
CHALLENGES TO CURBING ARMS PROLIFERATION IN NIGERIA.

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Abstract

The study focuses on the challenges of curbing small arms and light weapons proliferation in West Africa. The proliferation of small arms and light weapons is an evolving trend and a universal evil; posing challenges to human development and security. This is as a result of the fact that contemporary world is faced with various degrees of crisis which involves the use of arms of different sophistications, many of which are possessed illegally despite laws prohibiting illegal arms trade. Small arms and light weapons exacerbates conflicts, which leads to the use of arms in conflicts situations. Incidences like gang shooting, kidnapping, terrorism, armed robbery, and communal conflicts are essentially promoted and sustained by arms at the disposal of illegal users. Many others are victims of legitimate arms abuse by some ruthless law enforcement agents. The study found out that efforts put in place by West African states in particular Nigeria to curb arms proliferation has not achieved much because of so many challenges such as poverty, porous borders, local manufacturers, incessant crisis and soon. Nigeria has not achieved much in tackling domestic issues leading to arms proliferation such as poverty, unemployment, insecurity, conflict amongst others. The data obtained for this study was generated from the secondary source and documentary method applied in data analysis. It adopted "Attribution Theory" as a theoretical underpinning, to show how domestic issues are attributed to arms proliferation.

To this end, the study recommends that the government should place emphasis on finding solutions to reasons for the demand of arms in the country by providing jobs and employments in other to reduce the high rate of crime and to discourage local

manufacturers, who go into the venture for economic purposes. In conclusion there should be community focused mopping of illegal arms in circulation, closure of arms black market to destroy the network, clampdown on syndicates and dealers on illegal arms and promulgation of deterrent laws with severe penalty to discourage trading on illegal arms.

Keywords: Global Trends, proliferation, small arms, light weapons, challenges, security.

INTRODUCTION

Globally, the phenomenon of the proliferation of illicit SALW has recently emerged as a major concern of the international community, posing a complex challenge that involves security, humanitarian and development dimensions.

The majority of African countries became independent between 1960 and 1963, when the Organisation of African Unity (now African Union) was formed in Addis Ababa. At independence in the early 1960s, SALW were not a problem. Apart from Portuguese colonies of Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea-Bissau where Portugal imported millions of SALW to fight African nationalist and freedom fighters, and Algeria, where France also imported large quantities of the same kind of weapons to pursue its colonial agenda, the rest of the continent, more or less, were free from the 'tools of death' [International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA)]. The end of the cold war led to a decline in control over these weapons in many parts of the world, resulting in a significant increase in their circulation worldwide. The accelerated pace of globalization in the same period facilitated both legal and illegal cross-border transfers of these weapons, while a sudden upsurge in intra-state conflicts in West Africa created a staggering demand for them which pushed for more supply thereby making them weapons of choice in majority of recent conflicts and in non-war settings such as sectarian violence (ethnic, religious and chieftaincy conflicts), suicides, murders, homicides and accidents.

Presently, it is estimated that there are about 845 million small arms in the world today of which about 10 million are in the West Africa Sub-region. Experiences in intra-state conflicts and mercenary activities in Africa, Asia, the Middle East attest to the fact that SALW are indeed 'tools of death' and barrier to development. Other negative experiences are general crime, narcotics and drug related violence in the Americas and worldwide terrorism. Indeed, the SALW problem is a global one which requires global attention and the creation of solutions at all levels of political and social organization. As a result, many governments have signed a number of agreements at the global and regional levels to stop the illegal spread of SALW across borders.

There are two different types of global and regional agreements on SALW: legal and

political. The most important difference between these two types of agreement is that legal agreement is legally binding. By signing the agreement, states commit themselves to comply with its requirements. A political agreement is an expression of will and intent to behave in accordance with certain norms and principles.

There are two international agreements dealing with the illicit proliferation and trade of SALW:

1. The UN Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, their Parts Components, and Ammunition (UN Firearms Protocol).
2. The UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects (UN PoA).

At the Sub-regional level, the ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons, Their Ammunition and Related Material was adopted in 2006. It succeeded the ECOWAS Moratorium of 1998, the first political agreement on SALW in the Sub-region that bans the illicit importation and manufacture of SALW. Similarly, the ECOWAS Convention prohibits the illegal manufacture of SALW, and is legally binding for its members.

