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development denied



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FOREWORD

The use and proliferation of small arms has for too long been a cancer spreading across the developing world, undermining political and economic stability and leaving injury, death and mayhem in its wake.

Easily transportable, cheap, and difficult to monitor in an increasingly globalized world, these weapons are implicated in more than 300,000 deaths each year, primarily in the world's poorest countries. They have an insidious effect on development: by undermining the safety and security of communities, threatening livelihoods, and destroying social networks, they at best hold back and at worst contribute to the reversal of hard-won development gains.

Conflicts have multiple causes, but in the developing world they are nearly always exacerbated or fuelled by some combination of poverty, discrimination and the inability of governments to provide basic human security for their citizens. And when rule of law is replaced by the barrel of a gun, there is little opportunity to recover and rebuild. That is an issue that has always been very important for United Nations Development Programme. And that is why our Small Arms programme already covers more than 20 countries—from Afghanistan and Albania to Congo-Brazzaville and Kosovo—and continues to expand.

But to respond properly to the small arms crisis, the international development community needs to know the scale and extent of the problem and how best to respond. In this context, the *Small Arms Survey* makes an invaluable contribution by providing important information relating to the value and volume of small arms production and the distribution and scale of small arms stockpiles and transfers. And this year, it outlines and analyses practical measures to reduce their deleterious effects on human development. By doing so it makes an important and practical contribution to growing global efforts to combat the proliferation and use of these deadly weapons.

Mark Malloch Brown

Administrator, United Nations Development Programme

April 2003

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ABOUT THE SMALL ARMS SURVEY

The Small Arms Survey is an independent research project located at the Graduate Institute of International Studies in Geneva, Switzerland. Established in 1999 with the generous financial support of the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, it currently receives additional funding from Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, and the United Kingdom.

The objectives of the Small Arms Survey are: to be the principal source of public information on all aspects of small arms; to serve as a resource centre for governments, policy-makers, researchers, and activists; to monitor national and international initiatives (governmental and non-governmental) on small arms; and to act as a clearing house for the sharing of information and the dissemination of best practices. The Survey also sponsors field research and information-gathering efforts, especially in affected states and regions.

The project has an international staff with expertise in security studies, political science, law, economics, development studies, and sociology. It collaborates with a worldwide network of researchers, partner institutions, non-governmental organizations and governments.

Notes to readers

Abbreviations: Topic-specific lists of abbreviations are placed at the end of each chapter.

Chapter cross-referencing: Chapter cross-references appear capitalized in brackets throughout the text. For example, in Chapter 2: ‘There appears to be a growing market for craft weapons, another sign that small arms are not as readily available as some might like (PRODUCERS).’

Exchange rates: All monetary values are expressed in current US dollars (USD). When other currencies are additionally cited, unless otherwise indicated, they are converted to USD using the 365-day average exchange rate for the period 1 September 2001 to 31 August 2002.

Small Arms Survey: The plain text—Small Arms Survey—is used to indicate the overall project and its activities, while the italicized version—*Small Arms Survey*—refers to the publication itself. The *Survey*, appearing italicized, refers generally to past and future editions of the yearbook.

Web site: For more detailed information and current developments on small arms issues, readers are invited to visit our web site at: <http://www.smallarmssurvey.org>

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Peter Batchelor and Keith Krause were responsible for the overall planning and organization of this volume. Aaron Karp provided valuable editorial inputs during the in-house review process. Estelle Jobson was responsible for managing the production of the *Survey*, co-ordinating with the copy editor, Michael James, and the design team. Layout and design was done by Vick Arnò and Nicoletta Forni of Latitude. Lyn Nesbitt-Smith of Indexing Specialists (UK) compiled the index.

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A four-year-old girl wears a necklace, Eritrea (© Panos Pictures/Crispin Hughes).

Introduction

The challenges of post-conflict reconstruction and development, in places such as Afghanistan, Angola, Iraq, Kosovo, Sri Lanka, or the Democratic Republic of the Congo, are enormous, often overwhelming. The transition from reconstruction to sustainable growth and development is slow and takes years, if not decades. Human insecurity, fuelled in part by the widespread availability and misuse of small arms and light weapons, is one crucial negative factor in this complex equation. For this reason, we have chosen to focus in this edition of the *Small Arms Survey* on the link between small arms and human development, under the sub-heading 'Development Denied'.

Of course, small arms are only one piece of a complex and dynamic puzzle, and isolating the impacts of small arms availability and misuse on human development is a daunting task. In the various chapters of the yearbook, we have attempted to document how small arms availability and misuse can undermine the prospects for human development and to bring to light available evidence wherever possible. The result is an important and ambitious agenda for future research and action.

