

Small Arms Survey
A Project of the Graduate Institute of
International and Development Studies, Geneva

small arms survey 2015



weapons and the world

Highlights

Key findings and chapter summaries

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About the Small Arms Survey

About the project

The Small Arms Survey is a global centre of excellence whose mandate is to generate impartial, evidence-based, and policy-relevant knowledge on all aspects of small arms and armed violence. It is the principal international source of expertise, information, and analysis on small arms and armed violence issues, and acts as a resource for governments, policy-makers, researchers, and civil society. It is located in Geneva, Switzerland, at the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies.

Established in 1999, the Survey is supported by the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs and current or recent contributions from the Governments of Australia, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, the United Kingdom, and the United States, as well as from the European Union. The centre is grateful for past support received from the Governments of Canada, Spain, and Sweden, as well as from foundations and many bodies within the UN system.

The Survey has an international staff with expertise in security studies, political science, law, economics, development studies, sociology, and criminology, and collaborates with a network of researchers, partner institutions, non-governmental organizations, and governments in more than 50 countries.

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Small Arms Survey 2015

WEAPONS AND THE WORLD



The *Small Arms Survey 2015* examines the role of weapons and armed violence in humanity's appropriation of the earth's wildlife and mineral riches—in Africa, where the poaching of elephants and rhinos is becoming increasingly militarized, and near resource extraction sites around the world. In addition to presenting updates on the UN small arms process and the top arms importers and exporters, the volume assesses how recent technological developments affect weapons marking, record-keeping, and tracing; reviews small arms flows to Egypt, Libya, and Syria before and after the 'Arab Spring'; and evaluates a stockpile management initiative in South-east Europe. The 'armed actors' section sheds light on the arms and ammunition used by insurgents in northern Mali, the decline of the Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda,

and the use of floating armouries by private security companies in the Indian Ocean. This edition also analyses the conditions that are driving young people to adopt high-risk coping strategies in Burundi.

The *Small Arms Survey* is produced annually by a team of researchers based in Geneva, Switzerland, and a worldwide network of local researchers. Policy-makers, diplomats, and non-governmental organizations have come to value it as a vital resource for topical analysis of small arms-related issues and armed violence reduction strategies.

Praise for the 2015 *Survey* from Paula Kahumbu, Executive Director of WildlifeDirect:

'I commend the *Small Arms Survey 2015: Weapons and the World* for the many insights it offers into the relationship between firearms and wildlife crime, as well as other pertinent small arms issues. I have little doubt that this volume will be of great interest to those working to protect our natural heritage, as well as others involved in arms control and the promotion of peace and security.'

Key findings

Poaching in Africa

- As demand for ivory and rhino horn remains high, some poachers and anti-poaching forces are becoming increasingly militarized, using military-style weapons and adopting more aggressive tactics.
- Firearms and ammunition found at poaching sites are not systematically identified, recorded, or traced despite the potential use of such techniques in identifying the sources and trafficking routes of poacher weapons.
- Armed groups have been responsible for major cases of large-scale elephant poaching, yet poaching allegations have also been levelled against some government military forces.
- Small groups of poachers also target elephant herds and rhinos, killing significant numbers of animals over time, particularly in rangeland where elephant and rhino populations are dense.
- Without a substantial reduction in the demand for ivory and rhino horn, efforts to deter poachers through armed interventions may disrupt poaching, but not stop it.

Frontier urbanization around resource extraction

- The effort to control and secure resources that are being extracted can attract a variety of armed actors, including security forces and predatory groups, not only to the mining sites themselves, but also to rapidly expanding urban service areas.
- The sudden urbanization around extraction sites is rarely accompanied by sufficient public service provision, including security. As a result, these services are increasingly outsourced to non-state providers, such as private security companies or protection squads.
- Frontier urbanization can lead to conflict over the control of the land and its extractable resources; insecurity and social unrest related to precarious socio-economic and environmental conditions; and tensions, sometimes expressed violently, around post-extraction decline or state-led urban clean-up and rejuvenation plans.

UN update and technological developments in weapons design

- Following months of intense diplomatic activity, the Fifth Biennial Meeting of States (BMS5) process produced an outcome document featuring practical implementation measures in the areas that states discussed (stockpile management; marking, record-keeping, and tracing; and international cooperation and assistance).

- The BMS5 outcome builds on previous PoA meeting outcomes by, for example, promoting women's participation in PoA-related processes, highlighting the importance of stockpile security and weapons tracing in conflict and post-conflict situations, and emphasizing training in building sustainable capacity for PoA implementation.
- The BMS5 text also encourages the exchange of tracing results and other information, as well as robust stockpile management, for purposes of reducing diversion risks.
- Modular weapons design complicates the task of unique identification, which is essential for tracing. Policy responses include the identification of a 'control component' for these weapons.
- Unlike metal firearms, polymer guns are difficult to mark durably, as the International Tracing Instrument prescribes. Policy guidance is needed on issues such as the marking methods applicable to polymer firearm parts and the depth and placement of such markings.
- Current norms, both national and international, are largely adequate for the control of 3D-printed firearms, but their application is more difficult. Governments, moreover, have a clear interest in preparing for the day when fully functional 3D-printed firearms can be produced easily and economically.

Authorized small arms transfers, the 'Arab Spring', and transparency

- In 2012, the top exporters of small arms and light weapons (those with annual exports of at least USD 100 million), according to available customs data from the United Nations Commodity Trade Statistics Database (UN Comtrade), were (in descending order) the United States, Italy, Germany, Brazil, Austria, South Korea, the Russian Federation, China, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Turkey, Norway, and Japan.
- In 2012, the top importers of small arms and light weapons (those with annual imports of at least USD 100 million), according to available customs data, were (in descending order) the United States, Canada, Germany, Australia, France, the United Kingdom, Thailand, and Indonesia.
- The five largest exporters of small arms during 2001–12, according to available customs data, were (in descending order) the United States, Italy, Germany, Brazil, and Austria. The United States was also, according to available customs data, the world's largest importer of small arms during 2001–12. The next four largest small arms importers during this period were Canada, Germany, France, and the UK.
- There is little evidence that the 'Arab Spring' has had a significant impact on the policies of top or major exporters of small arms to the Middle East and North Africa.
- Small arms exporters have authorized exports of small arms to non-state armed groups that are inclined to fight extremist groups, notwithstanding the risk of misuse or diversion in these cases.
- Regional intergovernmental information exchanges on small arms transfers are not contributing to public transparency, yet regional reporting instruments that cover broader categories of conventional arms are releasing annual reports to the public.

Stockpile management in South-east Europe and the Regional Approach to Stockpile Reduction (RASR) initiative

- Poor ammunition stockpile management remains a serious problem in much of South-east Europe.
- While unplanned explosions at munitions sites are a global problem, they have been especially prevalent in South-east Europe, at both state and non-state facilities.
- Sales and donations remain the favoured disposal options. A RASR participating state will only opt to destroy its surplus stockpiles upon determining that its marketability is poor.
- Surplus weapons and ammunition destruction in South-east Europe remains largely donor-driven and donor-funded.
- A number of political, regulatory, and commercial constraints hinder regional cooperation with respect to transport and demilitarization.
- In collaboration with other stakeholders, RASR states are making a concerted effort to build, harmonize, and standardize the stockpile management knowledge base through regional technical training.

Insurgent arms in northern Mali

- Armed groups are better armed than they were a decade ago, including with larger-calibre weapons. Of particular concern is jihadist possession of man-portable air defence systems (MANPADS), although many of these may be inoperable.
- Insurgents use materiel that consists largely of cold war-era Soviet and Chinese arms and ammunition, but they also use more recently produced materiel from Bulgaria and China, among other states.
- Armed groups appear to have obtained much of their materiel through diversion from Malian army stockpiles; however, Libyan stockpiles have also been an important source of materiel, including of more recently acquired larger-calibre weapons.
- Violent jihadists are likely to pose an ongoing threat in northern Mali.