The target of this paper is West Africa as a whole and Nigeria in specific case. The results of the preponderance of SALW in the Sub-region are that, West Africa has become the most unstable Sub-region on the continent of Africa. Since 1960, of the 15 member states that make up ECOWAS most have been through several military coups, 37 of which were successful. SALW have particularly fuelled conflicts in Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo and the Sub-region is still struggling to survive ongoing conflicts in which small arms play a central and destabilizing role. It is also rapidly changing the cultural and traditional fabric of the Sub-region, drifting towards self-destruction where uneducated and semi-educated youth who wield the power of the gun are ruling the educated and the older generation with their wisdom. The conflict ridden West Africa is therefore a showcase of uncontrolled SALW proliferation - a region where in the not-too-distant past, SALW were alien to the society apart from the crude and primitive ones used by hunters in the hinterland.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS

Small arms

'Small arms' are weapons designed for personal use, including: light machine guns, sub-machine guns, including machine pistols, fully automatic rifles and assault rifles, and semi-automatic rifles. 'Small arms' also include:

1) 'Firearms', meaning:

- (a) Any portable barrelled weapon that expels is designed to expel or may be readily

converted to expel a shot, bullet or projectile by the action of an explosive, excluding antique firearms or their replicas. Antique firearms and their replicas shall be defined in accordance with domestic law. In no case, however, shall antique firearms include firearms manufactured after 1899.

(b) Any other weapon or destructive device such as an explosive bomb, incendiary bomb or gas bomb, grenade, rocket launcher, missile, missile system or mine.

2) 'Ammunition', meaning the complete round or its components, including cartridge cases, primers, propellant powder, bullets or projectiles, that are used in a small arm or light weapon, provided that those components are themselves subject to authorisation in the respective State Party.

3) 'Other related materials', meaning any components, parts or replacement parts of a small arm or light weapon, that are essential to its operation.

Light weapons

'Light weapons' include the following portable weapons designed for use by several persons serving as a crew: heavy machine guns, automatic cannons, howitzers, mortars of less than 100 mm calibre, grenade launchers, anti-tank weapons and launchers, recoilless guns, shoulder-fired rockets, anti-aircraft weapons and launchers, and air defence weapons.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Attribution theory is basically an approach that relates events to their likely causes. This approach was made prominent in the works of Heider (1958), Jones and Davis (1965), and Kelley's (1967). In particular, Kelley's (1967) developed co-variation model of attribution theory. It was a logical model for judging whether a particular action should be attributed to some characteristic of the person (internal) or the environment (external). The term co-variation simply means that a person has information from multiple observations, at different times and situations, and can perceive the co-variation of an observed effect and its causes. He asserts that in trying to discover the causes of behavior, one takes into account some kinds of evidence embedded in two types of causal information which influence judgments. These are Low factors = person (i.e. internal) attribution and High factors = situational (i.e. external) attribution. However, the approach, according to Fiske & Taylor (1991), focuses on how the social perceiver uses information to arrive at causal explanations for events. It examines what information is gathered and how it is combined to form a causal judgment.

Applying the method to this study, many scholars and public commentators have attributed the cause of arms proliferation to many factors based on varied observations. Their judgments recognize the internal and external dynamics of the problem. The external factors relate essentially to national policies of countries regarding production and distribution of

small arms and light weapons, how they treat the regulatory laws guiding small arms and light weapons and the overall assessment of economic interests attached to their production and distribution. In other words, the internal influence emanates from peculiar state's characteristics involving her leadership style, pattern of sharing social, economic and political rewards; the nature of relationship between and among her constituent units and the ways her laws are enforced. When these indices operate in the negative, the consequence degenerates into conflict that frequently escalates into armed violence; thereby necessitating the needs for arms and weapons that translate to arms proliferation.

CHALLENGES TO CURBING ARMS PROLIFERATION IN NIGERIA

While SALW supply and regulations regarding the proliferation, manufacturing and marking of SALW have been discussed for many years, the demand side of SALW has only more recently moved into focus with the realisation that successful and sustainable disarmament needs to address underlying causes for weapons acquisition. Small arms are attractive tools of violence for a number of reasons. They are widely available, low in cost, extremely lethal, simple to use, durable, highly portable (even by children), and easily concealed. As a consequence, they are present in virtually every society.

Those seeking to acquire arms often have complex and overlapping motivations for seeking particular weapons, and a constantly shifting set of means that constrain or facilitate the acquisition of these weapons.

It is worth noting that state-level demand for weapons is also influenced by a range of internal and external political, economic, social and security conditions. Routine modernization programmes and evolving technology, as well as changing regional security dynamics and internal political conditions, all contribute to persistent but changing demand for small arms and light weapons.