Ongoing international efforts

International efforts to tackle many of the problems associated with small arms availability and misuse enjoyed some success in 2002. The main undertaking of governments has been to report on their progress in implementing the *Programme of Action* from the 2001 UN Small Arms Conference. Although reports will not be disseminated until mid-2003, the information that states have already made public on their activities (available at <http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/database.html>) offers some indication of the wide range of practical measures that are being implemented at the local, national, and regional levels. Global efforts have concentrated on such areas as the development of 'best practice' guidelines (within the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe), the hosting of regional workshops to enhance co-operation between export control, customs, and judicial officials, measures to increase stockpile security, and weapons destruction programmes.

The work of the Small Arms Survey

The *Small Arms Survey* yearbook represents only a small part of the overall work of the Small Arms Survey project. In addition to it and to an ongoing series of occasional papers, the Small Arms Survey is engaged in a large number of research projects in different regions and on various aspects of the small arms issue. During 2002, the Small Arms Survey has undertaken research projects in Angola, eastern Africa, Haiti, Kosovo, Pacific Island states, South America, and Sri Lanka. The issues being examined span the entire range of topics discussed in this and previous editions of the *Small Arms Survey*. In some regions, the focus is on arms production, stockpiles and transfers. In others, the negative effects of small arms proliferation and misuse are highlighted.

This evolution of our activities accurately reflects the maturing of the work of the small arms community in general, as the activities of governments, international organizations, and NGOs concentrate increasingly on practical

This edition of the *Survey* documents how small arms availability and misuse can undermine the prospects for human development.

measures to tackle matters such as stockpile security, export controls, post-conflict weapons collection, or national legislation governing civilian possession of weapons. In each of these cases, reliable information and research go hand in hand with effective policy-making.

The range and scope of this research and fieldwork can be reflected only partly in our annual publication. In this edition of the *Small Arms Survey*, we have included three case study chapters: the Republic of Georgia, the Republic of Congo, and Yemen. These case studies, based on original field research projects, attempt to bring to a wider public the fruits of our research. Each of these chapters is drawn from a larger study, published as an occasional paper, available on the Small Arms Survey website.

Chapter highlights

This year's *Small Arms Survey* contains several new elements. Chapters on production, stockpiles, transfers, and weapons collection extend our previous work, while the three case study chapters focus on the role of small arms in particular contexts. The thematic chapter examines the development dimension of small arms, while the chapter on measures considers the emergence of new international norms specifically against the backdrop of the UN *Programme of Action*.

Chapter 1 (Products and Producers): Our estimate of the global value of small arms production remains unchanged at around USD 7.4 billion. Although the number of producing countries also remains unchanged at 98 (many of whom have small-scale or dormant production facilities), the number of companies involved in some aspect of small arms production has increased slightly, to 1,134. This is primarily due to more complete information rather than to a change in the industry itself. Although the data is still patchy, it appears that the industry itself is becoming more concentrated and that the profitability of many existing producers is in question.

The chapter also identifies the 30 most significant small arms producing states and the top five companies in different categories of small arms. As was already clear from previous research, production is concentrated in Europe and North America, although the Asia-Pacific region is a significant producer too. In addition, the chapter highlights the importance of small-scale, illicit 'craft' production in various countries, and provides a regional survey of small arms production in central and eastern Europe.

Chapter 2 (Stockpiles): The chapter on global small arms stockpiles deepens current understanding of the distribution of the world's estimated 639 million small arms. It shows that Europe has been significantly affected by the growing availability of firearms. A wave of serious gun crime, including recent massacres in France, Germany, and Switzerland show that random, large-scale firearms violence is not an exclusively US phenomenon.

In Europe, it is estimated that there are some 84 million civilian firearms in the 15 states of the European Union. About 80 per cent of European arms are in civilian hands. The total is still far fewer than the estimated 238–276 million civilian-owned guns in the United States, but more than most analysts previously would have expected. The distribution of types of weapons also varies widely between states, with some, such as Denmark, possessing very few handguns (one for every 15.5 long guns) and others, such as France, with relatively widespread handgun ownership (one for every 2.7 long guns). Different national traditions and legislative frameworks account for these variations and highlight the need for further comparative research into firearms possession and use throughout Europe and elsewhere.

