

## **Insecurity, Arms Conflict and Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons in Africa**

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### **Abstract**

This paper examined the menace of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) proliferation as one of the major obstacles to sustenance of stable peace, national security and Socio – economic development on the African continent. Being an enquiry after the fact, the Ex-Post – Facto research design was adopted for data collection, while the Radical Structural Conflict Theory was applied as framework for analysis. The paper found that the uncontrolled proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) in Africa have negative implications on national security and socio-economic development through escalation and extension of conflict, direct and indirect human cost resulting in the loss of the productive age demographic as well as future generations of African professionals. Within the context of control measures, the paper also found that in spite of concerted efforts of a majority of the sub-Sahara African countries, success and progress of their initiatives has been slow thereby giving the arms traffickers opportunities to continue their business unabated. Recommendations were suggested as a way forward.

**Keywords:** Small Arms and light Weapon, Proliferation, National Security, Socio – Economic Development.

### **Introduction**

Uncontrolled Proliferation of illicit weapons of mass destruction within the context of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) have continued to be a major threat to peace, national security and sustainable socio-economic development on the African continent as well as globally. These arms in the hands of non-state actors have fueled insurgencies, terrorism, organized crimes, human trafficking, civil wars and drug cartels among others. According to Kevin (2017:23) with the easy availability of these weapons little internal insurrection in African states tends to escalate into larger civil wars that end up destabilizing an entire region. As a result of this, states and governments in Africa and globally are currently fighting to curb the menace.

The literature, presents evidences of illicit proliferation of arms. For instance in Nigeria Today (2018:45) it is reported that out of an estimated 857 million SALWs in circulation worldwide 500 million are illegal, 100 million are estimated to be in use in the various conflict theaters that dot the African continent. At the end of such conflict these illegal arms usually remain in the society and become precursor of next round of conflict in neighboring regions. The Nigeria Today publication also reported that over 8 million illegal arms are in the hands of terrorist, criminals, ethnic militias, politicians and death squads across Nigeria. The Geneva Declaration Secretariat (2017:1-2) noted SALW kill between 500,000 and 750,000 people annually and are a contributory factor to armed conflict, the displacement of people, organized crime and terrorism thereby undermining, peace, reconciliation, safety, security, stability and sustainable socio-development in Africa.

Confirming the above assertion, Kofi Annan, the then UN secretary General observed that

*“Illicit arms proliferation undermines respect for international humanitarian laws, threaten legitimate but weak government in Africa”.*

There are currently, several global initiatives towards controlling the trafficking and proliferation of SALW. One of such is the United Nations Programme of Action on small arms (UNPOA). There are also some regional and sub-regional initiatives under the auspices of the African Union (AU), Economic Community of West

African States (ECOWAS), Southern African Development Community (SADC) and East African Community (EAC). Despite the existence of these regional initiatives, and their various policies articulated towards curbing the menace on the African continent, Green (2011:58) noted that

*“The implementations of these policies are at a slow pace thereby giving illicit arms traffickers opportunity to continue their trade”*

While African governments are delaying implementation the Small Arms Survey (2017: 65) claimed between 500,000 to 750,000 lives are lost annually to SALW. It is against this background that the paper seeks to interrogate the implications of uncontrolled illicit Arms proliferation on national security and socio-economic development in African States in order to contribute to knowledge.

## **Methodology**

### **Research Design**

The primary focus of this paper is an examination of the menace of uncontrolled trafficking and proliferation of SALW on the African Continent. Being a research enquiry after the fact, the Ex-Post-Facto research design was adopted and anchored on secondary data obtained from published secondary sources such as books, peer-reviewed academic journals and on line sources. The data generated were critically reviewed and analyzed to provide answers to the following research questions posed for investigation

1. What are the sources of small arms and light weapons (SALW) in Africa.
2. What are the factors responsible for small arms and light weapons proliferation in Africa?
3. What are the implication of SALW proliferation on National Security and Socio-economic Development in Africa
4. What are the challenges of combating SALW proliferation in Africa?

