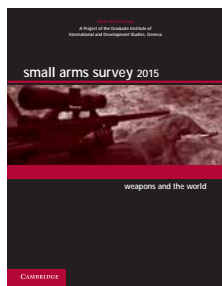


Small Arms Survey 2015

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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