Elsewhere the number of small arms appears to be less than commonly assumed. This is shown through assessment of Afghanistan, Macedonia/Former Republic of Yugoslavia, and sub-Saharan Africa. The number of small arms and light weapons circulating in Afghanistan is great, but much smaller than previously assumed. The widely-used figure

Our estimate of the global value of small arms production remains unchanged at around USD 7.4 billion.

of ten million small arms almost certainly is a serious exaggeration. In reality there probably are 500,000 to 1.5 million small arms in the country. Similarly in all of sub-Saharan Africa, there probably are no more than 30 million small arms in circulation. More accurate assessments should help national governments and the international community to design more effective policies to deal with the dangers of small arms proliferation.

Chapter 3 (Transfers): Analysing small arms transfers in a systematic fashion has proved to be our most difficult research task. The chapter maintains the same estimate of the value of global small arms transfers—USD 4 billion a year—and provides systematic data for about 50 per cent of the estimated value of the total legal international trade in small arms. The remainder is estimated on the basis of data from diverse official and unofficial sources that is not always comparable in scope or coverage. Although transparency on the official trade has increased, most states involved in the small arms trade still fail to provide annual reports of imports and exports. Nevertheless, it appears that countries in western Europe and North America account for nearly 90 per cent of all documented exports and nearly 70 percent of known imports.

We provide systematic data for about 50 per cent of the estimated value of the total legal international trade in small arms.

A closer analysis of existing data shows that the states of the European Union (EU) tend to dominate the international small arms trade. Of course, trade between members of the EU is important (approximately USD 349 million a year), but even when this is excluded, western Europe remains the largest documented exporter of small arms to North America, South America, and the Middle East. Somewhat paradoxically, many of the regions worst affected by small arms violence, such as Southeast Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, appear to be minor players in the documented legal trade in small arms.

While not definitive, the data presented in the chapter suggests that the overall value of the international legal trade in small arms is declining.

Chapter 4 (Development and Small Arms): The negative effects associated with the widespread availability and misuse of small arms form the core of our thematic chapter on the association between small arms and human development. Research on this linkage is in its infancy, yet analysts agree that the potential negative effects may be large, whether measured in terms of direct effects (fatal and non-fatal injuries that lead to lower productivity and represent an increased burden on households and communities) or indirect effects (armed criminality, increased costs associated with economic activity and investment, erosion of social capital, and diminished access to basic services and entitlements).

At the macro level, simple relationships between small arms and underdevelopment are extremely difficult to demonstrate. At this time, social scientists, for example, are unable to detect a direct causal relationship between poverty and armed violence. It is also difficult to identify a strong correlation between foreign direct investment in a country and its levels of firearms violence. But at a micro level, however, the misuse and impacts of small arms on communities can be strong, in particular on economic activity (traders not using the Congo river, for example, in the belief that transport is insecure). Armed violence can also affect the quality of and access to basic services, and have long-term corrosive effects on social and human capital. But much more work needs to be done to clearly document these effects, and to assess the consequences of various policy interventions on human development.

Chapter 5 (Yemen): Yemen represents an interesting case where small arms are widely available, yet their role in social and political life is poorly understood. Our research began with the observation that the widely-reported figure for the number of guns in Yemen—up to 80 million¹—was almost certainly wrong. A more reliable estimate is most likely between six and nine million, still a huge arsenal but not the most heavily-armed place on earth.

The chapter examines more closely the particular social and political context of Yemen, in which weapons are widely available, but indiscriminate use appears to be low. It examines the factors influencing the high demand for arms in Yemen, and highlights the importance of formal and informal codes of social control and the role of traditional authority

structures in regulating the possession and use of small arms. As we have seen elsewhere (such as Kosovo and Somalia), when traditional authority structures are destroyed or eroded, widespread violence often ensues. Although Yemen is currently stable, the central government has difficulty exercising effective power outside the main cities, and it has taken some small steps to regulate the possession, carrying, and use of small arms. Nevertheless, the situation remains uncertain and it is clear that Yemen continues to import large quantities of small arms and light weapons.

Chapter 6 (Georgia): The Republic of Georgia was torn asunder soon after independence in the early 1990s. Field research conducted by the Small Arms Survey has demonstrated that the increased availability of small arms played a central role in exacerbating the conflict and in increasing the intensity of the civil war. In the early phases of the conflict (1989–91), weapons were scarce and violence was relatively contained. With the disintegration of state institutions and the release of large quantities of small arms from the regional arsenals of the former Soviet Union, conflict was aggravated and intensified.

The chapter documents these findings with new data (based on primary sources) estimating the weapons holdings of armed groups in 1990–91 and showing how the increased availability of small arms can be tracked through declining prices in the early 1990s. The result was that by 1992–93, armed militias had acquired at least 40,000 weapons with which to continue their struggle, and political struggles were transformed from low-level social violence into full-scale warfare.

