including Sudan itself. The majority of cases presented in the reports cite recently produced ammunition transferred in violation of the UN embargo; however, some examples cited by the UN Group of Experts refer to the use of fairly old lots that were probably sourced from surpluses in the region.⁵⁴

Some particularly interesting cases in the UN Panel of Experts' 2008 report refer to weapons and lots of small-calibre ammunition illegally transferred to Darfur and previously under the control of Chad and Libya. Specifically, the Chadian government had held materiel manufactured in Serbia⁵⁵ and the United States,⁵⁶ while the Libyan government had stockpiled materiel produced in Belgium,⁵⁷ Bulgaria,⁵⁸ and Spain.⁵⁹ In all probability, this

materiel made its way to Darfur as surplus transfers (UN PoE Sudan, 2008, paras. 210–20). These examples—although isolated—clearly suggest that the inclusion of stricter clauses on re-export by the first recipient country might be a useful tool to reduce the risks of dissemination of surpluses.

Conclusion

The case studies presented in this *Issue Brief* reveal volumes and values of selected surplus ammunition transfers. They cannot offer a complete picture of surplus ammunition transfers undertaken worldwide. Yet they highlight the frequent involvement of East and South-east European countries, where significant surplus stockpiles are being tapped into for exports. These countries' transition to new military standards, in terms of both personnel and equipment, will only enlarge their stockpiles of unused ordnance. Selling this surplus allows them to reduce their obsolete national stockpiles and reinvest the proceeds to modernize their arsenals. Thus, despite international, regional, and national destruction programmes, significant amounts of surplus ammunition are available on the international market. This Warsaw Pact standard ammunition is relatively affordable and available through quick and flexible procurement channels. It is particularly attractive to Western governments seeking to equip local security forces in Iraq and Afghanistan with compatible ammunition, and to end users with limited financial resources.

It is difficult to determine in advance how buyers will use ammunition. Research has shown, however, that countries engaged in conflict and experiencing long-lasting political crises usually apply less robust stockpile management standards, which increases the risk of the ammunition being diverted to fuel conflicts and regional instability. It may also explain why a number of armed groups operating in Africa source materiel from state stockpiles.

The African case studies highlight a further challenge in that some coun-

tries purchase significant quantities of weapons of previously unused calibres, which in turn creates a demand for corresponding—and often surplus—ammunition. As some of the examples referring to Côte d'Ivoire and the DRC clearly illustrate, however, some purchases of surplus equipment do not seem to meet the operational requirements of the state security forces, while they most probably generate financial and political benefits for the individuals who negotiated the contracts.

The trade in surplus ammunition is significantly less transparent and visible than that in other types of ordnance for two reasons. Firstly, as the African case studies clearly show, ammunition is rarely transferred separately; surplus transfers usually involve a mix of weapons and ammunition. Cartridges and shells, for instance, are almost always delivered as part of larger weapons consignments in order to reduce transport costs, minimize logistics, and maximize profitability. Secondly, the extent of the trade in surplus ammunition is not reflected by export reports, which seldom disaggregate surplus items from new ones. Similarly, surplus ammunition is not explicitly monitored by regional or international reporting tools as a distinct category. Despite the efforts and resources allocated in the last decades to prevent illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and to control authorized arms transfers, the importance of effectively monitoring the surplus ammunition trade remains underestimated. Even in Africa—where existing regional protocols and conventions contain specific provisions on ammunition⁶⁰—this situation has undermined the effectiveness of monitoring and controlling mechanisms.

The study of surplus ammunition transfers leads directly to stockpile management concerns at the supply and demand ends of the ammunition trade. Understanding stockpile management and, more specifically, the dynamics of the surplus ammunition business is fundamental to understanding the ammunition trade, given that 'surplus exports, not destruction, is still the natural first choice of many

governments' (Karp, 2010, p. 5).⁶¹ While surplus ammunition has not yet become a priority concern on the international political agenda, it does represent a relevant dimension of the control of arms transfers.