### **Theoretical Framework**

There are many theories in the literature that compete to explain the origin and development of SALW. This paper considers the Radical Structural Conflict Theory as the most appropriate theoretical framework of analysis. The fundamental tenet of the theory is that conflict emanate out of the structures of a society's organizational framework. In such societies, conflicts arise from reactive practices such as oppression, exclusion, marginalization, discrimination, injustice among others that end up generating violence. The theory was developed by Karl Marx and Fredrich Engels in their classic works “Communist Manifesto” and “Historical Materialism” (1818-1883). The major talking point of the theory is anchored on the Marxist contention that capitalism is an oppressive economic system whose enslavement of the working class through economic policies and control of production of goods, create conflict (Rawl, 2010:15). The conflict created resulted in a class struggle between the elites or capitalist and the proletariat or working class. Since the elites or capitalists hold the monopoly of power in society through the fusion of the corporate elite, the military industrial complex and the executive arm of government, the radical structure conflict theory holds that the interest and policies of the power elite that is opposed to those of the people would result in scaling up of conflict and the manufacture of arms and weapons for the purpose of mass control. Other proponents of the theory, such as Mill and Sears (2008) pointed out that power provides the mechanism for the violent control of the rest of the population. It is within this context that politicians, war lords and international arms traffickers use money to acquire arms and weapons and at the same time compromised the agents of social control such as police, and other security agencies to turn the blind eye, thereby giving them the opportunity to carry on their business of proliferation of SALW on the African continent.

### **Conceptual Clarifications and Analysis**

#### **Analysis of the Concept of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW)**

Small arms and light weapons (SALW) have attracted a lot of scholarly attention in the literature. In spite of the volume of writings on the concept, there is no universally acceptable definition of SALW. This due to the

dynamics of technological development that these categories of weapons have undergone. The prevalent working definitions tend to describe such arms and weapons either by their configuration, characteristics, size, usage or combination of some of these. For instance, The Royal Military College of Science (RMCS, 1993) Handbook on weapons and vehicles conceptualized small arms as

*“Man-portable, largely shoulder controlled weapons of up to 12.7m(0.5)caliber with a flat trajectory and effective range of 0.800m.”*

Weizmann (2013:18) an international arms expert on the other hand categorized small arms as

*“Those weapons intended to be used by an individual and designed for personal use such as pistols, machine guns, light machine guns and rifles”.*

The ECOWAS small arms moratorium categorized SALW as

*“Light machine guns, machine pistols, fully automatic rifles, assault and semi-automatic rifles and Light Weapons include:”*

*“Man-portable air defense system (MANPADS) shoulder held anti-aircraft missile, rocket propelled grenades (RPGs), and mortars (Ocheoche, 2012:10) “*

From the various categorizations of SALW highlighted above, it is apparent, that there is a lack of consensus in the literature with regards to what constitute small arms as opposed to a standard conventional weapon. This has led to the conceptualization of an alternative concept of Light Weapons which emphasizes a more technologically sophisticated category. Despite the emergence of the light weapons concept, defining small arms still lacks clarity. In the literature there seems to be an amount of uncertainty as to where small arms end and light weapons begin. Ocheoche (2012:18) is of the view that despite the diverse views and definitions, there is a common ground within the context of the characteristics of small arms and light weapons. The author argued that the concept of SALW can be better understood from these characteristics. These characteristics that underpin the various definitions of SALW as identified by this paper are four. In the first instance, the focus of all the definitions was on the lethal characteristics of the weapons and their application. The second identified characteristic of SALW is on their weight and size. They are weapons that are “man-portable” or could be transported by light vehicles. The third characteristic of SALW is on their logistics value. They are weapons that are easy to maintain. Their functionality requires little training and little logistical back-up. The fourth identified characteristic is that whether they are small arms or light weapons, they are relevant to the security establishments and political actors as instruments of coercion.

Arising from the identified characteristics of SALW and their various categorizations based on their application the paper identifies small arms to include:

*“Revolvers and self-loading pistols, rifles and carbines assault rifles, sub-machine guns and light machine guns”.*

### **Analysis of the Concept of Arms Proliferation**

In a general context, proliferation implies rapid expansion, abundance or multiplication. Within the context of SALW, arms proliferation in general implies the spread of weapons from one country to another or from one group to another. Arms proliferation can be horizontal when it involves the acquisition of weapons system by State not previously possessing them or vertical when it involves increase in arms arsenals by these State already possessing them (Obasi, 2011:33) Kofi Annan, the then UN Secretary General conceptualized arms proliferation as:

*“A method in which arms and weapons are sold to private citizens especially in conflict zones” (Kofi 2010:45)*

Article 2 of the Draft International and Firearms Protocol comprehensively defined illicit firearms proliferation and trafficking as:

*“The importing, exporting, acquisition, sale, delivery and movement or transfers, their parts and*

*components and ammunition from across the territory of one State party to that of another State party without the authorized or in violation of the legislation or regulations of any one of the States Parties concerned” (Green 2011:55)*

The illegal movements or proliferation of weapons and in particular small and light weapons (SALW) has been prevalent and widespread within African continent especially in countries south of the Sahara. It is against this background that the paper defines arms proliferation as;

*“Sudden increase in the number of arms and weapons beyond those needed for legitimate national security.”*

### **Analysis of the Concept of National Security**

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 2012:6) noted that human security is encapsulated in freedom of individuals from fear, want, and safety from chronic threats such as hunger, disease and freedom from repression. Drawing from this, national security can be seen to entails freedom from actual and potential threats to national life that may arise as a result of human actions or inaction's resulting in deaths, human suffering and material damage.

The concept of national security is anchored on three fundamental conventions, namely, the sanctity and inviolability of human life, the universality and dignity of human life and the existential imperatives of the value for individual safety in a world full of multi-faceted threats. According to Peterside (2018:25) small arms and light weapon proliferation has led to disruption of the pattern of daily life of those in conflict zones. It also play an important role in denying victims of conflicts the basic core value of human rights within the context of self-preservation, human self-fulfillment and self-existence. These basic core values are central to the concept to National security.

According to Gaskin (2016:54) the first duty of a government is to keep the citizens safe in line with Hobbes assertion that:

*“Only the State has the where withal to guarantee security and save the society from anarchy”*

In this wise, Omede (2012:10) sees national security as a dynamic condition which involves the relative ability of a State to counter threats to its core values and interest. Mc Grew (2018:60) asserted that national security is anchored on two important tripods, namely the maintenance and protection of the socio-economic order in the face of internal and external threat and the promotion of a preferred international order which minimizes the threat to core values and interest as well as to the domestic order. According to Green (2011:5) arms buildup has fueled violence in many African conflict theaters especially communal clashes and ethno-religious conflicts. The availability of SALW has helped to prolong conflicts, induced huge internal population displacement, and devastated the economic livelihood of individuals and communities, thereby undermining socio-economic development in African States (Osman, 2017:38).

### **The Concept of Socio-Economic Development**

Socio-Economic Development is a multi-dimensional concept which has attracted the attention of scholars and social scientist. Earlier theoretical articulation of what constitute socio-economic development conceived it as a process of transition from traditionality to modernity. Socio-economic development was seen from a purely economic prospective of increase in per capital income and Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Contemporary approach however considers indicators such as infant mortality, shifts in social status, employment opportunity, life expectancy, decrease infertility as well as housing, water supply, nutrition and education among other social variables as constituting the process of socio-economic development. The new thinking on development holds that true socio-economic development must be people based and oriented. According to Obasanjo and Mabogunje (2011:3)

*“Development is not determined by per capita income growth alone but must include people who are the center of socio-economic development”*

Pudley Seers (1969) in his classical book “The meaning of Development” noted that;

*“As a process, development includes the people’s capacity to manage and induce positive change”*

Proponents of this view of development see it as a process in which men’s ability to think and make conscious decisions about himself and his environment is manifest. It is in this light the paper views socio-economic development as a process of a nation charting a course for itself, the community or group to follow, and determining concrete actions to take on the course taken.

### **A Critical Analysis of the Proliferation of SALW and its Impact on the African Continent**

Uncontrolled accumulation and spread of SALW pose a threat to peace, national security and socio-economic development in Africa. The free flow of weapons and its use in the various conflict zones on the continent of Africa and its dramatic impact not only threaten the existence of nation States, but also the livelihood of millions of people across the continent. According to Renner (2016:18), in Africa alone, almost six millions (6,000,000) people have died in the last 50 years due to the use of SALW. In West Africa, the author estimated that over 30,000 people have been killed by SALW in conflict each year since the end of the “cold war” era. Green (2011:65) on the other hand observed that the proliferation of SALW is on the increase in Africa due to the spillover effect from conflicts in Mozambique, Angola, Somalia, Liberia, Sudan, and Sierra Leone among others. Stohl et al (2018:230) noted that a large number of SALW in use in Africa were stolen licensed weapons and that Africa is a major trans-shipment point for the international arms trade. Abdel-Fatau (2018:16) in agreement pointed out that the major supply pipeline of SALW in Africa comes from the arms stockpiles that were pumped into Africa from the 1970s to early 90s by the ex-soviet union, the USA and their allies in the execution of their numerous proxy intra-state and interstate wars.

