

Small Arms and Light Weapons (Salw) Proliferation with Impact on Terrorism in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

One phenomenon that emerged as a major threat to global peace in the 21st century is the Proliferation of small arms and light weapons by terrorists, who are non-state actors. The African continent is a major trans-shipment point for international trade and a major producer of local arms. The study assessed the impact of the proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons on the prevailing terrorism perpetrated in Nigeria. It is estimated that over 70% of eight out of ten million illegal weapons in West Africa are in Nigeria. The availability has effects on terrorist acts committed by the Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'awati Wal-Jihad group (BOKO HARAM), Niger Delta Militants terrorists, and escalating kidnappings. Data were collected from secondary sources and analyzed qualitatively through content analysis. Findings showed that the porous nature of extensive lands and maritime Nigeria borders, racketeering, and leakages from members of the police and armed forces, both serving and retired are some of the sources of SALW proliferation in the country. It was also observed that the high circulation of SALW in Nigeria is a product of the interplay of several interrelated factors like the country's internal socio-economic and political dynamics, compounded by globalization. To tackle the menace, it was recommended among others that the Nigerian government should strengthen institutions and processes of Governance to ensure the socio-economic status of its citizens and put in place effective mechanisms to check the illicit trafficking of Arms through the borders.

I. INTRODUCTION

Arms trafficking and the conflict they feed divert scarce resources away from social services, disrupt trade, discourage tourism, and contribute to the breakdown of family structure (www.state.gov/region/africa). The proliferation and use of SALW to perpetuate terrorism and other crimes in Nigeria in recent years has posed a serious threat to the country's security. The challenge is that this proliferation has an international

dimension to it as Nigeria seems vulnerable, particularly along the land and Maritime borders which are porous (Musa 2013) "The proliferation of small and light weapons is increasingly and dangerously becoming a transnational organized crime with Boko Haram's Insurgency, serving as hubs or impetus for arms trafficking. A major pipeline of SALW on the African continent remains the stockpiles that were pumped into Africa in the 1970s, 1980s, and early 90s by the ex-Soviet Union, The USA, and their allies to fan proxy intra-state and interstate wars. Leftover weapons found their way through clandestine networks involving rogue arms brokers, private military companies, shady airline companies, and local smugglers in Africa (Okeke and Orji, 2014, Ojudu, 2007 Musa 2013). A possible explanation of SALW is the porous nature of the country's huge and inadequately policed border lines according to Dikwa (2013:58). The estimated border line of Nigeria is around 36,450 square kilometers. This constitutes about 1500km with the Niger Republic, 90km with the Chad Republic, 700km with the Benin Republic, and 1700km with the Cameroon Republic. It also has a border in the Atlantic Ocean around 850km. these great landlines have proved too extensive to be effectively policed and maintained by Nigerian security; as a result, the proliferation of small arms and the threat to the lives of Nigerian citizenry especially along the borders. The study examined why proliferation and attendant crimes like terrorism persisted despite all efforts to address the problem in years—and reviewed the lack of literature on the proliferation of SALW and terrorism in Nigeria.

HISTORY OF PROLIFERATION OF SALW IN NIGERIA

Perhaps, gun possession by civilians in Nigeria is not new and predates colonialism (Saburi Biobaku, 1957). The Europeans introduced guns before colonialism during the legitimate and illegitimate (slave) trade between them and Africans. Subsequently, guns and other arms, ammunition, and weapons were used by Europeans

to realize their imperial ambitions when they used force to suppress Africa's resistance to European incursion, conquest, and colonialism.

The British popularly employed gunboat diplomacy to compel African chiefs to enter into various treaties with them. There was the establishment of the West African Frontier Force (WAFF) used by the British which was used to execute the British-Aro War of (1901-1902), and other forms of resistance in Nigeria, West Africa, and Africa. The role of the Royal Niger Company (RNC) later United African Company (UAC) backed by the British Government in using force to suppress dissenting communities is imperative (Chuma-Okoro, 2011). These arms or guns possibly found their way to the hands of Africans during the period of colonialism subsequently used in tradition and hunting in the rural community. In no time, guns and gunpowder became symbols of strength and power and were later transformed into ceremonial weapons displayed during funerals, burials, ceremonies, and customary festivals among the natives. They also became symbols of individual and ethnic grandeur, and for deterring aggressors and invaders.