Finally, a number of case studies and examples provided in this *Issue Brief* illustrate that, despite the precautions taken by exporting states, the risk of ammunition diversion, whether surplus or not, is relatively high, especially in conflict zones and states whose capacity is limited. Such risk should persuade states to better monitor the different stages of surplus ammunition transfers—from the risk assessment during the licensing process to the delivery of the equipment—to improve the efficiency of post-delivery checks and establish stricter clauses on the re-export of delivered ammunition. ■

Endnotes

- 1 In some countries, the normative framework on stockpile management refers to *unused* equipment rather than *surplus* equipment. Use of the latter suggests that the owners of the equipment reviewed their stockpiles and equipment needs, and identified as *surplus* those items considered inappropriate, obsolete, or excessive in number.
- 2 The UN Commodity Trade Statistics Database (UN Comtrade) contains detailed imports and exports statistics reported by roughly 200 statistical authorities.
- 3 See UN (2001).
- 4 See, for instance, the definition of 'surplus' in UNGA (1997) and OSCE (2000).
- 5 SEESAC is the South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons, based in Belgrade.
- 6 At the time of writing, 107 states had submitted a report on the national implementation of the Programme of Action for 2010. All reports are available at UN (n.d.).
- 7 For further details on eDisposals, see DSA (n.d.).
- 8 This claim is called into question by the Interior Ministry of Lower Saxony's reported intention to sell 15,000–17,000 Heckler & Koch P7 pistols following their replacement by the more modern P2000 in 2006 and by the German Defence Ministry's delivery of '10,000 Walther P1 pistols to Afghanistan for use by the country's fledgling army and police force' (AI, 2004, p. 19; *Spiegel*, 2009).
- 9 Author interview with Scott Willason, chief, Ammunition Support Branch, NATO Maintenance and Supply Agency, Capellen, Luxembourg, 28 June 2010.
- 10 Confidential diplomatic source, 2010.
- 11 No US dollar equivalent amounts for the Bosnia and Herzegovina convertible mark (BAM) are available for 2001.
- 12 In 2009 the Bosnian presidency nevertheless identified about 95,000 weapons and 24,000 tons of ammunition as surplus to national needs. Following this assessment, on 10 April 2010 the government announced the decision to destroy up to 4,000 tons of high-risk ammunition (OSCE, 2010).
- 13 See MEICO (n.d.).
- 14 See Romtehnica (n.d.).
- 15 This calibre was adapted to a number of rifles developed by Warsaw Pact states, including the most widely available, the AKM.
- 16 European Union Force.
- 17 The contract reportedly included more than 78 million 7.62 x 39 mm rounds for AK-47 rifles, 100,000 rocket-propelled grenades, and 12,000 rounds of tank ammunition (Harding, 2006).
- 18 Very often, ammunition marking does not contain sufficient information for identification purposes. Since the rounds do not feature unique markings, it is only possible to assume that the ammunition in question belonged to the production lots shipped by US authorities.
- 19 In addition to Kalashnikov assault rifles, machine guns, and rocket-propelled grenade launchers, the delivery allegedly included five anti-aircraft missiles, five guided anti-tank missiles, and ammunition.
- 20 Including 100 T-72M tanks, small arms, and ammunition.