As earlier highlighted, this paper identified from the literature, three broad channels arms are illicitly proliferated on the African continent. The first channel of trafficking is carried out through small-scale transactions by individuals or small arm Company that deliberately break the law by illegally transfer arms to illicit recipients. This is the type of proliferation that is prevalent in African countries without significant conflict. The weapons trafficked in this context most cases fall into the hands of criminals. A good example of this source of illegal armed proliferation in Africa is Kenya where three of the five bordering countries have on-going conflicts with a large number of refugees coming into the country from Sudan and Somalia carrying displaced weapons (Ox Research; 2017:29).

The second source of SALW proliferation in Africa is through the shipment of arms with the connivance of corrupt government officials, brokers or middle men motivated mainly by profit. Thus channel of trafficking uses well established networks as well as smugglers. It is this form of arms proliferation that was partially instrumental in the arming of Tutsi warring factions during the Rwanda genocide (Green, 2011:159). The third identified source of illegal SALW proliferation in Africa is the type of arms trafficking that involve direct government agencies who facilitate covert flows of weapons to their proxies, allies or illegal recipients for profit. It was this source of illegal weapons that armed the Rwandan government in the period prior to the Rwandan Genocide. According to Green (2011:160) more than a dozen nations helped fueled the Rwandan war through sale of illegally trafficked weapons in the open market. The Rwandan government admitted it bankrupted the country’s economy to pay for those weapons (Nelson, 2015:108).

Two major factors have been identified that makes it easier for uncontrolled illicit arms proliferation in Africa. The first is the borders inherited by African Nations are very porous and easily crossed. Moreover, these African

borders, according to Imobighe, (2018: 16) were arbitrarily drawn by European imperialists who colonized the entire continent. The author reported that along Nigeria's border with Benin and Niger, there were over 1,500 illegal entry points. The UN Small Arms Committee noted that along Guinea, Sierra Leone and the Ivory Coast border, there were 170 illegal crossing points for illicit arms and drugs. Confirming this development, Diarral (2015:35) observed that porous borders within African States are instrumental to the influx and spread of weapons on the continent. For Chesterman (2015:33), the break-up and deregulation of arms industries in Eastern and Central Europe have led to the establishments of mini arms industries whose aggressive search for new markets on the African continent exacerbated the proliferation.

Available statistics show that 80 percent of global SALW are in civilian hands was illegally acquired. Statistics also revealed that out of the 640 million small arms in global circulation, 100 million are found in Africa, 30 million in sub-Sahara Africa and 8 million in West Africa (Hazen and Horner, (2017:37). According to Jekada (2015:40), trade in illicit weapon is worth USD 4 billion annually, with 8 million new weapons manufactured every year by over 1,249 companies in 92 countries. Ibrahim (2015:65) on the other hand, noted that African countries spent over USD 300 billion on armed conflict between 1990 and 2005. This amount equals the sum of International aid that was granted Africa within the same period (Ibrahim 2015:122).

Proliferation of SALW and the need to control the trade has been recognized both within the nation states of Africa and the rest of the world. Also acknowledged is the fact that SALW proliferation has led to an increase in violent crimes that undermine human security such as rape, cultism, herdsmen's killings, armed robbery and civil war among others. While prolonging conflicts, SALW also hinders the chances of resolving such conflicts as demonstrated by the Liberian civil war and Sierra Leone conflict, Weiss, (2013:37) in agreement with this assertion, noted that

*"The mere presence of guns undermine alternative conflict resolution strategies"*

The author concluded that the availability of SALW play a strong role in perpetuating violence and civil wars on the African continent as well as making such conflicts more lethal at every level, from criminal activity to fall-fledged war.