Today, guns are no longer just ornaments of prestige, or just for hunting, safari, and expedition. Guns have transformed in terms of functionality, lethality, sophistication, ubiquity, and motive of ownership. They have become more weapons of criminality and instruments of the underworld (Chuma-Okoro, 2011). Ostensibly, the 1959 Firearms Act was enacted to check the increasing rate of arms proliferation in Nigeria towards independence.

The failure of the Nigerian government to execute a comprehensive disarmament and arms destruction program after the civil war (1967-1970) exacerbated the proliferation of guns and illicit arms trafficking. As of 2002, the number of SALW in Nigeria was estimated by various reports and studies at between 1 and 3 million including arms in lawful possession of members of the armed forces and the police and those (majority) in the hands of civilians. 80% of SALW in civilian possession was illegally acquired because of the strict regulations. There is fear that a larger percentage of the SALW in circulation in Nigeria is illicit or illegal. Some of these illicit SALW were used in armed violence such as ethnic-religious conflicts, communal clashes, sectarian violence, cultism, political violence, electoral violence, vigilantism, militancy, and criminality. Between November 2006 and February 2007, 212 cases of violent crime were reported, 189 of these were

carried out with firearms, 34 with other tools, and two involved bombs (Chuma-Okoro, 2011). The rate of accumulation of SALW is increasing and becoming endemic as various forms of violence and casualties have been in recent times recorded in the Northern part of Nigeria. Thus, the proliferation of SALW in Nigeria has a destabilizing effect. There is a lack of capacity and strong legal or effective institutional frameworks to regulate SALW and combat the phenomenon of SALW proliferation in Nigeria, particularly in the Northern part of Nigeria (Chuma-Okoro, 2011). More fundamentally, the Nigerian state is yet to deal with the demand factors of SALW proliferation preferring to dwell on the symptoms rather than the root causes. The demand factors are the root causes of SALW proliferation, because if there is no demand there will be no supply. Nigeria is the source, transit, and destination of SALW, and therefore the demand factors include mass unemployment, poverty, corruption, excessive militarization, failure of political leadership, misgovernance, bad leadership, poor governance, and state violence, among others. There is indeed excess politicization, state-sponsored violence, and state proliferation of SALW leading to political violence, electoral violence, and other forms of violence for example, virtually all law enforcement or security agencies are allowed to carry arms with the exemption of a few that are even lobbying to be allowed to carry weapons, thus militarizing society more (IJHCS).

Definition of small and light weapons (SALW)

There is no universally accepted definition of SALW. This is because the understanding of what constitutes these categories of weapons has changed due to the dynamics of technological development. However, good working definitions are available. Which describes such arms and weapons either by configuration, characteristics, size, user perspective, or a combination of some of these. Small arms are weapons manufactured to military specifications and designed for use by one person, whereas light weapons are those used by several persons working as a crew, (UN, 2007).

International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons The ITI, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 8 December 2005, defines small arms and light weapons as:

any man-portable lethal weapon that expels or launches is designed to expel or launch or may be readily converted to expel or launch a shot,

bullet, or projectile by the action of an explosive, excluding antique small arms and light weapons or their replicas. Antique small arms and light weapons and their replicas will be defined by domestic law. In no case will antique small arms and light weapons include those manufactured after 1899:

(a) "Small arms" are, broadly speaking, weapons designed for individual use. They include, inter alia, revolvers and self-loading pistols, rifles and carbines, sub-machine guns, assault rifles and light machine guns;

(b) "Light weapons" are weapons designed for use by two or three persons serving as a crew, although some may be carried and used by a single person. They include, inter alia, general purpose or universal machine guns, medium machine guns, heavy machine guns, rifle grenades, under-barrel grenade launchers and mounted grenade launchers, portable anti-aircraft guns, portable anti-tank guns, recoilless rifles, man-portable launchers of anti-tank missile and rocket systems, man-portable launchers of anti-aircraft missile systems, and mortars of a caliber of fewer than 100 millimeters.

There are various sources responsible for the proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons in Africa. Okeke and Orji (2014) observed that

Out of the 640 million small arms circulating globally, it is estimated that 100 million are found in Africa about 30 million in sub-Saharan Africa, and 8 million in West Africa, alone. The majority of these SALW about 59% are in the hands of civilians, 38% are owned by the government armed forces, 2.8% by police, and 0.2% by armed groups. The gun trade is worth \$ 4

billion annually, of which up to \$1 billion may be unauthorized or illicit. Eight million new guns are manufactured every year by at least 1,249 companies in 92 countries. 10 to 14 billion units of ammunition are manufactured every year enough to kill every person in the world twice over (Okeke and Orji, 2014:418).