The decline of the FDLR-FOCA

- The Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda (Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda, FDLR) put in place state-like institutions and procedures to control territory and refugee camps in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), while the structure of its armed wing, the Forces Combattantes Abacunguzi (Abacunguzi Fighting Forces, FOCA), resembled that of a regular army. Such unusually strong organizational control mechanisms were critical to the FDLR-FOCA's ability to generate income, recruit new combatants, and carry out military operations.
- External interventions, including the military operations that targeted the FDLR-FOCA in 2009–11, and the UN's demobilization programme, dealt severe blows to the group's internal cohesion and accelerated its decline.
- While the current weakened state of the FDLR-FOCA represents an opportunity for regional peace efforts, the remaining force has gone into hiding by mingling with the civilian population, putting the latter at risk in the event of further military attacks.

Floating armouries in the Indian Ocean

- The number of registered maritime PSCs rose from 56 in 2010, the year the International Code of Conduct for Private Security Providers was officially established, to more than 400 in 2014, with the companies based in 65 countries.
- While there is no publicly available registry of floating armouries, this research indicates around 30 such vessels were operating in the HRA during 2014. Some floating armouries can hold approximately 1,000 firearms, as well as ammunition.
- There are no international standards for floating armoury security or storage and armoury practices vary significantly.
- There is concern that new market entrants will seek to undercut existing operations by cutting costs and neglecting armoury security.
- Official government statements stress that no arms have been diverted from maritime PSCs or authorized floating armouries, but anecdotal evidence provided by maritime PSCs utilizing floating armouries reveals practices—such as transferring arms and ammunition from one maritime PSC to another—that violate the terms of arms export licensing provisions.

Young people in Burundi

- The threats posed by young people's involvement in armed violence remain significant in Burundi, influenced by widespread poverty, land disputes, manipulation by political parties, and the availability of arms from the civil war era.
- Data on the use of firearms in Burundi is limited, but new monitoring mechanisms suggest that more than one-third of all incidents of armed violence involve the use of small arms and grenades.
- Major international assistance projects in Burundi in the post-conflict period have tended to neglect the provision of support to young people, who are most at risk of becoming involved in violent activities.
- Local and national party-based politics play a significant role in provoking and sustaining youth violence in Burundi.
- Interviews show that for many young Burundians, joining youth wings of political parties represents one of the most easily accessible and effective short-term coping tactics, but one with long-term risks.

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Review copies are available on request from the Small Arms Survey.

In the Line of Fire

ELEPHANT AND RHINO POACHING IN AFRICA

In Africa, elephant populations on the whole are in decline and the illicit killing of rhinos has escalated sharply over recent years. The actors involved in poaching these animals include armed militias, rogue military officers, commercial poachers, and bush meat and subsistence hunters. Poachers are making widespread use of military-style weapons and high-calibre hunting rifles in their pursuit of elephants and rhinos, complicating the efforts of wildlife rangers to stop them.

Poachers use a range of weapons, including hunting and Kalashnikov-pattern rifles and craft firearms.

This chapter draws on interviews with leading wildlife conservation experts and open-source material to examine the challenges facing and strategies adopted by anti-poaching forces and wildlife management agencies in African range states with elephant and rhino populations. Based on original field research conducted in Kenya, the chapter also offers insight provided by rangers, conservationists, and others affected by poaching in the country.

The main findings are that:

- Poachers use multiple means to kill elephants and rhinos, including firearms and non-firearm methods.
- As demand for ivory and rhino horn remains high, some poachers and anti-poaching forces are becoming increasingly militarized, using military-style weapons and adopting more aggressive tactics.
- Firearms and ammunition found at poaching sites are not systematically identified, recorded, or traced despite the potential use of such techniques in identifying the sources and trafficking routes of poacher weapons.



From a helicopter, a park ranger with an FAL-type rifle searches for a fugitive poacher in Kruger National Park, South Africa, November 2014.
© James Oatway/Sunday Times/Gallo Images/Getty Images

- Armed groups have been responsible for major cases of large-scale elephant poaching, yet poaching allegations have also been levelled against some government military forces.
- Small groups of poachers also target elephant herds and rhinos, killing significant numbers of animals over time, particularly in rangeland where elephant and rhino populations are dense.
- Without a substantial reduction in the demand for ivory and rhino horn, efforts to deter poachers through armed interventions may disrupt poaching, but not stop it.

Poaching of various types takes place across African range states. In Central Africa, where some elephant populations have decreased significantly, poachers include armed militias, rogue law enforcement officers, commercial poachers, and subsistence hunters. At the *global* level, demand for illegal ivory is a strong predictor of poaching trends. The strongest *national-level* factor influencing rates of illegally killed elephants is poor governance. Large-scale poaching is the targeting and illegal killing of a concentrated population of elephants in a short period of time. Documented cases have involved the use of firearms, large quantities of ammunition, and even military helicopters. Small-scale poaching is the targeting of an individual elephant or rhino, or small numbers of such animals, for profit. In contrast to large-scale poaching, small-scale poaching tends to be conducted over a significant period of time. The poachers make use of firearms as well as traditional methods to kill elephants and rhinos.

Firearms, large quantities of ammunition, and even military helicopters are used in large-scale poaching.

Armed groups involved in poaching encompass a variety of actors and include pro-government militias and armed opposition forces, as well as economically motivated bands of former or current state military. Most armed groups are active within Central Africa. As these groups can potentially operate in large numbers and possess considerable firepower, they can pose unique challenges to rangers and others charged with protecting wildlife. Among armed groups in Africa, those in Central Africa have had the most significant impact on elephant herds; the UN Security Council and other international bodies have condemned their poaching activity in the region.

Firearms commonly used to hunt elephants and other big game can be classified into three groups: hunting rifles of various calibres; automatic military-style small arms, including assault rifles and light machine guns; and shotguns. Traditional weapons and methods, such as spears and poison, are also used to poach elephants and rhinos. Although information on weapons and ammunition used by poachers can provide insight into the networks that support and conduct poaching, including weapons sources and supply lines, it is not systematically collected.

Across African range states that have elephant and rhino populations, anti-poaching initiatives take many different forms. In some cases, they involve a combination of state and private rangers, government soldiers, and locally based organizations working jointly to combat poaching through the use of force or through grassroots work aimed at influencing local behaviour and attitudes. Anti-poaching rangers and units form the first line of defence against poaching, along with supporting law enforcement structures. While holding poachers accountable for poaching is important, so is the arrest and conviction of the people running the criminal syndicates that sponsor and facilitate the trafficking of ivory and rhino horn. To be effective, initiatives against poaching must be able to rely on cooperative efforts by government agencies (including judiciaries), local conservation organizations, and national and international organizations and conservation groups. 📌

Digging for Trouble

VIOLENCE AND FRONTIER URBANIZATION

This chapter focuses on violence related to one specific form of urbanization prevalent in the global South—*frontier urbanization*—here defined as the rapid growth of previously marginalized, underdeveloped regions and hinterlands into urban areas that service resource extraction, particularly of oil, gas, and minerals. Little is known about the spatial and institutional dynamics and competing interests among the extractive industries, state and non-state security providers, and populations in such settings. Is there a link between frontier urbanization and specific types of violence? What are the security effects when the extractive boom recedes?