According to Xolani (2016:15) majority of African countries acknowledge that national controls are vital in helping to stop arms proliferation but the challenges impeding the effectiveness of such national controls has been the inability of the African governments to determine the risk of diversion before authorizing a transfer of arms. In this regard, the International Action Network on Small Arms noted that 34 of the 44 countries in Sub-Sahara Africa have one form of national legislation that regulate some aspect of the small arms trade, but only 2 out of those 34 countries, require an assessment of the risk for diversion before authorizing a small arms transfer. In contrast, the International Action Network on Small Arms noted that out of the 41 European countries that make up the membership of European Union (EU), 32 EU countries included provision for assessing the risk of diversion before authorizing a small arms transfer in their arms control legislation. This paper submit in line with the EU arms control bench mark, that for any African national arms control legislation to be effective, it should incorporate a clause to assess the risk of diversion before approval of any small arms sales.

Another national response to stopping illicit arms proliferation legislation has been enacted is for African countries to strengthen their border security. As highlighted earlier in this paper, one of the reasons for the growth and success of SALW proliferation on the African continent is due to their open and porous borders. Most African countries have three or four neighbours, making it difficult for effective border patrol.

To achieve this objective, the Nairobi Protocol was signed between the East African countries which stipulated small arms registration to foster better tracing of weapons in cases of diversion. Even though a level of success

have been recorded in the EAC, the borders are still open and arms traffickers still find it easy to move weapons into and out of the conflict areas (Mulama 2013:6). This paper submits in this regard that for the Nairobi Protocol to be effective in curbing or reducing illicit arms proliferation within the Sub-region, it will be necessary to establish better control over the borders.

Similar to the East African situation, the South African Development Community in response to the flow of SALW and their illicit trafficking established a Protocol on Firearms, Ammunition, and Related materials in 2001 but entered into force in November 2004. A notable feature of the Southern African region initiative was the establishment of standards for the marking of small arms to facilitate the tracing of such weapons in order to uncover illicit trafficking. In spite of the clear policy on arm control and proliferation put in place, effective implementation across the board is a major challenge to SADC arms control initiatives. As noted by Stohl et al (2018:233)

*“Border guards and customs officers in much of Southern Africa focus on ensuring payment of appropriate duties than regards themselves as having an important role in combating illicit arms proliferation.”*

As a result the SADC arms control policy is not being properly implemented, thereby offering arms traffickers the opportunity to continue in their trade. In this regard, this paper submits that for the Nairobi Protocol to be effective in controlling arms trafficking in the sub-region, clear and strong legislation as well as a strong security force is needed to ensure the protocol and incorporated controls are well understood and enforced.

Of all the sub-regional initiatives, ECOWAS efforts have been adjudged as taking

*“The most dramatic strides towards curbing the illicit trade in small arms (Stohl et al (2018:235).”*

The ECOWAS initiative unlike the EAC and SADC established a Moratorium in June 2006 on the import or manufacture of small arms in the region. The principal arms of the moratorium is to

*“Harmonize national controls among member states, support training programmes for military, police and security forces, enhance border controls, stockpile management and facilitating dialogue with arms suppliers countries (Stohl, 2018:239)*

Analysts and scholars have applauded the ECOWAS moratorium as it addresses the main aspect of the SALW proliferation that makes it difficult to stop and control. Similar to other sub-regional initiatives, the ECOWAS policy has been faced with the challenge of implementation. Stohl et al (2018:241). In this regard, this paper also submits that the gray areas in the moratorium be elaborated in detail with respect to the implementation of the policies.

### **Implications of Uncontrolled Illicit Arms Proliferation on Peace, National Security And Socio-Economic Development in Africa**

One major implication of SALW proliferation on the Africa continent is the negative impact on peace and national security in many African States. While peace and security are important components of national security, they are the first and most negatively impacted aspect of the African citizens in conflict areas that are affected by SALW proliferation. As a result of this, SALW trafficking has significantly undermine the human rights of civilians in the areas where arms proliferation is prevalent. This paper identified three major areas, where uncontrolled illicit arms proliferation has implications on peace and national security. These are in the areas of escalation and extension of conflict, strength envy of criminals and criminal organizations and increased number of crimes against women and children (Bourns et al, 2016:223)

Another negative implication of uncontrolled illicit arms proliferation is that conflict zones, young adult men are

the direct victims of armed conflict. Women on the other hand face a different set of crimes against them such as intimidation, torture, forced prostitution and rape by combatants. This development has been attributed to the spread of HIV/AIDS as well as the high rate of unwanted pregnancies in Africa. According to Mulama (2013:6) children also are faced with different set of challenges as a result of conflict. The most significant challenge according to the author is the continued recruitment of children as a child soldiers. It is reported that there are over 300,000 child soldiers involved in conflicts in Sub-Saharan Africa (OX Research, 2017:33). The child soldier according to the research is equipped with SALW and is forced to fight members of their community at an early age. At the end of conflict, such child soldiers end up as criminals since they have no formal education or skills to do anything else. This development also has negative implication on peace and national security in the region.