Demand for SALW on the part of civilians may be boosted by the following;

Economic factors/ Poverty

Musa (1999) poverty and criminality is the base of SALW proliferation in Nigeria is widespread poverty, despite Nigeria's status as a major oil exporting country. A sharp contradiction exists between the fact that Nigeria is one of the world's largest exporters of crude oil, and the fact that the standard of living of Nigerians is the 36th lowest in the world in terms of human development indicators. The Niger Delta region is a case in point. The situation in the region is symptomatic of what has been referred to as 'criminal social neglect and ecological degradation'. The consequence of this is that the region of the country which is responsible for some 70% of the country's income displays a degree of penury and poverty which stands in sharp contradiction to the wealth it produces. This has led to a militarised and militant youth population, which has been known to kidnap oil workers and defy security agencies, using their knowledge of the localities and their access to SALW. Economic factors, such as high rates of unemployment and low incomes, may cause people to turn to

crime using SALW as a means of survival. This could mean becoming involved in gangs, militias or other armed groups that bring some economic benefits. Young people may be particularly vulnerable in these situations.

Culture, attitudes and tradition:

In some cultures, the display of weapons is seen as important. This is often referred to as a 'gun culture'. 'Macho' cultural norms may prevail, in which both males and females place symbolic social value in the armed male as a source of status and security. In many cultures across the African continent, weapons are used for traditional rites and ceremonies. While the Fulanis in northern Nigeria make use of swords, arrows and sticks, the communities of traditional hunters of the west and east carry shotguns (Ayissi and Sall, 2005:59). In the North-West Province of Cameroon, there is a traditional rite of gun-firing at events such as at the traditional burial of local dignitaries. These are mostly locally-made so called dane guns, operating with gunpowder. Projectiles like metal pellets can be inserted into their muzzles making them very lethal. For the sake of prestige, many have now turned to the use of a wide range of more modern equipment like shotguns, revolvers, semi automatic pistols and even high caliber rifles. Of course there are gun laws limiting such open use but they are hardly respected and can be easily circumvented.

The Prevalence of Internecine Conflicts and Criminality

Civil conflict often stems from state policies that fail to protect people and recognize their basic rights, leading citizens to seek power or liberation through weapons. The demand is not limited to armed groups: wherever there are internal conflicts or groups engaged in violent conflict, there will be a growing demand for SALW among civilians, due to fears of continuing or resurgent conflict. The desire to possess small arms and the unlawful use of same in Nigeria has also been attributed to the prevalence of organised armed conflicts and the increasing culture of violence which has become a defining character of the socio-political scene since 1999. Except for self-defence and other lawful purposes, the possession of illicit firearms usually follows a premeditation of mayhem, violence or criminal act. (Howden, 2010) This correlation between crime and conflicts on one hand, and the demand for arms on the other has caused the multiplicity of conflicts and criminality to consequentially increase the demand for illicit SALW by civilians and non-state actors. (Jegade, 2010) While criminals, militants and hoodlums require them to perform their nefarious acts, their activities create an arms race between rival gangs wanting to maintain an edge over each other; and also between the State security forces and the criminals. The conflicts in the Niger Delta and the emergence of the Niger Delta militias are very important dynamics in the SALW situation in Nigeria because of the amount of weapons they have at their disposal and their active involvement in gun running. The government recognised this fact when it initiated a number of disarmament programmes in the region in 1999 and 2004, and recently extended amnesty to the militants in the region in 2009. (Xan, 2009)

Insecurity and the Privatisation of Security

The failure of the Nigerian government to guarantee human security and freedom from fear has transformed security from a public service and necessity to be provided by the government to a private necessity which individuals and groups have to provide for themselves. The government's inability to prosecute persons arrested in respect of the various religious and ethnic crises fans violence and its continuity; while the weakness of law enforcement exacerbates the culture of impunity and robs the criminal justice system of the deterrence role. The Nigeria Police Force suffers from poor training, lack of equipment, corruption and other inherent and extraneous handicaps.(Human Rights Watch,2015) Criminals and dissidents are often better equipped than the police thereby making the police incapable of repelling their attacks and unable to defend the public from criminals. Most recorded incidents of armed violence occur without the intervention of the police, a situation which the public perceive as a lack of willingness on the part of the former to engage armed crime and wilfully putting their lives in danger. (Hazen and Horner, 2008) Entities therefore rely on private security companies and vigilantes, possession of guns and installation of security gadgets, thereby increasing the demand for SALW. (Alemika,1993). Public office holders, thus protected, they commit flagrant and gross human rights violations against persons including extra-judicial executions of perceived criminals without been called to account for their actions.(Human Rights Watch ,2012) The scenario equally develops into a vicious circle where, civilians and various armed groups and criminals acquire more arms to outweigh each other.(Ginifer and Ismail,2012) This development represents failure on the part of the Nigerian State to fulfil the legal and due diligence obligation imposed by international human rights laws requiring her to “maximise human rights protection for the greater number of people”. It depicts failure in the obligation to reduce small arms violence by private actors and consequently reduce the demand for small arms and the need for people to arm themselves.