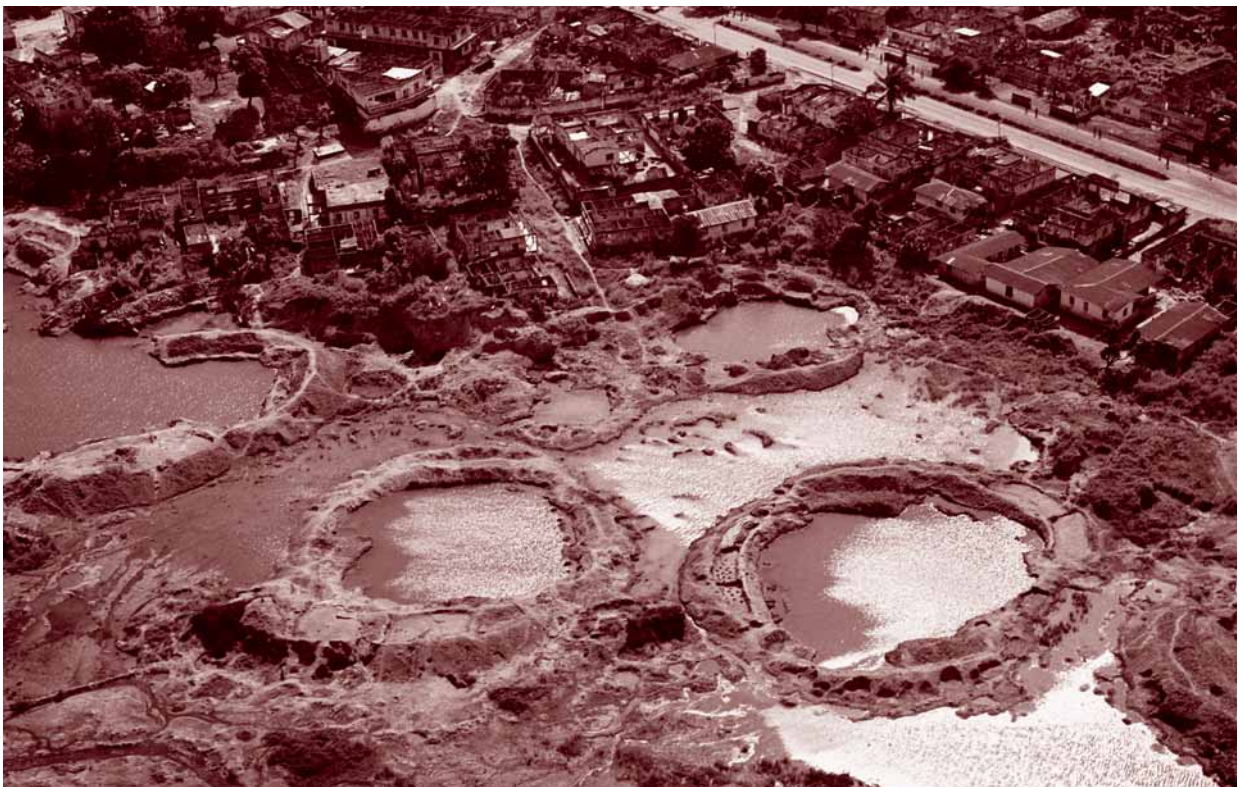
'Frontier urbanization' captures the volatility of urban growth and decline in areas affected by extraction activities.

The main findings of this chapter are as follows:

- The extraction of oil, gas, and strategic or precious minerals is typically accompanied by significant urbanization of the adjoining area, with often-dramatic socio-economic repercussions.
- The effort to control and secure resources that are being extracted can attract a variety of armed actors, including security forces and predatory groups, not only to the mining sites themselves, but also to the rapidly expanding urban service areas.
- The sudden urbanization around extraction sites is rarely accompanied by sufficient public service provision, including security. As a result, these services are increasingly outsourced to non-state providers, such as private security companies or protection squads.

Frontier urbanization can lead to conflict over the control of the land and its extractable resources; insecurity and social unrest related to precarious socio-economic and environmental conditions; and tensions, sometimes expressed violently, around post-extraction decline or state-led urban clean-up and rejuvenation plans. While the intersection of extractive industries and frontier urbanization is associated with various types of violence, key information, including rates of violence and small arms proliferation, remains elusive.

Following a brief introduction that conceptualizes frontier urbanization and identifies what is known about the links between urbanization and extraction-related armed violence, the main part of this chapter is divided into three sections that describe interrelated sources of violence and insecurity in such areas.



An aerial view of the abandoned diamond mines of Koidu, Sierra Leone, in 2001. Rebel forces later took control of the minefields and surrounding areas.
© Rob Huibers/Panos Pictures

The first discusses armed actors' protective and predatory responses to resource extraction. In the face of relatively high global prices for oil, gas, and minerals, the extraction of these resources is potentially lucrative for the business sector, the state, party-political elites seeking to finance their campaigns, and armed actors ranging from rebels to organized criminal groups. The practicalities of extracting, transporting, and selling what comes out of the earth depends to a large extent on the nature of the raw materials themselves, and the type of machinery and equipment required to extract and transport them. Security concerns, however, appear to be a fundamental aspect of all extraction endeavours—fuelled by protective measures on the one hand, and the resort to violent, predatory behaviour on the other.

The second section highlights the political, societal, and ecological challenges posed by unserved and impoverished (and often informal) urban areas that can arise in response to extraction activities. State institutions, particularly at the local level, sometimes lack either the capacity or the political will to react to the rapid growth of mining boom towns. As a result, these towns are among the poorest urban areas on earth, featuring high unemployment, a lack of social fabric, and dire living conditions because of air, water, and soil pollution. This section also touches on urban protest and social unrest in the face of perceived injustice and environmental damage related to resource extraction. Protests tend to revolve around working conditions, disputes over the land and its resources with property owners or indigenous groups, and environmental issues related to pollution and the destruction of natural habitat.

The third section discusses the extent to which frontier areas can cope with demise and decline. In light of significant labour mobility, extractive towns in the global South may experience the mass exodus of residents once the mining boom is over. Even so, some urban areas servicing extractive activities are too large to ever become true ghost towns. In such cities, state authorities tend to apply long-term approaches to persistent, informal, 'ungovernable' neighbourhoods. Their methods are at times violent and violence-inducing.

The chapter's conclusion reflects on the scenarios presented and offers possible directions for further research. Among the challenges to moving from a case study approach to a more comprehensive analysis is the lack of key data points, such as rates of violence and small arms proliferation in urbanized frontiers compared to other urbanized areas. Research on the different facets of frontier urbanization and security provision across actors and communities is needed to better understand violence trends. Only then can promising policies and legal frameworks be developed to mitigate violence and improve security. ■

One Meeting after Another

UN PROCESS UPDATE

This year's UN Update chapter recaps the key features of the Fifth Biennial Meeting of States (BMS5), the latest meeting on the UN Programme of Action (PoA),¹ held in June 2014 (see Figure 3.1). After a brief review of the process leading to the adoption of the BMS5 outcome document, the chapter identifies sources of value added in the document as compared with previous PoA-meeting text. The last section of the chapter reviews the issues that are up for discussion at the next meeting on the PoA calendar, the Second Open-ended Meeting of Governmental Experts (MGE2), scheduled for June 2015.

As described in the chapter, the BMS5 outcome document features practical implementation measures in the areas that states discussed, namely stockpile management; marking, record-keeping, and tracing; and international cooperation and assistance. It builds on previous PoA meeting outcomes by, for example: promoting women's participation in PoA-related processes, highlighting the importance of stockpile security in conflict and post-conflict situations, and emphasizing training in building sustainable capacity for PoA implementation.

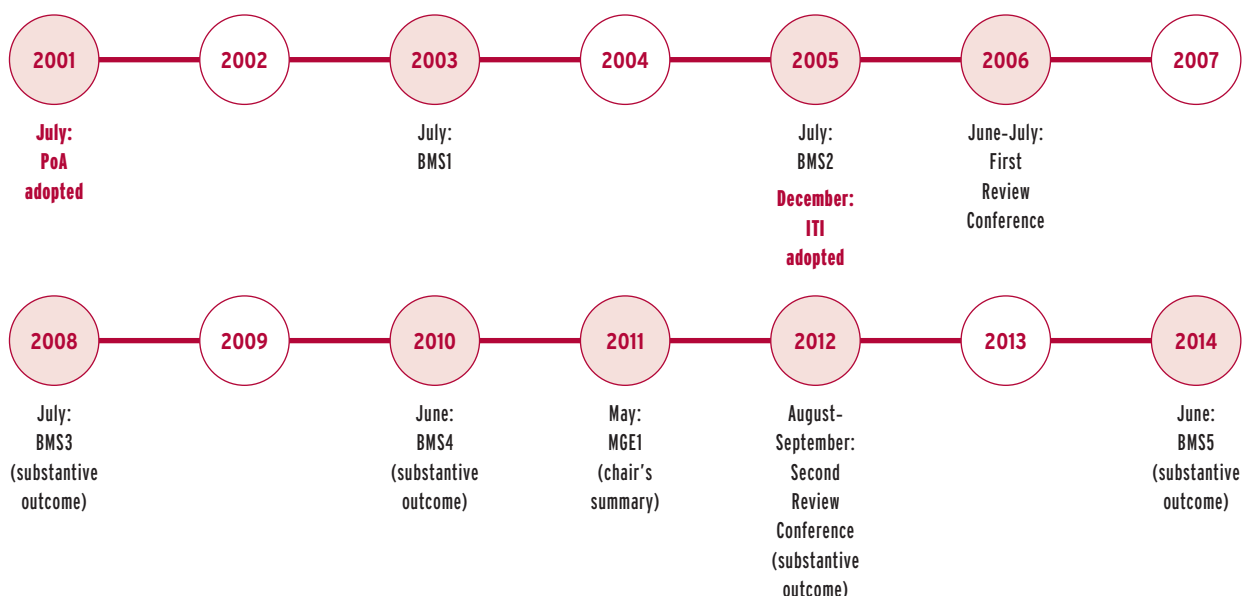
Certain omissions from the BMS5 text, while important, do not weaken the document's focus on practical implementation measures.