Many reasons have been adduced by pundits like Musa(2013) and Dikwa(2012) for the situation in Nigeria. Firstly, a possible explanation for the proliferation of SALW is the porous nature of the country's huge and inadequately policed border lines. Secondly, globalization and poor governance as viewed by Edeko(2011:58) when he opines that the Proliferation of SALW in the Niger Delta is within the context of the interplay between the internal governance process and external forces. Thirdly, lack of adequate legal and institutional frameworks. **Poor security networks, corruption, border leakages, and politics** have played dominant roles in the excessive availability of arms in Nigeria.

The impact of the proliferation of SALW in Northeast Nigeria results in terrorists finding haven around the axis to thrive and threatens Nigeria's security, destruction of many communities as seen in the northeast north central, and northwest states. For example, the Horrific killings of hundreds of residents in the local governments of Borno, Adamawa, Plateau, and Kaduna. It has contributed significantly to the spate of terrorism in Nigeria.

MAP SHOWING STATES AFFECTED DUE TO SALW with International Borders as well as locations of Boko Haram Attacks



Image from Aljazeera Centre for Studies

This study shall attempt to provide an answer to the question as to why the proliferation and attendant crimes like terrorism persisted despite several efforts to stop it over the years.

Besides, from the literature review, there is a paucity of literature on the nexus between the proliferation of SALW and terrorism in Nigeria, particularly in the Northeast and Niger-Delta regions, and implications for the regions and Nigeria and sub-regions with attendant implications for the regions, Nigeria and sub-region at large.

Research questions include: i. What factors influence the proliferation of SALW and terrorism in Nigeria? ii. What are the social, political, and economic effects of the proliferation of SALW and terrorism on Nigeria? iii. What are the implications of SALW and terrorism for security in Nigeria? iv. What is the effective control of the proliferation of SALW in Nigeria?

The objective of the study is to access the impacts of the proliferation of SALW on prevailing terrorism perpetuated by the Boko Haram group in Northern Nigeria and militants in the Niger Delta. The scope of the study is limited to an assessment of the impact of the proliferation of SALW on acts of terrorism in Nigeria.

The study is significant as the subject has gained tremendous currency in public discourse and generated a lot of scholarly interest and discussion. It contributes to knowledge on the subject matter and has academic value for students, researchers, policymakers, and the general public. It is also useful material to relevant ministries, security agencies, and other institutions in identifying lapses associated with various existing initiatives aimed at checking the proliferation of SALW in Nigeria to create a framework and better policies to effectively curtail the problem.

Definition of Key Terms:

Boko Haram: Boko Haram, which refers to itself as “Jama’atu Ahl as-Sunnah li-Da’awatiwal-Jihad” (JASDJ; Group of the Sunni People for the Calling and Jihad) and “Nigerian Taliban”—other translations and variants are used—is a Nigeria-based group that seeks to overthrow the current Nigerian Government and replace it with a regime based on Islamic law. It is popularly known in Nigerian and Western media as “Boko Haram,” which means “Western education is forbidden” (the word Boko is a holdover from the colonial English word for book), (NCTC).

ECOWAS Moratorium:

ECOWAS Moratorium on the Importation, Exportation, and Manufacture of Small Arms and Light Weapons in West Africa. deal with the creation of national commissions, exemptions, collection and destruction programs, and the harmonization of legislation on specific national initiatives by four ECOWAS member States, in a concerted effort at national, bilateral, and regional levels to deal with the small arms menace in the sub-region. It’s an agreement signed by 16 member states of West Africa in October 1998 that took effect on the 1st of November the same year, (unrec.org).

Non-State actors: an individual or organization that has significant political influence but is not allied to any particular country or state, (Oxford Dictionary.com).

violent non-state actors (VNSAs), also known as **non-state armed actors** or **non-state armed groups (NSAGs)**, are individuals or groups that are wholly or partly independent of governments and that threaten or use violence to achieve their goals, (Hofmann and Schneckener, 2011).