- 21 This section of the *Issue Brief* lists the small arms, light weapons, ammunition, and larger weapon systems types exactly as they appear in the original reference documents. Quotation marks indicate that weapons denominations in cited sources seem inappropriate or improbable.
- 22 The embargo on supplies of military equipment to Côte d'Ivoire was established by Resolution 1572 (2004) and subsequently renewed by Resolutions 1643 (2005), 1727 (2006), 1782 (2007), 1842 (2008), 1893 (2009), and 1946 (2010). All relevant resolutions are available on UNSC (n.d.a). On 7 February 2006 the Sanctions Committee on Côte d'Ivoire also imposed a set of sanctions (travel ban and freeze of assets) on three individuals, including two leaders of the youth movements that participated in the 2004 disturbances; for further details, see UNSC (n.d.b). The list of individuals who are subject to sanctions is available at UNSC (n.d.c).
- 23 The Ivorian armed forces—the Forces Armées Nationales de Côte d'Ivoire (FANCI)—received two Czech-manufactured T-55 AM-2 tanks, three BMP-2 infantry fighting vehicles, more than 100 mortars (60 mm, 81 mm, and 120 mm), and anti-tank grenade launchers (Confidential military intelligence report, 2005).
- 24 Shipments included 4 SU-25 combat aircraft, 1 Antonov An-12, 2 Mi-24Vs combat helicopters, 1 Mi-8T helicopter, and 22 UAZ-3151 4x4 light vehicles. Belarus's submissions to the UN Register of Conventional Arms for 2002 and 2003 also mention the export to Côte d'Ivoire of 13 BMP-1 and 13 BRDM-2 armoured vehicles, 10 120 mm mortars (type 2S12), 10 82 mm mortars (type BM-37), 6 RSZO BM-21 launchers, and 6 BTR-80 armoured personnel carriers (UNROCA, n.d.).
- 25 Operating from Togo, but owned by Robert Montoya, a French national.
- 26 An Israel-based company managed by Daniel Chekroun.
- 27 Another Israel-based company managed by Chekroun.
- 28 Fifty thousand rounds of 7.62 x 39 mm ammunition, 30,000 rounds of 7.62 x 54 mm ammunition, 12,000 rounds of 12.7 mm ammunition, 1,000 rounds of 20 mm ammunition, 2,000 RPG-7 rockets, 920 mortar shells (82 mm and 120 mm), and 200 hand grenades.
- 29 Two Mi-24V combat helicopters, two MiG-23 Flogger combat aircraft, and three 120 mm mortars for an estimated USD 5.8 million. The figure is cited in UN GoE CI (2005). Bulgaria reported the export of ten 120 mm mortars to the UN Register of Conventional Arms in 2002; it reported exports of two Mi-24 helicopters, two MiG-23s, and three additional 120 mm mortars in 2003. Data provided by Bulgaria for the period 2002–04 does not contain references to other equipment. The data is available in UNROCA (n.d.).
- 30 Fifty anti-tank RPG-7 rocket launchers, 10 NSVS heavy machine guns (12.7 mm), and 1,100 AK-47 assault rifles.
- 31 Two thousand offensive hand grenades, 2,000 defensive hand grenades, 1,500 OG-7V anti-personnel rockets for use in RPG-7 rocket launchers, 20,000 rounds of 12.7 x 108 mm ammunition, and 250,600 rounds of 7.62 x 39 mm ammunition.
- 32 The Bulgarian government published its first annual report on arms transfers in February 2007. Available information covers the activities from 2005 onwards. In addition, Bulgarian submissions to the UN Register of Conventional Arms for the period 2002–04 only mention two Mi-24 helicopters, two MiG-23s, and 13 120 mm mortars.
- 33 Confidential documents, October 2004; confidential diplomatic source, August 2004.
- 34 The Forces Nouvelles is a coalition formed by the three insurgent movements that brought about the conflict in 2002. This coalition has controlled the northern half of the country since September 2002. See Balint-Kurti (2007) for further details.