While there are some important omissions from the BMS5 text, such as full acknowledgement of related UN Security Council work on small arms, these do not weaken the document's focus on practical implementation measures. In addition to those already mentioned, such measures include steps to enhance the tracing of small arms in conflict and post-conflict situations and the exchange of tracing results and other information in order to identify and reduce diversion risks—in each case, building on discussions at the Second Review Conference in 2012.

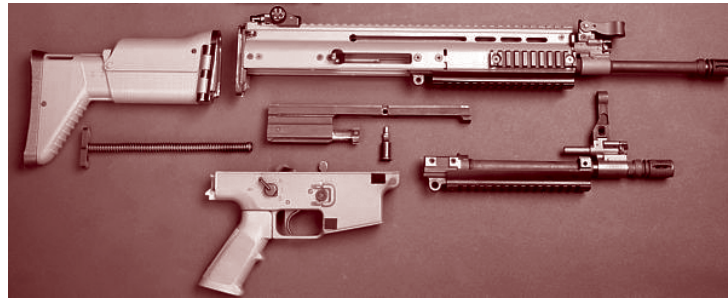
In addition to building on past PoA meetings, the BMS5 outcome makes important connections to future meetings, in particular MGE2—putting the topic of recent developments in small arms manufacturing, technology, and design on its agenda. As described in the chapter, specific challenges to small arms control efforts arise in at least three new areas: modular weapons design, polymer firearm parts, and 3D printing. The chapter also examines the opportunities that some new technologies offer for improved small arms control.

Modular weapons typically feature a core (fixed) section around which most other major parts and components can be changed in order to meet different operational needs. This complicates the task of unique identification as the weapon will usually bear conflicting serial numbers following a change of parts if the latter have been marked with such numbers, as the International Tracing Instrument (ITI)² recommends. Policy responses include the identification of a 'control component' for modular weapons and common approaches to the marking of this and other parts of the weapon.

Figure 3.1 **Timeline of PoA meetings**



Gun manufacturers are increasingly using polymers in the production of firearm parts such as handgun frames (primary structural components), largely due to their lower weight and cost. Unlike metal firearms, however, polymer guns are difficult to mark durably, as the ITI prescribes; arms traffickers who seek to make a polymer gun untraceable will normally succeed in doing so once they remove the serial number that the manufacturer has marked on the frame. Policy guidance is needed on issues such as the marking methods applicable to polymer firearm parts and the depth and placement of such markings.



A partially disassembled SCAR-L (light version of the Special Forces Combat Assault Rifle).
© weaponsman.com

Falling prices, improved technology, and other factors have led to a boom in additive manufacturing ('3D printing') in recent years, at both the industrial and consumer (hobbyist) levels. In early 2013, 3D-printed guns hit the news with the production of the first functioning 3D-printed firearm, the 'Liberator' handgun, made almost entirely of polymer. While current norms, both national and international, are largely adequate for the control of 3D-printed firearms, their application is more difficult given the diffusion of increasingly powerful 3D-printing technology to individuals and small groups. Criminals and non-state armed groups may find 3D-printed guns attractive since, when unmarked, they are untraceable and because many security screening devices have difficulty detecting firearms made largely of polymer (although that is not true of the metal ammunition they still use). While firearms produced using traditional manufacturing techniques still easily outperform their 3D-printed counterparts, governments have a clear interest in preparing for the day when fully functioning 3D-printed firearms can be produced easily and economically.

**Governments have a clear interest in preparing for the day when fully functioning
3D-printed firearms can be produced easily and economically.**

As mentioned already, new technologies pose various challenges to small arms control, yet they can also help strengthen implementation of the PoA and ITI in areas such as weapons marking, record-keeping, and tracing, stockpile security, and the prevention of unauthorized use. The chapter describes some of these new technologies while also noting the numerous barriers that stand in the way of their widespread adoption—in particular, for many countries, the cost of establishing supporting infrastructure (databases and networked IT).

MGE1, held in May 2011, helped alert states to new developments in small arms manufacturing, technology, and design that made PoA and ITI implementation more difficult in several areas. MGE2 offers UN member states an important opportunity to engage with these challenges and indicate how to respond. ■

Notes

- 1 Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects.
- 2 International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons.

Trade Update

AFTER THE 'ARAB SPRING'

This chapter explores the impact of the 'Arab Spring' on small arms transfers to the Middle East and North Africa, a region with high levels of armed violence and political instability. It outlines trends in authorized small arms transfers for 2001–12, and discusses the extent to which regional reporting instruments contribute to transparency in small arms transfers.

Authorized small arms transfers

This chapter examines trends in the values of authorized small arms transfers by top exporters and importers between 2001 and 2012, as reported to UN Comtrade. An analysis of available customs data shows that the United States dominated the small arms market for that period and also reveals that:

- the five largest exporters of small arms during 2001–12 were (in descending order) the United States, Italy, Germany, Brazil, and Austria; and that
- the five largest importers of small arms during 2001–12 were (in descending order) the United States, Canada, Germany, France, and the UK.

Based on UN Comtrade data, this section also identifies the top exporters and importers of small arms and light weapons—those with annual exports and imports of at least USD 100 million, respectively—in 2012:

- The top exporters were (in descending order) the United States, Italy, Germany, Brazil, Austria, South Korea, the Russian Federation, China, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Turkey, Norway, and Japan.
- The top importers were (in descending order) the United States, Canada, Germany, Australia, France, the United Kingdom, Thailand, and Indonesia.

Authorized small arms transfers to the Middle East and North Africa, 2001–14

Parts of the Middle East and North Africa suffer from very high levels of armed violence, armed conflict, and political instability, as well as the risk of small arms misuse and diversion. The 'Arab Spring' heightened many of these concerns, with repeated calls for the imposition of multilateral arms supply restrictions following government crackdowns on protests. Governments in the region continue to import small arms to bolster weak or recently re-established national security forces that are fighting well-equipped non-state armed groups. The chapter examines the effect of increased armed violence and political instability in Egypt, Libya, and Syria on the policies of significant small arms exporters to the region by comparing the small arms flows of two periods: 2001–10 and 2011–13.

There is little evidence that the 'Arab Spring' has significantly affected the policies of major arms exporters.

There is little evidence that the 'Arab Spring' has had a significant impact on the policies of top or major exporters of small arms to the Middle East and North Africa. Libya is the only state affected by the uprisings to be subject to a UN arms embargo. Efforts to impose such an embargo on Syria have failed and the option has not been discussed with regard to Egypt. Multilateral efforts to

restrict arms flows to Syria and Egypt do not appear to have had a significant impact on the ability of governments in these countries to procure small arms and ammunition. Considerations that presumably include regional and national security concerns are exerting a strong influence on arms export decision-making, effectively outweighing the risk of misuse or diversion in the eyes of these exporters.