Proliferation: NATO 27 Feb. 2023 10:19

defined proliferation refers to attempts by state or non-state actors to develop, acquire, manufacture, possess, transport, or transfer nuclear, radiological, chemical, or biological weapons or devices and their means of delivery or related material, including precursors, without prejudice to the rights and obligations of agreement to the treat.

The Review of Literature:

Concept of Small Arms and Light Weapons

Small arms and light weapons are described either by their configuration, characteristics, size, user perspective, or a combination of some of these.

The Royal Military College of Science (RMC) Handbook on Weapons and Vehicles, (1993:33) defines small arms as: Man-portable. Largely shoulder-controlled weapons of up to 12.7 millimeter (0.5 inches) caliber; such weapons generally have a flat trajectory and an effective operational range of 0 to 800 meters although this varies considerably with the caliber and weapon type, certain weapons can also provide neutralizing fire up to 1800 meters.

One of the most widely accepted definitions comes from the 1997 report of the United Nations Panel of Governmental Experts on Small Arms. In general terms, ‘small arms’ are designed for personal use and may be carried by one person; ‘light weapons’ are used by several

persons or a crew and maybe transported by two or more people, a pack animal, or a light vehicle (UNGA, 1997a, paras. 25, 27(a))

The International Tracing Instrument (see Part 2.3) provides the following definition of small arms and light weapons: any man-portable lethal weapon that expels or launches is designed to expel or launch, or may be readily converted to expel or launch a shot, bullet, or projectile by the action of an explosive, excluding antique small arms and light weapons or their replicas (UNGA, 2005b, para. 4).

It then goes on to note that, broadly speaking, small arms are 'weapons designed for individual use light weapons are 'weapons designed for use by two or three persons serving as a crew, although some may be carried and used by a single person'(UNGA, 2005b, para. 4).

Bureau of Political-Military Affairs of US Department of State(2001:12) views on SALW as encompassing any portable firearms and their ammunition designed for individual use by military forces as lethal weapons. The list of small arms includes; self-loading pistols, rifles and carbines, submachine guns, assault rifles, and light machine guns.

Factors responsible for the proliferation of Small arms and Light Weapons

Edoko(2013)citing <http://africa.com/stories> notes in a meeting of States at the UN in New York, on June 14-18,2010 told the gathering that there are more than 170 border points with Guinea, Sierra Leone, and Ivory Coast. Thus, the influx of refugees felt in neighboring states is a major contributor. In other words, porous borders: Inter-Security Agencies Conflict at Nigeria's Borders and Challenges to Nigeria's National Security unregulated movement of people facilitates the circulation of weapons (WISJ, Vol 7 (3), 2023:5, Diarra, 2005:35)Porous border is one of the major factors responsible for small arms proliferation in Nigeria. It encourages the smuggling of arms into the country at will. Most of the weapons in circulation were smuggled from the neighboring countries such as Ghana, Chad, Niger, and Benin into the country. Recognizing this, in August 2004, the Nigerian government and the Benin Republic signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to set up a trans-border security outfit that will be responsible for the effective border security and control of illicit.

Secondly, Corruption and Poor Governance: Corruption and Poor governance are the bane to small arms proliferation in Nigeria. The

other sideeffects of poor governance and corruption are unemployment and poverty in the country. These elements have contributed significantly to arms proliferation in Nigeria. It is either those in power who are siphoning money or they are arming thugs for personal reasons. The governance system in Nigeria has created more problems than it can solve. The problems of corruption, injustice, poverty, lack of patriotism, favoritism, ethnic bigotry, political theurgy, and lack of regard for traditional institutions which are important to the maintenance of peace, stability, development in society, and national building in Nigeria, these arms are precisely small, circulate easily because they are easy to buy, easy to use, easy to transport and conceal.

Thirdly, findings from the study equally show that unemployment, poverty, marginalization of certain ethnic groups, politicization of ethno-religious differences, profitability, and socioeconomic utility factors are the factors influencing the proliferation of small arms in Nigeria. (WISJ, Vol 7 (3), 2023:5)

Furthermore, small arms have found their way into civilian hands from official sources due to a combination of factors, including, the breakdown of structures, lax controls over National armories, and poor service conditions for security personnel (Ibid). similarly, according to Kelli (2008) weapons are brought into West Africa by poorly paid soldiers who served in Peacekeeping missions. Also, in places where wars have officially come to an end, the presence of small arms makes sure that Physical insecurity persists through Banditry and violent settlement scores (Abdel-Fatau, 2014).