- 35 See UN GoE DRC (2006, p. 10; 2008a, paras. 45–52; 2008b, paras. 25, 26, 102–13, 116–20, 136–40; 2009, paras. 22–33, 36–43, 50–52; 2010, paras. 37, 55, 67, 70, 71, 116).
- 36 Between 2005 and 2008 the embargo on supplies of military equipment covered all recipients in the DRC, including government actors. The sanctions regime established pursuant to Resolution 1596 (2005), however, featured some exemptions for transfers to Congolese armed forces that had begun or completed the integration process, or that operated under the command of the *‘état-major intégré’* of the national army or national police. Such transfers had to be notified to the Sanctions Committee prior to their delivery and had to be received at sites designated by the Congolese government in coordination with the UN Organization Mission in the DRC. In 2008, with the adoption of Resolution 1807, the UN Security Council reduced the scope of the embargo to armed groups operating in the east of the country (South and North Kivu provinces and Ituri district). Yet paragraph 5 of the resolution still requires states supplying the Congolese government forces to notify the Sanctions Committee prior to delivery. Following the recommendations contained in the Group of Experts’ interim report of 2010, the Sanctions Committee reviewed its guidelines with a view to increase the quality of information submitted by exporting states (UN GoE DRC, 2010a). For further details, see UNSC (2010).
- 37 Nine million rounds of ammunition (7.62 × 39 mm and 7.62 × 54 mm), 1,000 OG15V 73 mm shells, 2,000 rounds of VO-1 82 mm shells, 4,000 rounds of 100 mm UOF412, 1,000 rounds of 120 mm VOF-843B, 1,200 122 mm 9M28F rockets, and 2,000 rockets for RPG-7 rocket launchers.
- 38 Records also mention the export of 20 T-55 tanks, 20 BMP-1 armoured vehicles, and 2 heavy-duty trucks the same year. Ukraine reported the export of the T-55 tanks and BMP-1 vehicles to the UN Register of Conventional Arms and in its annual report on arms transfers. Neither document makes any reference to the rest of the transferred equipment, however. In 2000 Ukraine had already exported to the DRC 30 BTR-60 and 6 MT-LB armoured vehicles, 6 2S1 artillery systems, and 4 Mi-24 helicopters (UNROCA, n.d.).
- 39 Ammunition included 122 mm D-30 howitzer shells, several thousand 100 mm shells for T-55 tanks, and 152 mm munitions for 2S3M self-propelled howitzers (AFP, 2010; Bromley and Holtom, 2010). Other items included Mi-24B attack helicopters, T-72 and T-55 tanks, RPG-7s, anti-aircraft cannon, several hundred units of 7.62 mm and 14.7 mm machine guns, trucks, and mechanical parts.
- 40 Confidential military sources, August 2010.
- 41 Resolution 1807 (2008) establishes that ‘all States shall notify in advance to the Committee any shipment of arms and related materiel for the Democratic Republic of the Congo’ and underlines ‘the importance that such notifications contain all relevant information, including, where appropriate, the end-user, the proposed date of delivery and the itinerary of shipments’ (UNSC, 2008, para. 5).
- 42 Resolution 1718 establishes that the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) ‘shall cease the export of all items covered in subparagraphs (a) (i) and (a) (ii) above and that all Member States shall prohibit the procurement of such items from the DPRK by their nationals, or using their flagged vessels or aircraft, and whether or not originating in the territory of the DPRK’ (UNSC, 2006, para. 8b). Items mentioned in sub-paragraph (a) (i) of the resolution are defined as ‘any battle tanks, armoured combat vehicles, large calibre artillery systems, combat aircraft, attack helicopters, warships, missiles or missile systems as defined for the purpose of the United Nations Register on Conventional Arms, or related materiel including spare parts’ (UNSC, 2006).
Resolution 1874, adopted in June 2009, further enlarged the scope of the sanctions regime by adding ‘all arms and related materiel, as well as . . . financial transactions, technical training, advice, services or assistance related to the provision, manufacture, maintenance or use of such arms or materiel’ (UNSC, 2009, para. 9).