Western and Gulf Cooperation Council States face a dilemma regarding the supply of small arms to non-state armed groups engaged in conflict with



Footage released by IS allegedly shows small arms and ammunition dropped by the United States and intercepted by IS, in Kobani, Syria, October 2014. © A3Maq News/YouTube

Table 4.11 Small arms and ammunition pledged or delivered to peshmerga, August–September 2014

| Exporter | Pledged materiel | Declared value |
|----------------|---|-----------------------------------|
| Albania | 22 million 7.62 x 39 mm cartridges, 15,000 hand grenades, 15,000 60 mm mortar shells, 12,000 82 mm mortar shells, 20,000 grenades for 40 mm under-barrel grenade launchers | n/a |
| Bulgaria | 1,800 firearms and 6 million rounds of ammunition | USD 3.7 million (BGN 6 million) |
| Croatia | Undisclosed small arms and ammunition | n/a |
| Czech Republic | 10 million 7.62 x 39 mm cartridges, 8 million 7.62 x 54R mm cartridges, 5,000 RPG-7 rounds, and 5,000 hand grenades | USD 2 million (CZK 41 million) |
| Estonia | 1 million rounds of 7.62 x 39 mm ammunition | n/a |
| France | Browning M2 heavy machine guns and undisclosed arms and ammunition | n/a |
| Germany | 8,000 G3 rifles and 2 million rounds of 7.62 x 51 mm ammunition, 8,000 G36 assault rifles and 4 million rounds of 5.56 x 45 mm ammunition, 40 MG3 general purpose machine guns and 1 million rounds of 7.61 x 51 mm ammunition, 8,000 P1 pistols and 1 million rounds of 9 x 19 mm ammunition, 30 MILAN anti-tank guided weapons and 500 guided missiles, 200 shoulder-fired Panzerfaust 3 rocket-assisted recoilless guns and 2,500 rockets, 40 Carl Gustaf recoilless guns and 1,000 projectiles, 100 flare guns and 4,000 rounds, and 10,000 hand grenades | USD 91 million (EUR 70 million) |
| Hungary | 7 million cartridges and thousands of mines and armour-piercing shells | n/a |
| Iran | Undisclosed arms and ammunition | n/a |
| Italy | 100 MG 42/59 general purpose machine guns and 250,000 ammunition rounds, 100 12.7 mm machine guns and 250,000 ammunition rounds, 1,000 RPG-7 grenades, 1,000 RPG-9 grenades, and 400,000 ammunition rounds for 'Soviet-made machine guns' | USD 2.5 million (EUR 1.9 million) |
| UK | 40 Browning M2 heavy machine guns and nearly half a million rounds of ammunition | USD 2.6 million (GBP 1.6 million) |
| United States | Undisclosed arms and ammunition | n/a |

Note: n/a = not available.

Sources: AFP (2014b; 2014c; 2014d); Albania (2014); B92.net (2014); Italy (2014, p. 13); Jones (2014); Kimball (2014); Kominek (2014); Novinite (2014); Payne (2014); UKMoD (2014); author correspondence with a small arms expert, September 2014

repressive governments or extremist organizations in the Middle East and North Africa. They must balance the risks that such groups might abuse human rights, violate international humanitarian law, and divert arms transfers with the pressing humanitarian needs of civilian populations that are threatened by armed conflict and repression. Small arms have been delivered to non-state armed groups in Libya and Syria in the context of humanitarian interventions, regime change support, and counter-terrorism efforts. Table 4.11 provides a snapshot of the arming of the *peshmerga* (Kurdish militia) in Iraq in response to the advance of the armed group known as the Islamic State.

Exporters have authorized exports of small arms to non-state armed groups that are inclined to fight extremist groups.

Transparency on small arms transfers: regional reporting instruments

Several regional reporting instruments contribute to transparency with respect to small arms transfers by releasing information provided by states. Member states of the European Union and countries in South-east Europe provide reports that cover authorizations and, in some cases, deliveries of conventional arms. Information specific to small arms is currently exchanged only among participating states of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe. The assessment of regional reporting instruments shows that regional intergovernmental information exchanges on small arms transfers are not contributing to public transparency, in contrast to regional reporting instruments that cover broader categories of conventional arms. ■

Less 'Bang' for the Buck

STOCKPILE MANAGEMENT IN SOUTH-EAST EUROPE

Most countries in South-east Europe (SEE) face the challenge of managing operational, excess, and ageing weapons and ammunition. Managing ammunition, in particular, requires a comprehensive approach—a mix of complex and often expensive measures relating to planning, procurement, storage, use, infrastructure, physical security, surveillance, and final disposal. Few SEE governments have the capacity to address each of these issues throughout the national ammunition stockpile's life cycle.

Proper management of conventional ammunition and explosives stockpiles involves procedures that increase safety and security at storage sites, thereby enhancing the military's operational capabilities, reducing the risk of unplanned explosions, and preventing illicit proliferation. Yet examples of catastrophic accidents associated with surplus—and sometimes unsafe—ammunition, generally illustrate that SEE governments regard surplus stockpiles as having a high commercial value (if sold) and are reluctant to allocate the budgets required for demilitarization.

The creation of weapons and ammunition surpluses is normal, yet in some countries of the region it presents a continuing problem because the disposal process can be politically sensitive. The Regional Approach to Stockpile Reduction (RASR) initiative aims at fostering regional solutions to South-east Europe's stockpile management problem. RASR participating states are Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, and Slovenia. Funded exclusively by the US government, the initiative seeks to address stockpile management challenges by sharing good practices and lessons learned, by building transparency and mutual confidence between RASR participating states, and by pooling transport and destruction capacities.

In some SEE states, the surplus disposal process can be politically sensitive.

RASR initiative workshop discussions have revealed disparities and shortfalls in expertise across SEE, specifically in the areas of stockpile safety and security. Technical knowledge and experience are often lost with the restructuring of armed forces and the consequent reassignment or loss of personnel, which thwarts sustainable capacity building. Critically, many soldiers assigned to guard duty at ammunition and weapons storage sites lack the basic training necessary for ensuring the adequate safety and security of these sites.

RASR workshop discussions have revealed disparities and shortfalls in stockpile management expertise across SEE.

This chapter reviews the surplus stockpile situation in the nine RASR participating states at the end of 2014, more than five years after the launch of RASR in May 2009.

More generally, the research seeks to identify the most promising means of building on the stockpile management and destruction efforts already undertaken in these countries. The chapter thus highlights the issue of *sustainability*, while placing a particular emphasis on *capacity building* and *training*.



Empty ammunition crates litter the road leading to the site of an unplanned explosion at an ammunition factory in Gorni Lom, Bulgaria. October 2014. © AP Photo



A participant is trained in firefighting skills during an ammunition transportation safety course held at Rajlovac, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, in mid-2014. © Swiss Armed Forces

The main findings are:

- Poor ammunition stockpile management remains a serious problem in much of South-east Europe.
- While unplanned explosions at munitions sites are a global problem, they have been especially prevalent in South-east Europe, at both state and non-state facilities.
- While most countries reported that surplus stockpile levels were decreasing, some registered little change between 2009 and 2014 as military reform, ageing ammunition, and new acquisitions provided a steady flow of surplus ordnance.
- Sales and donations remain the favoured disposal options. A RASR participating state will only opt to destroy its surplus stockpiles upon determining that its marketability is poor.
- Surplus weapons and ammunition destruction in South-east Europe remains largely donor-driven and donor-funded.
- A number of political, regulatory, and commercial constraints hinder regional cooperation with respect to transport and demilitarization.
- In collaboration with other stakeholders, RASR states are making a concerted effort to build, harmonize, and standardize the stockpile management knowledge base through regional technical training.
- In Bosnia and Herzegovina, a long-term, ongoing initiative that is potentially of wider application seeks to integrate technical training into a broader capacity building effort that promotes host-country ownership, organizational reform, and the integration of international standards into national legislation and policy.

This chapter's analysis is largely based on data obtained by the Small Arms Survey in its capacity as one of the five RASR Steering Committee members; additional information was obtained in the framework of an ongoing research project on European Union Force Mobile Training Team 2.1.6.1, which was set up in 2011.