Types of small arms and light weapons

Small arms", broadly speaking, are individual-service (i.e. for carry and operation by individual infantrymen) kinetic projectile firearms. These include: handguns (revolvers, pistols, derringers, and machine pistols), muskets, rifled muskets, shotguns, rifles (assault rifles, battle rifles, carbines, designated marksman rifles, short-barreled rifles, sniper rifles, etc.), submachine guns, personal defense weapons, squad automatic weapons, and light machine guns

Light weapons", broadly speaking, are infantry-portable weapons that are either crew-served kinetic firearms, incendiary devices, or shoot explosive munitions. These include: anti-materiel rifles, anti-tank rifles, general-purpose machine guns, medium machine guns, unmounted heavy machine guns, portable flamethrowers, grenades, rifle grenades, underslung grenade launchers, grenade launchers, automatic grenade launchers,

recoilless rifles, rocket-propelled grenades, man-portable anti-tank missiles, man-portable air-defense systems, and mortars under 100 millimeters (3.9 in) caliber, (unodc.org.)

Effect of Small Arms and Light Weapons

In recent times, the proliferation of SALW in Nigeria has led to an increase in violent crimes, revolts, subversion, sabotage, religious crises, communal conflicts, social agitations, micro-nationalism, insurrection, terrorism, insurgency, militancy, electoral violence, social upheavals, political violence, cross border smuggling, porous border, insecurity, economic crisis among others. The proliferation and use of SALWs in ethno-religious clashes, armed robbery, militancy, insurgency, banditry, etc., have killed more than 50,000 Nigerians with Boko Haram accounting for 30,000 lives in its almost eleven years of emergence. The proliferation of SALW has socio-political and economic effects at global, regional, and National levels, Kelli (2008:4). Because of this proliferation, the fabric of the sub-region itself is rapidly changing, moving toward self-destruction". According to Jacques (2009), the persistence and complications of wars in Africa are partially due to small arms proliferation. President Jonathan (2014) further revealed that the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) in 2013 lamented that Africa has lost about 250 billion dollars as a result of the conflicts and illicit transfer of arms.

Measures of containing small arms and light weapons

The United Nations Program of Action on the Illicit Trade in Small arms and Light weapons in all its aspects (POA) was agreed upon in July 2001 and remains the primary international agreement on the control of SALW (saferworld.com). The protocol resolved to prevent, combat, and eradicate illicit trade in small and light weapons in all aspects (www.poa-iss.org, 2014) via several approaches and instruments that were adapted through the: Bamako declaration, Nairobi declaration, The ECOWAS Convention on SALW, South African Development Community (SADC) protocol.

Theoretical Framework

The study combines the theory of relative autonomy of the state and failed state theory. The theory of relative State autonomy depicts the level or degree of detachment or aloofness of the state in the discharge of its duties such as mediating inter-class and intra-class struggles. Thus, this theory presupposes that in any State or political society,

there are two levels of contradiction, namely, a primary and secondary contradiction. Primary contradiction is inter-class struggle or depicts class struggle between two antagonistic classes such as the ruling class and the ruled class or the bourgeois class and the proletariat (i.e. The working class) whilst secondary contradiction is the intra-class struggle, denoting class conflicts within the ruling class or between the different segment of the ruling class. The exponent of the theory holds that a state can exhibit low or high relative autonomy. The Nigerian state like other developing countries exhibits a low level of autonomy of the state as a result of low commodification of capital. The state does not limit itself to regulatory rule and hence compromised, such that instead of rising above class struggle it is deeply immersed in it (Ake, 1981; 1985, 1986),

According to Patrick (2007:44-46), the term 'failed state' is used to describe a state perceived as having failed at some basic conditions and responsibilities of a sovereign government. A failed state has shattered social and political structures. It is characterized by social, political, and economic failure, such that its central government is so weak and ineffective with little practical control over its territory, nonprovisional of public utilities or services, widespread corruption and criminality; refugees and involuntary movement of populations, and sharp economic decline.