Chapter 7 (Small Arms Norms): This chapter takes the UN *Programme of Action* as its starting point, regarding it as a key element in the development of small arms norms at the global level. Relying on both international legal and political perspectives, the chapter understands norms as both guiding and prescribing state behaviour. The chapter also provides benchmarks that can be used to assess progress in norm development. While state practice worldwide remains unclear, precluding a determination of specific norms in such areas as weapons marking and export controls, the chapter demonstrates that the commitment to take action to address the small arms problem, as reflected in the *Programme of Action*, is itself a norm. The chapter also shows that the recently adopted *Firearms Protocol* of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) is spurring the emergence and development of specific norms in this subregion.

The chapter concludes that the key challenge for states worldwide is to give their existing commitments—as contained in the UN *Programme of Action*, the *SADC Protocol*, and other instruments—concrete expression. Norm development in the small arms area is, in other words, just beginning. State practice will have to be closely monitored in the coming years to determine to what extent new norms are firmly entrenched in practical action.

Chapter 8 (Congo): This chapter focuses on the weapons collection, demobilization, and reintegration of ex-combatants programme launched by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in the Republic of Congo in July 2000. The Small Arms Survey was contracted by UNDP/IOM to undertake an assessment of small arms availability and trade in the Republic of Congo. Based on field research conducted in the Republic of Congo, it is clear that at least 16,000 weapons have been collected from ex-combatants since 1999 through the combined efforts of the UNDP/IOM and the government of the Republic of Congo. This represents about 28 per cent of the estimated total of 57,000 small arms and light weapons in circulation before the implementation of the various weapons collection programmes in late 1999. Unfortunately, the first phase of the weapons collection programme, which ended in 2001, did not prevent a renewed outbreak of fighting in March 2002. Some argue that a more comprehensive weapons collection programme could have helped prevent this outbreak, others that no political commitment to a sustainable peace existed. The findings of the chapter highlight the importance of accurate baseline data on different aspects of the small arms problem as a critical input for policy initiatives, particularly with respect to disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration programmes.

Chapter 9 (Small Arms in Peace Processes): The military and symbolic significance of weapons often turns them into bargaining chips during peace negotiations. The sensitivity of this aspect of peace settlements carries over into the disarmament period, when third parties like the United Nations are regularly called upon to implement the agreements reached by the belligerents. This chapter examines how concerns about small arms can influence peace negotiations and how these concerns have been addressed after agreement has been reached—particularly during disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration programmes.

The military and symbolic significance of weapons often turns them into bargaining chips during peace negotiations.

Comparative analysis of recent efforts shows that disarmament and weapons disposal should be spelled out in the agreement and not sidelined, despite their sensitive nature. Indeed, the lack of such provisions can create confusion, undermine transparency, and encourage deception at a later date, all of which may prove significant obstacles to long-term peace. Central to post-settlement success is the disarmament of all relevant armed actors, the monitoring and verification of compliance, and the incorporation of the disarmament process into a larger, simultaneous peace-building process. Without a timely, inclusive, and comprehensive approach that will reduce the demand for small arms in the long-term, peace is likely to be undermined.

CONCLUSION

The 2001 UN *Programme of Action* acknowledges that the excessive accumulation and uncontrolled spread of small arms and light weapons in many regions of the world 'have a wide range of humanitarian and socio-economic consequences and pose a serious threat to ... sustainable development at the individual, local, national, regional and international levels'. This edition of the *Small Arms Survey* has attempted to document the ways in which the presence of small arms can undermine human development, thereby denying people the possibility to realise their human potential and maximize their well being.

While the 2003 biennial meeting of the 2001 UN *Programme of Action* will ensure that the small arms issue remains on the agenda of the international community, the development community, both inter-governmental and non-governmental, remains somewhat reluctant to treat the small arms problem as a pressing development issue. However, there have been some positive developments in recent years. The UNDP's small arms programme, focusing specifically on weapons in exchange for development, has ongoing, or planned, projects in more than 20 countries. Various NGOs, many of them part of the International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA), are now engaged in a wide variety of development-related small arms projects in many parts of the world.

Small arms and light weapons are thus emerging not as a single disarmament and arms control issue awaiting one solution but as a cluster of policy issues, with complex linkages between different elements and regions. The challenge is and will be to develop an adequate conceptual, political, and practical framework within which all relevant dimensions of the problem, including the development dimension, can be usefully tackled in the years to come.

ENDNOTES

¹ Kaplan, Robert. 2003. 'A Tale of Two Colonies.' *Atlantic Monthly*. April. <<http://www.theatlantic.com/issues/2003/04/kaplan.htm>>