The chapter begins by describing the rationale behind RASR. The second section reviews surplus stockpile, disposal, and storage data declared by RASR participating states between 2008 and 2014. The third section describes the main constraints on regional cooperation with reference to surplus ammunition transport and demilitarization. The final section examines the need, current programmes, and potential opportunities for sustained, comprehensive, and standardized stockpile management capacity building in SEE. ■

Expanding Arsenals

INSURGENT ARMS IN NORTHERN MALI

Despite a preliminary peace agreement in June 2013, armed violence persisted in northern Mali in 2014. The Malian army and secessionist rebels engaged in armed confrontation. Armed groups clashed in violent competition over resources and influence. Jihadists targeted national and international forces with roadside bombs and in suicide attacks. This chapter considers the multi-layered and often interconnected sources of insecurity in northern Mali in their historical perspective—with a specific focus on the origins and sources of arms and ammunition that fuel it.

Northern Mali's security situation remained precarious towards the end of 2014.

The chapter demonstrates that armed insurgency is not a new phenomenon in northern Mali, underscoring that it takes place against a background of complex competition between and within ethnic groups and tribes as well as networks that traffic drugs and other contraband. A notable aspect of the unresolved insurgency that began in 2012 and triggered international intervention in 2013 is the degree to which insurgent arms holdings have grown. In addition to small arms, their materiel includes larger-calibre weapons such as recoilless guns, auto-cannon, and rocket launch systems. Posing a previously unknown challenge in northern Mali, jihadists now follow an al-Qaeda-inspired agenda against 'Crusader' aggression and 'enemies of Islam'—with a view to establishing Islamic laws and institutions in the areas under their control. In this context, they make frequent use of improvised explosive devices at roadsides and near airstrips in northern Mali, not least in attacks against the Malian army, French forces, and UN peacekeepers.

The chapter finds that armed groups in northern Mali are better armed now than they were a decade ago, including with larger-calibre weapons. In particular, jihadists possess man-portable air defence system (MANPADS), which tend to be inoperable. Nevertheless, two MANPADS that French forces recovered from jihadists in northern Mali in 2013 were found to be fully operational despite rustic storage and poor handling. Much of the materiel used by insurgents was produced in the Soviet Union and China during the cold war era. But insurgents also possess more recently produced materiel, including ammunition produced in Bulgaria in 2011 and in China in 2010.



A woman walks down a demolished street in Gao, north-eastern Mali, following an attack by armed groups, February 2013. © Joel Saget/AFP Photo

Insurgents sourced much of their materiel from Malian stockpiles through capture on the battlefield, looting, and other forms of diversion. In May 2014, the Malian army and insurgents clashed in the town of Kidal in northern Mali. Routing the Malian army, insurgents reportedly captured several tonnes of arms and ammunition as well as 50 new 4×4 vehicles that the European Union had provided to the Malian army as part of its support for military training.

While far fewer in numbers, NATO-standard arms and ammunition are also present in northern Mali. They include Belgian- and Portuguese-produced assault rifles as well as Belgian-produced machine guns and ammunition. The source of some of this and other materiel is Libya, where arms and ammunition have been widely available since the dispersal of Qaddafi-era arsenals. Tribal links and established trade routes across the Sahara facilitate cross-border trafficking of arms and ammunition and their constant supply to northern Mali in trans-Saharan convoys of trucks and all-terrain vehicles—a modern version of the caravan trade. Supplies from Libya appear to include larger-calibre weapons as well as MANPADS. More limited quantities of ammunition may have been sourced in Algeria, Burkina Faso, and other states in the region. Research conducted for this chapter has not yielded evidence that any foreign state is supplying arms or ammunition to insurgents in northern Mali, including to al-Qaeda-linked actors who are under a UN Security Council embargo.

The findings suggest that a negotiated peace agreement between rebels and the Malian government is necessary to reduce violence over the long term. At the same time, and in light of the prominence of Malian stockpiles as a source of arms and ammunition for insurgents, the need for improvements to the army's physical security and stockpile management appears to be urgent. Measures should also be put in place to prevent weapons throughout the region from reaching northern Mali. Such efforts may require regional initiatives beyond the UN embargo on jihadists—which has been largely ineffective to date. This challenge is complicated by the fact that many of the border areas are controlled by non-state or semi-autonomous groups. Since falling out with secessionist rebels, jihadists have emerged as perhaps the most pressing security concern in northern Mali. Countering these groups will require dynamic responses from the international community. ■

Waning Cohesion

THE RISE AND FALL OF THE FDLR-FOCA

In a declaration issued on 30 December 2013, leaders of the Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda (Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda, FDLR) in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) ‘committed themselves to put down their weapons and rather undertake a political struggle’. By mid-2014, some 200 combatants of the estimated 1,400-strong force had surrendered and turned in weapons, raising hopes that the claim was being followed by concrete action. While the FDLR has not demobilized in its entirety—and was the target of new attacks by the Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo (Armed Forces of the DRC, FARDC) in early 2015—these figures illustrate the dramatic decline in the group’s strength, down from an estimated 11,500 men in 2002.

This chapter analyses armed groups’ internal cohesion and control mechanisms, including procedures for the acquisition, management, and use of weapons and ammunition. Specifically, it examines the formation and the evolution of the FDLR and its armed wing, the Forces Combattantes Abacunguzi (Abacunguzi Fighting Forces, FOCA), arguably one of the most enduring and destabilizing of the many armed groups operating in the eastern DRC (see Map 7.1). The chapter also examines the factors, internal and external, that have contributed to the recent weakening of the FDLR–FOCA.

The chapter’s main findings include:

- The FDLR–FOCA put in place state-like institutions and procedures to control territory and refugee camps in the DRC, while the structure of its armed wing resembled that of a regular army. Such unusually strong organizational control mechanisms were critical to the group’s ability to generate income, recruit new combatants, and carry out military operations.
- The FDLR–FOCA sourced its weapons primarily from other armed actors in the region—either through battlefield capture or support received from allies. Standing orders issued by the group’s military command placed great importance on the need for combat units to acquire new weapons and to use ammunition sparingly.
- The group’s small arms holdings are diverse but ageing. Little is known about the current size and state of its light weapons stockpiles, however.
- External interventions, including the military operations that targeted the FDLR–FOCA in 2009–11, and the UN’s demobilization programme, dealt severe blows to the group’s internal cohesion and accelerated its decline.



As part of their demobilization and reintegration process, former FDLR members set to return to civilian life in Rwanda attend classes on politics and history, including the 1994 genocide, held in Mutobo, Rwanda, April 2014. © Chip Somodevilla/Getty Images

- While the current weakened state of the FDLR–FOCA represents an opportunity for regional peace efforts, the remaining force has gone into hiding by mingling with the civilian population, putting the latter at risk in the event of further military attacks.

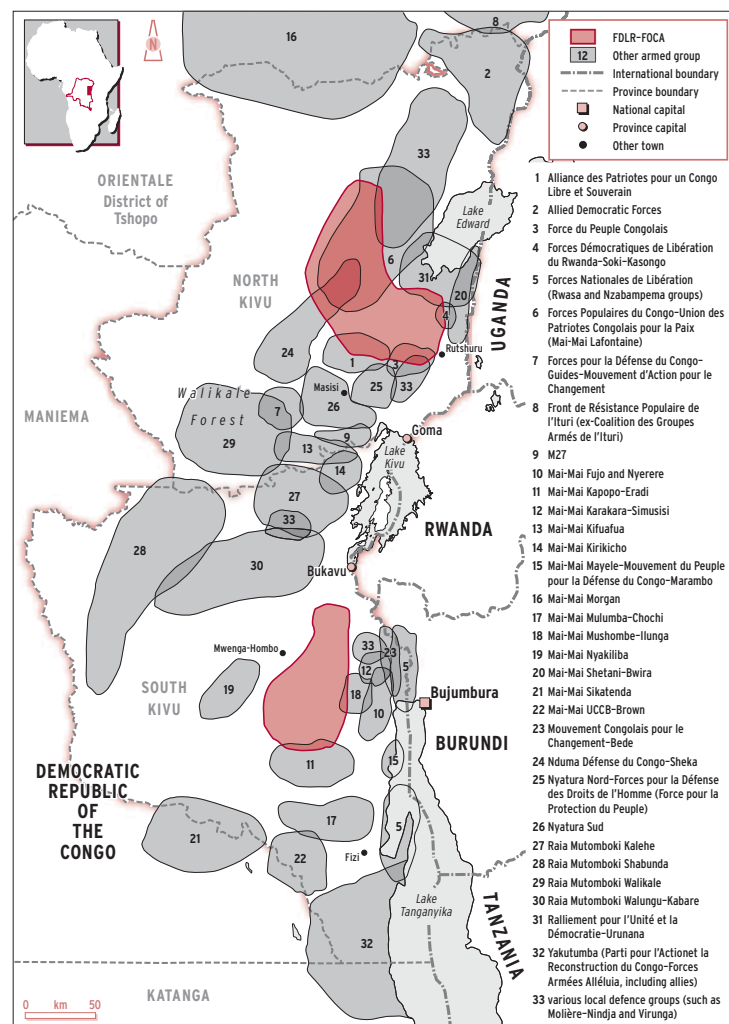
The FDLR adopted 'state-like' structures and regulations.