Due to many human and economic factors, socio-economic development on African continent has been slow. In cases of countries ravaged by conflicts such as Southern Sudan and Somalia, socio-economic development is non-existent (Stohl et-al 2018:228) this paper identified three major fronts that uncontrolled proliferation of SALW have negative implications on socio-economic development on the continent of Africa.

The first major implication of illicit arms proliferation on socio-economic development in Africa is the human cost of the conflicts in the form of death and injuries on the African population. Nelson (2015:7) reported that between 1956 to 1965, 105,000 people are estimated to have been killed in Hutu/Tutsis conflict. In April, 1994 genocide against Tutsis and Hutus, the claimed up to one million people were killed in 4 months. The direct cost of the genocide will definitely affect the socio-economic development of the country for a number of decades as generations were lost during the genocide (Nelson 2015:10). The majority of the combatants engaged in arms conflicts in Africa are usually young male adults or adolescent. The lives lost reduce the number of young people available to work and help develop their countries. Moreover some of those who lost their lives were professionals at their prime age.

Another implication of illicit arms proliferation on socio-economic development in Africa is the displacement of a large number of African populations. Even though in some cases those displaced by conflicts return to their country, a large number of the displaced settle as refugees or IDPs in their country of origin. As a result of conflict, economic activities are disrupted as businesses shut down. At the end of conflict, most business owners have lost their lives and investment. Moreover, foreign investors are weary of investing in the country for fear of losing their investment. As a result of conflict through SALW socio-economic development comes to a stop and at times irreversible as the productive demographic age is lost and with it the future generations of Africa also lost.

Another implication of uncontrolled illicit proliferation of SALW on socio-economic development in Africa is the negative impact on the delivery of public goods and access to public goods. Health and Education are public goods that are vital to socio-economic development of a country. This is so because adequate health services promote a lower death rate and spread of disease amongst the citizens, which in turn ensures continuous socio-economic development. In areas of conflicts on the African continent as a result of SALW, health services are absent. The same applies to other public services that enhance socio-economic development such as education. As a result, the conflict limits the African nation's states the ability to economically develop in both the long and short term.

In any country, the governance structure helps to shape the level of socio-economic development through providing public goods of security to its people. According to Bourne et al (2016:345) where there is a high level of armed violence and illicit SALW proliferation, it is a sign of weak governance structure with an unaccountable security sector.

In such a situation, increased availability of SALW impacts the governance structure by weakening the security



sectors thereby leading to privatization of the security sector. The privatization of the sources cannot be adequately monitored due to weak governance structure socio-economic development is negatively affected as cost of doing business increases (Bourne et al, 2016:346).

### **Conclusion**

The proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALW) has deepened the challenges confronting the African continent as a whole. The uncontrolled presence of illicit SALW has not only led to conflict, it has also exacerbated those conflicts and encouraged the revisit of old conflicts, thereby undermining peace, national security and socio-economic development of the African continent.

In the final analysis, the effects made towards controlling and curbing the menace of SALW proliferation from the African continent must be all encompassing and requiring the dedication and commitment of all major stakeholders in this regard, the following recommendation are suggested:

1. It is recommended that national responses and action plans for control and reduction of SALW proliferation be well established and functioning before entering into sub-regional initiatives. Once is done sub-regional initiatives would be much more effective.
2. The second recommendation that would help to limit SALW proliferation is the articulation of plans for the DE-mobilization, disarmament and reintegration (DDR) of combatants as conflicts come to an end. Proper disarmament will minimize the amount of SALW that can be transferred by criminals to other areas of conflict, as the DDR program would not only remove weapons from circulation but also make it unprofitable for arms traders to continue with arms trafficking within the same region.

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