DYNAMICS OF SALW PROLIFERATION IN NIGERIA

Sources of illegal small arms in Nigeria

However, the exact origins of illicit small arms flow and their ammunition are not well documented or known. Analysts point out that smugglers operating from Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Cameroon, and within Nigeria itself facilitate the illegal trade. The porous nature of the borders between Cameroon, Chad, and Niger has been a channel through which these illegal weapons are smuggled into the country, (Musa, 2013)

Factors encouraging the proliferation of SALW in Nigeria

The high circulation of SALWs in Nigeria is a product of the interplay of several interrelated factors. These include; the internal socio-economic and political dynamics of Nigeria, compounded by globalization, (Edeko, 2011). The crude nature of politics in Nigeria is one key factor driving the process of SALW proliferation. Politics in Nigeria is defined by politicians as a do-or-die affair or

welfare. As a result, many of them recruit 'specialists of violence', cultists, gangs, and thugs-to attain and retain political power. The result is either gross ineptitude or recrudescence of political warfare, further exacerbating governance failure.

Accordingly, Moulaye,(2008) avers that governance failure entails the inability of state actors, institutions, and agencies to use public resources and authorities to ensure the protection of lives and properties as well as delivering public goods necessary for the advancement of human security and development.

Corruption creates a security paradox that feeds the cycle of SALW proliferation. Corruption has become largely institutionalized in both public and private sectors in Nigeria, and the security sector has become worse for it,(Onuoha,2009)

The process of globalization has congealed both time and space, making it easier for ideas, goods, persons, services, information, products, and money to move across borders with fewer restrictions, (Edokos, 2011: 56).

Implication of SALW and Terrorism in Nigeria

Small armshad and continue to have devastating consequences in sub-Saharan Africa and the world. Research findings affirmed that continuous communal conflicts or insurgency over the past decades are the result of the ever-increasing acquisition of SALWs. This has caused a lot of deaths, and injuries to thousands of innocent civilians. According to the International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA) in 2007, thousands of people died every day and at least 3,000 were injured by small arms usage on a global scale.

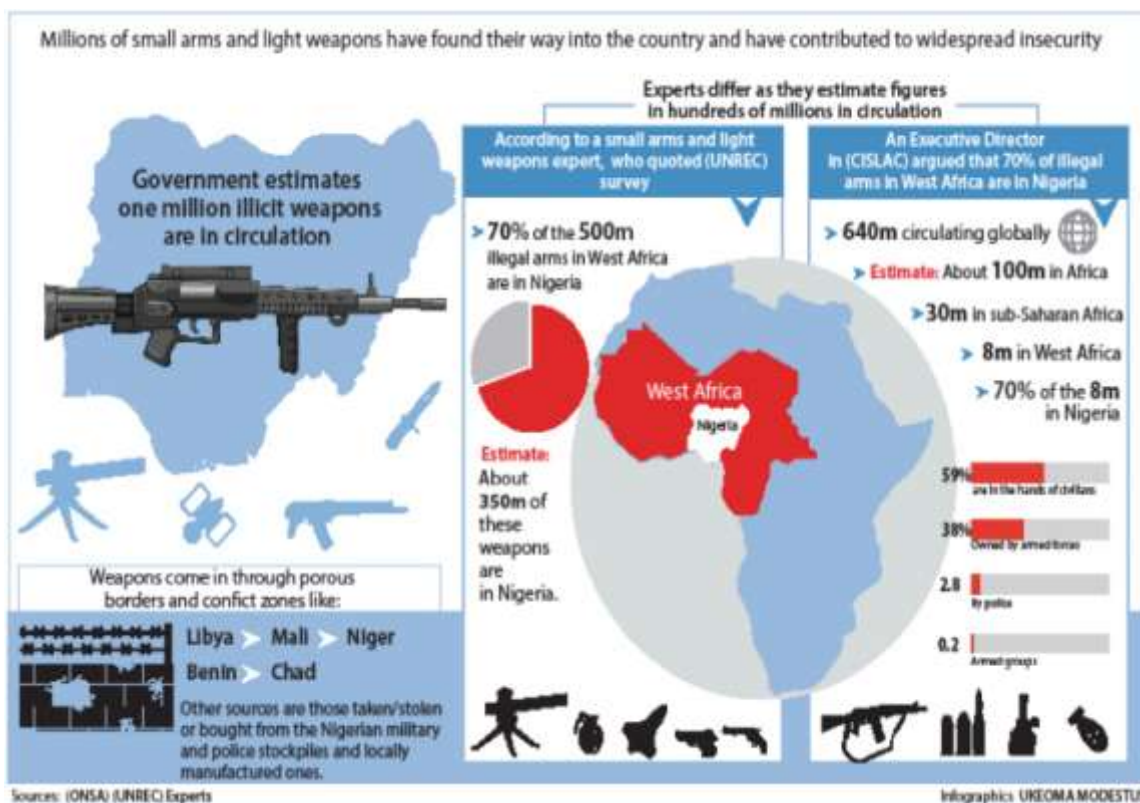
It has an impact on the basic rights and freedoms to which human beings are entitled through:I. conflict escalation and extension, Bisong (2013).

ii. Forceful imprisonment and kidnapping, Using (2014) and Chatham House (2006).

iii. buildup of criminal and communal organizations.