Long considered one of the principal obstacles to peace in the region, the FDLR–FOCA appears severely weakened and no longer able to threaten the government in Kigali. The loss of Kinshasa as a key supporter, especially in the 2009–12 period, and international pressure on its leadership, followed by joint Congolese–Rwandan attacks on its positions, seem to have eroded the group's cohesion and, consequently, its overall strength. The killing and arrests of many of the group's leaders and commanders, along with the formation of splinter factions, constitute serious strains on the group's decision-making processes. In response to its military retreat, the FDLR–FOCA has also lost control over much of the territory and resources it once held, poisoning morale and accelerating the desertion and repatriation of combatants to Rwanda. From a 'state within a state' with a unifying objective—reclaiming power in Rwanda—the organization has transformed into a loose grouping of armed factions in hiding that are essentially preoccupied with their daily survival.

Yet the current weakened state of the FDLR–FOCA should not be taken as the group's epitaph. The structures it previously established could easily be revived should the region's strategic alliances shift once more and become more favourable to the movement—as they have in the past. The international community and regional leaders will therefore need to maintain their efforts to neutralize the FDLR–FOCA through complementary military and diplomatic means. They would also do well to understand the factors that underpinned the group's formerly high levels of cohesion, so as to be able to counter them again, should the FDLR–FOCA revive in the future. As this chapter describes, the aggressive international and military pressure on the FDLR leadership, combined with the implementation of credible demobilization and repatriation programmes that targeted commanders and facilitated the desertion of the rank and file, are policies that accelerated the group's decline.

A disorganized FDLR–FOCA also presents new challenges. The group's weapons holdings, perhaps ageing but largely unknown, have now dispersed with the combatants in hiding. This complicates prospects for a comprehensive demobilization and disarmament programme, as agreements with the group's leadership may not translate into participation of the various small units that currently constitute the group. The FDLR–FOCA's waning cohesion may also be bad news for civilians, who have already suffered greatly from the group's reprisal attacks and criminal activities. With group commanders and combatants hiding in communities, civilians are at risk of being caught in the crossfire. Keeping military pressure on the FDLR–FOCA under these new conditions is a major challenge for the international community and the Congolese government. Maintaining the option for exiled Rwandan Hutus to return to Rwanda under good conditions will be crucial. ■

Map 7.1 Approximate areas of influence of selected armed groups in the eastern DRC, October 2014



Stockpiles at Sea

FLOATING ARMOURIES IN THE INDIAN OCEAN

There has not been a successful pirate attack off the coast of Somalia since 2012, but the shipping industry's demand for anti-piracy measures remains high. Indeed, this demand has resulted in an increase in registered maritime private security companies (PSCs) from 56 in 2010 to more than 400 in 2014. In 2013, private armed guards were on board roughly 35–40 per cent of the estimated 65,922 merchant vessels transiting across the Indian Ocean's 'high-risk area' (HRA) (see Map 8.1).

One of the major challenges for maritime PSCs that provide anti-piracy services for merchant vessels transiting the HRA is moving their arms and ammunition between coastal states that prohibit or have restrictions on vessels with arms on board. Floating armouries have emerged to overcome this challenge. There is a lack of information on the number of floating armouries, their use, the number of arms they store, and related physical security and stockpile management practices. This chapter introduces the types of vessels used as floating armouries and their services. It provides an overview of some of the nascent—and potential—approaches to regulating floating armouries to ensure safe and secure practices.

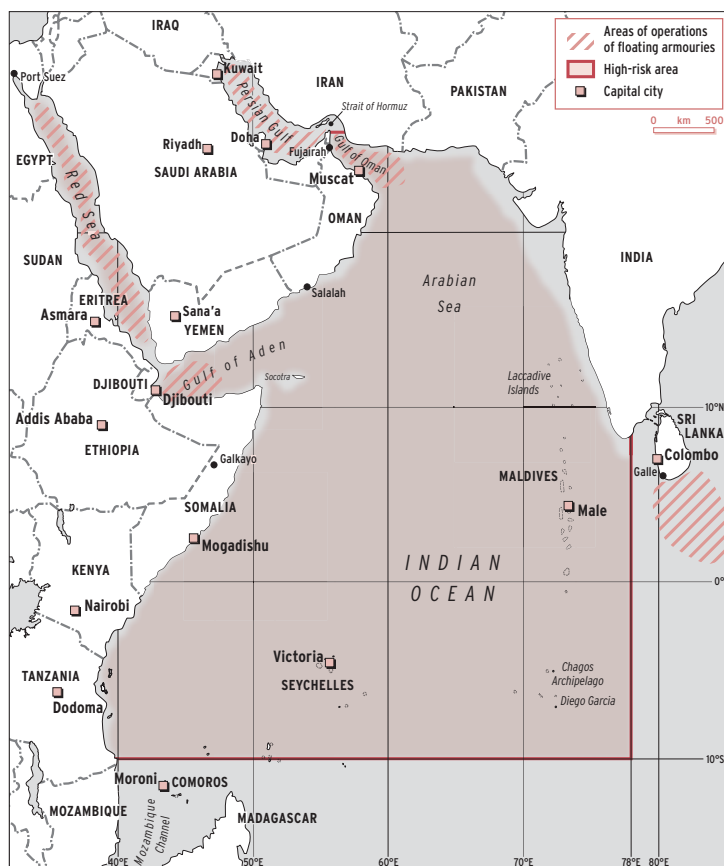
There are no international standards for floating armoury security or storage.

Addressing maritime insecurity: the PSC solution

The International Maritime Organization has issued recommendations and guidance to ensure that the carriage and use of weapons and equipment by private armed guards comply with the legislation and policies of their vessel's flag state and of the countries with jurisdiction over the territorial waters and ports that the vessel is to enter. Nevertheless, there are no common standards or practices agreed among flag states or coastal states regarding the carriage, embarkation, disembarkation, or storage of maritime PSC arms. In the face of regulatory hurdles, including prohibitions on the entry of arms, and the often high cost permits and storage in government-owned

land-based armouries, maritime PSCs increasingly use floating armouries for convenience, economy, and safety.

Map 8.1 Floating armouries and the high-risk area, 2014



Around 30 floating armouries operated in the HRA during 2014.

What is a floating armoury?

A floating armoury is a ship operating in international waters that provides services for maritime PSCs, including the embarkation and disembarkation of PSC personnel, arms, and equipment between a commercial vessel or port and the floating armoury; storage, service, and maintenance, or rental of arms; and the provision of accommodation for private armed guard teams. Storage capacities vary, but some floating armouries can hold approximately 1,000 fire-arms, as well as ammunition.

Around 30 floating armouries operated in the HRA during 2014 in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Oman, and 1 in Sri Lanka. In 2014, governments in and around the HRA were not known to own or operate any floating armouries; however, the Sri Lankan government had authorized and closely controlled the floating armoury MV *Mabanuwara*, which was operating in its territorial waters.

Arms circulating in the HRA

Due to limited transparency, questions persist regarding the control of arms supplies to maritime PSCs operating in the HRA, as well as the total number of arms that they use and store in floating armouries in the region. Only the Netherlands and the UK have provided public information regarding small arms transfers to maritime PSCs and the use of floating armouries. Estimates of the total number of PSC firearms in the HRA are in the range of 7,000–10,000.