Due to the absence of reliable information on the exact nature of the items delivered to the DRC, however, it is impossible to determine whether the transfer—which was carried out in violation of paragraph 5 of Resolution 1807 on the DRC—represented a violation of the sanctions regime on North Korea.
- 43 This figure is estimated on the basis of the Group of Experts’ reporting of at least 8 containers of ammunition (UN GoE DRC, 2009, para. 260), and on the assumption that a container can hold 600 ammunition boxes (750 cartridges each).
- 44 At the time of writing, the most recent data available on transfers realized from China relate to 2008; North Korea had not submitted any information to the UN Register.
- 45 In July 2010 MONUC was replaced by the UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the DRC.
- 46 UN GoE DRC (2006, p. 10; 2008a, paras. 55, 56; 2008b, paras. 25, 26, 102–13, 116–20, 136–43; 2009, paras. 22–43, 52–55).
- 47 The list of items to be exported includes machine guns, small-calibre ammunition, rifle grenades, pistols, shells, and artillery ammunition components.
- 48 Two licences were granted in 2006 and three in 2007. As well as the ammunition, these covered 2,000 sniper rifles, 50 semi-automatic rifles, and 10 sub-machine guns. The 2007 Romanian report refers to the delivery—in the course of the year—of 2,010 sub-machine guns. Since no deliveries were made in 2008 or 2009, firearms delivered in 2007 most probably included those covered by the export licences granted in 2006. Yet this assumption raises questions regarding the exact nature of the guns delivered.
- 49 As a result of these transactions, Uganda acquired several thousand mortar bombs (120 mm and 82 mm) and hundreds of thousands of rounds of small-calibre ammunition (Confidential export documents, 2006–08).
- 50 More than 5 million 7.62 mm rounds, 10,800 60 mm mortar rounds, and 8,256 82 mm mortar rounds were allegedly offloaded (Danssaert, Cappelle, and Johnson-Thomas, 2007, p. 34).
- 51 The shipment included thousands of 122 mm high-energy rockets and 100 mm high-energy shells, hundreds of rockets for RPG-7 rocket launchers, and thousands of rounds of 7.62 mm ammunition (Confidential export documents, 2006).
- 52 Confidential export documents, 2005.
- 53 Under these agreements, 115,510 rounds of 12.7 × 108 mm ammunition (worth slightly more than EUR 25,000, or USD 34,220); 34 aircraft bombs (acquired for roughly EUR 7,000, or USD 9,581); and a total of 15,080 units of 12.7 mm ‘sub-machine guns’, M84 7.62 mm ‘sub-machine guns’, and magazines for 7.62 mm assault rifles (with an overall value of EUR 82,000, or USD 112,242) were delivered.
- 54 UN PoE Sudan (2006a, para. 125; 2006b, paras. 7, 73, 75–79, 82, 83; 2007, paras. 73, 94, 99–101, 135; 2008, paras. 198–231; 2009, paras. 138–152).
- 55 Four million 5.56 × 45 mm rounds transferred to Chad by Israel in 2006.
- 56 Comprising 106 mm M344 cartridges sold to Chad between 1983 and 1987.
- 57 Comprising 106 mm ammunition for recoilless rifles manufactured between 1980 and 1981 and probably transferred to Libya in the same period.
- 58 Rockets for RPG launchers manufactured in 1982, 46,000 units of which were delivered to Libya the same year.
- 59 Comprising 106 mm recoilless rifles manufactured in 1979, 189 units of which were delivered to Libya in 1981.
- 60 For example, the Economic Community of West African States’ Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons, Their Ammunition and Other Related Materials, adopted in 2006 by 15 West African states, contains explicit references and provisions on ammunition, including in terms of record keeping (art. 11), authorizations for possession (art. 14), marking (art. 18),

and harmonization of national legislation and normative frameworks (art. 21). See ECOWAS (2006).

- 61 In 2010 the Small Arms Survey undertook a prolonged study of physical stockpile and security measures in South-east Europe, in support of the Regional Approach to Stockpile Reduction initiative. The authors of this *Issue Brief* acknowledge the contribution that this stockpile research made to this study of surplus ammunition transfers.

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