Impact on development

Development, especially in the northern part of Nigeria is slow, as they are ravaged by communal and religious conflicts often.archive.org/stream/department of statistics



PICTURE from the Daily Trust;<http://dailytrust>

CONTROL STRATEGIES BY NIGERIA TO SALW PROLIFERATION

In Nigeria, various strategies and mechanisms have been put in place over the years to check illegal possession and use of SALW, according to Okeke and Oji(2014). At the national level, Nigeria continues to rely on the National Firearms Act of 1959, amended through the Robbery and Firearms(Special Provisions) decree No. 5 promulgated in 1984 and later the Robbery and Firearms (Special Provisions) Act. Proposals were made that the laws be reviewed and updated following the UN Program of Action in 2001, a committee was initiated by President Obasanjo to address the issue but, it made little progress in tackling this issue. In May 2001, a second committee was established, the National Commissions for Control of Proliferation and Unlawful Circulation of Light Weapons (NATCOM) for implementation of the ECOWAS moratorium, the two committees were merged, however, the committee accomplished little due to lack of Political will power, financial support, technical expertise, corruption on part of law enforcement agencies, and institutional capacity (Hazen and Horner 2007;Chuma-Okoro, 2011).Nigeria in the ECOWAS Small Arms Control Program (ECOSAP) to check the cross-border acts of banditry was compelled to establish a Multi-National Joint Task Force (MNJTF) known as the International Joint Patrol Force (IJPLF)to patrol areas prone to attacks (Agwai Martin L., (2007).

Other efforts were made following updates in 2014, according to (thewillnigeria.com: www.theguardian.com,2014). A National Centre for the Control of Small and Light Weapons (NCCSALW) was established to be domiciled in the office of National Security Adviser was established according to premiumtimesng.comon May 3, 2021.

It replaces the defunct presidential committee on SALW and shall serve as the institutional mechanism for policy guidance, research, and monitoring of all aspects of small and light weapons in Nigeria.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and issues raised in the study, the following recommendations are made;

1. The government should map out effective means of securing her borders to check the illicit transfer of arms through the borders. In this light, existing understanding and cooperation with countries Nigeria shares

borders like Benin Republic, Cameroon, Chad, and Niger should be strengthened.

2. The Nigerian government should strengthen institutions and processes of governance to enhance the provision of the socio-economic status of its citizens, partner with private sectors to undertake a robust job creation for the teeming and idle youths that are often used by insurgents, thugs, kidnappers, and cult organizations.
3. The government should expedite action on the bill at the National Assembly that would seek to ensure a streamlined, active, and coordinated effort towards tackling the proliferation of arms.
4. The government should strengthen the nation's intelligence architecture to respond to the contemporary challenge of arms proliferation and Terrorism as recommended by Ochuoe (2013:356)
5. The citizens and stakeholders in the country should seek, and work to elect a patriotic, political leader for governance of its country.
6. There is a need for further study on the proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) with a focus on the impact and trend of various crimes and armed conflicts being perpetuated in the country.

Emphasis should be on the implication of the problem and effective strategies needed to curtail the phenomenon.

Finally, Government study groups and academic and research centers should take leading roles in organizing workshops and conferences, seminars, and paper presentations on the trends and dynamics of SALW proliferation in Nigeria and the African State (Ishaku, 2014; Researcher).

II. CONCLUSION

The proliferation of SALW is a dangerous threat to the peace and stability of Nigeria and the entire African continent as the phenomenon has a strong link with the plethora of armed conflicts and insurgency the country is currently contending with.

The inability of the government through its security apparatus to control the proliferation is responsible for the worsening insecurity in the country. It is also the conclusion of the study that various strategies being utilized by the government have so far failed to effectively address the problem of the proliferation of small arms and light weapons in Nigeria and its attendant crimes, (Ishaku, 2014, researcher)

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