Safe and secure

There are no international standards for floating armoury security or storage and armoury practices vary significantly. For example, due to the fact that floating armouries operating in the HRA are not designed to serve as armouries, storage space for weapons, ammunition, and equipment may be inadequate. In addition, new market entrants could seek to undercut existing operations by slashing costs and neglecting armoury security.

Official government statements stress that no arms have been diverted from maritime PSCs or authorized floating armouries, but anecdotal evidence provided by maritime PSCs utilizing floating armouries reveals that certain practices—such as transferring arms and ammunition from one maritime PSC to another—violate the terms of arms export licensing provisions.

Regulating floating armouries

A variety of approaches have been proposed for regulating floating armouries. These include:

- the establishment of an international regulatory authority for monitoring and inspecting floating armouries;
- International Maritime Organization guidelines, standards, and recommendations for floating armouries;
- flag state regulations for floating armouries, drawing upon the practice of the Saint Kitts and Nevis registry;
- licensing for use by maritime PSCs by government authorities in arms exporting states; and
- an international standard connected to ISO/PAS 28007, which covers maritime PSCs' operations and guard training and qualifications, but not floating armouries.

Other areas at risk from piracy and armed robbery at sea are examining the HRA model, with the Gulf of Guinea identified as a potential site for floating armouries.

The use of floating armouries is a lucrative business that has responded to diverse, often contradictory, legislative and administrative measures relating to the carriage of armed guards into territorial waters and ports. For now, it seems that only a catastrophic incident may prompt the international community to regulate floating armouries. ■

Unprotected

YOUNG PEOPLE IN POST-CONFLICT BURUNDI

Burundi has long been afflicted by successive waves of extreme violence. Having gained its independence from Belgium in 1962, the country witnessed cyclical outbreaks of mass violence in 1965, 1972, 1988, 1991, and 1993, which resulted in the deaths of hundreds of thousands of people, the displacement of millions of others, and the perpetuation of a climate of distrust, fear, and extreme underdevelopment. All of these episodes were rooted in unresolved grievances and contestations for control of power and resources; they also reflected a political landscape in which deep ethnic divides were used to mobilize the population to engage in extreme violence.

Although civil war in Burundi ended more than a decade ago, the country remains deeply affected by insecurity.

Although civil war in Burundi ended more than a decade ago, the country remains deeply affected by insecurity. Many of the underlying conditions that led to the outbreak of armed conflict persist, including poverty, unemployment, a lack of access to basic social services, and a narrowing political space. These structural weaknesses persist despite the heavy investment of international aid and development actors in peacekeeping, peacebuilding, and security sector reform over the last two decades.

Young people in particular are confronted with the challenges of insecurity. Having lived much of their lives in a situation of violent conflict, they have experienced extreme loss and hardships: the death of parents and other close family members, frequent displacement, loss of land and looting of property, illness, and disrupted access to school and other basic services. In the post-conflict period, young Burundians continue to suffer from a persistent lack of access to education and health care, food insecurity, and seemingly insurmountable challenges to obtaining gainful employment.

In the face of such adversity, young Burundians are doing their best to cope, with varying degrees of effectiveness. As this chapter shows, young people use a variety of coping tactics to improve their access to resources and to ensure their immediate short-term survival. In the longer term, however, these strategies may increase their exposure to risks. Indeed, many young people seek to access material support or protection through political patronage; given the historic precedent of political elites recruiting youths to carry out acts of violence and intimidation in Burundi, the current mobilization of large numbers of young people to government and opposition party youth wings presents heightened risks for an upsurge in armed violence.



Young women work in the fields in the province of Cibitoke, northern Burundi, March 2010. © Thierry Bresillon/Godong/Corbis



Imbonerakure members march in the stadium of Gitega, Burundi, September 2014. © Damien Roulette

Young Burundians adopt high-risk coping strategies, including those that lead to involvement in armed violence.

This chapter reviews the circumstances and capacities of young people in Burundi, and the deleterious effects of years of violence and poverty on the protective factors that would have otherwise safeguarded them from involvement in violent activities. It examines the relationship between armed violence and material adversity and the ways in which young people experience and cope with the daily challenges of survival. It is based on original fieldwork conducted with almost 500 young Burundians between 2012 and 2014. The chapter's main findings include the following:

- The threats posed by young people's involvement in armed violence remain significant in Burundi, influenced by widespread poverty, land disputes, manipulation by political parties, and the availability of arms from the civil war era.
- In the absence of family support, young Burundians adopt high-risk coping strategies, including those that lead to involvement in armed violence.
- Major international assistance projects in Burundi in the post-conflict period have tended to neglect the provision of support to young people, who are most at risk of becoming involved in violent activities.
- Local and national party-based politics play a significant role in provoking and sustaining youth violence in Burundi. For many young Burundians, joining youth wings of political parties represents one of the most easily accessible and effective short-term coping tactics, but one with long-term risks.
- Providing young people with opportunities to earn an income and ensure their own livelihood is likely to improve their prospects significantly, while also reducing their chances of adopting high-risk coping tactics.

Examining how young people cope with pervasive violence requires both short- and long-term perspectives, with an appreciation for the complexity of coping processes whose outcomes might not be measurable for many years. To avert, or at least mitigate, the damage of armed violence, government leaders, policy-makers, and practitioners need to place a higher priority on improving the opportunities available to young people. Despite the profound challenges, advances can be made. Yet to truly make a difference in the lives of young Burundians, concerted attention, political will, and an efficient use of existing funds are required. Burundi is not unique in its developmental challenges, but the country's particular history makes addressing the dire conditions of its youth particularly urgent. ❏

'I commend the *Small Arms Survey 2015: Weapons and the World* for the many insights it offers into the relationship between firearms and wildlife crime, as well as other pertinent small arms issues. I have little doubt that this volume will be of great interest to those working to protect our natural heritage, as well as others involved in arms control and the promotion of peace and security.'

—Paula Kahumbu

Executive Director, WildlifeDirect

'The catastrophic loss of wildlife has many causes, but the unsustainable exploitation of species by humans is often central to it. The *Small Arms Survey 2015: Weapons and the World* is a critical investigation into the threat that people pose to wildlife. The Survey scrutinizes the groups and weapons that are driving some species towards extinction and the responses mounted by governments, NGOs, and local communities, providing important evidence for the global effort to combat poaching and animal trafficking.'

—Inger Andersen

Director General, International Union for Conservation of Nature

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About the *Small Arms Survey 2015*

The *Small Arms Survey 2015* examines the role of weapons and armed violence in humanity's appropriation of the earth's wildlife and mineral riches—in Africa, where the poaching of elephants and rhinos is becoming increasingly militarized, and near resource extraction sites around the world. In addition to presenting updates on the UN small arms process and the top arms importers and exporters, the volume assesses how recent technological developments affect weapons marking, record-keeping, and tracing; reviews small arms flows to Egypt, Libya, and Syria before and after the 'Arab Spring'; and evaluates a stockpile management initiative in South-east Europe. The 'armed actors' section sheds light on the arms and ammunition used by insurgents in northern Mali, the decline of the Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda, and the use of floating armouries by private security companies in the Indian Ocean. This edition also analyses the conditions that are driving young people to adopt high-risk coping strategies in Burundi. The chapters are:

- In the Line of Fire: Elephant and Rhino Poaching in Africa
- Digging for Trouble: Violence and Frontier Urbanization
- One Meeting after Another: UN Process Update
- Trade Update: After the 'Arab Spring'
- Less 'Bang' for the Buck: Stockpile Management in South-east Europe
- Expanding Arsenal: Insurgent Arms in Northern Mali
- Waning Cohesion: The Rise and Fall of the FDLR-FOCA
- Stockpiles at Sea: Floating Armouries in the Indian Ocean
- Unprotected: Young People in Post-conflict Burundi

About the organization

The Small Arms Survey is a global centre of excellence whose mandate is to generate impartial, evidence-based, and policy-relevant knowledge on all aspects of small arms and armed violence. It is the principal international source of expertise, information, and analysis on small arms and armed violence issues, and acts as a resource for governments, policy-makers, researchers, and civil society. It is located in Geneva, Switzerland, at the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies.

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