Supply factors responsible for arms proliferation in Nigeria includes:

Diversion:

According to the United Nations, it has been estimated that as much as 60 percent of the licit global arms trade has been diverted through illicit markets to the regional conflicts that have erupted since 1990.

Theft:

All stockpiles are subject to the risk of theft. Physical security and stockpile management, which refers to the procedures and activities regarding safe and secure accounting, storage, transportation and handling of munitions and weapons, is necessary for reducing the risk of theft.

Misuse by government military or police forces:

A large portion of illicit firearms consist of leakages from members of the armed forces and the police both serving and retired. This includes the remnants from the Nigerian civil war and leakages from returnees of peace keeping operations. (Hazen and Horner, 2016) According to the UN, private arms brokers play a particularly negative role in supplying weapons to areas of actual or potential conflict. Arms brokers include negotiators, financiers, exporters, importers, and transport agents, and are used to arrange every aspect of an arms deal between the supplier and an intended client. They trade most heavily in SALW and landmines. These intermediaries seldom own or even possess the arms supplies outright, and typically live neither in the country where the weapons are supplied nor the one in which they are received.

Arms brokerage is still fairly weakly regulated and the strongest mechanisms that exist are regional ones, for instance the EU Common Position on Regulating Arms Brokering. This is a legally binding agreement that obliges all EU Member States to develop controls over brokering based on the licencing of all individual brokering transactions. The Nairobi Protocol, to which the Republic of Sudan is a signatory, also requires both the registration of SALW brokers and the licencing of individual transactions. However, despite these agreements, many national legal systems still do not prohibit or clearly regulate the activities of arms brokers or when they have measures in place, do not enforce these effectively. This leaves a lot of opportunity for brokers to exploit the gaps and continue with their activities. Other factors that allow arms brokers to continue operating include deficits in the national capacity of many countries to control and monitor their airspace. Air cargo firms play an essential role in arranging the actual delivery of arms shipments, particularly in Africa, where the size of the continent and lack of road and rail infrastructure make air transport more convenient. Studies have indicated that some air transport agents even have expertise in the falsification of documentation and circumvention of inspection to conceal cargoes.

Two UN Panels of Experts on Sierra Leone and Liberia that examined illegal arms transfer to the respective countries identified a number of ways in which the brokers managed to obtain ship and deliver weapons despite international sanctions. These included using false aircraft registration certificates, false flight plans and using end-user certificates that indicate Nigeria as the final recipient of the arms shipment while the arms were going to Liberia instead and Nigeria had no knowledge of the transaction.

Illegal arms brokering is further enabled by corrupt government officials, especially at points of entry and exit and a lack of border control. This situation also makes it possible for certain governments to use brokers in order to conceal their small arms exports or procurement if they wish to do so.

Porous Borders:

Another factor is that Africa by virtue of its size, the second largest continent in the world and population, the second most populated and given the level of its development experience persistent problem of border control. Also, due to the sheer size of some of its countries, for

instance, Nigeria, has 770 km of shared land border with the Republic of Benin to the west, about 1500 km with Niger to the north, 1700 km with Cameroon to the east, 90 km with the Republic of Chad to the north-east and 850 km maritime border on the Atlantic Ocean. Outstretched these tally up to 4910 km of borders which have to be controlled. Each of these entry points, along with the airports, has been used to smuggle arms into the country. One can imagine how tasking it is to effectively control these borders. It is also interesting to observe that all three largest sub-Saharan countries, namely Sudan (the continent's overall largest), the Congo DRC (3rd overall largest) and Chad (5th overall largest) have been experiencing instability and armed conflict for long. It may well be that their size and their porous borders make it easy for weapons to be smuggled inflaming and protracting violence (Ngang, 2007). Ayissi and Sall (2005:55) argue that it will be very hard to find any country in the world capable of effectively controlling such extensive borders. Arms traffickers exploit this situation to smuggle SALW into the country.

Globalization:

The forces of globalization bring with it opportunities and challenges, the elimination of state enforced restrictions on exchanges across borders and the increasingly integrated and complex global system of production and exchange that has emerge as a result further complicate the challenge of containing SALWs proliferation. The idea of globalization and its advocate for free market forces with minimum economic barriers and open trade for world development provides ground for illicit trade in arms by minimizing custom regulations and border control, trafficking of small arms becomes easier. Malhotra, (2011), stressed that, a miniscule percent of container ships have cargo checks, therefore making the arms movement smooth. Faking documents bribing officials and concealing arms as humanitarian aids are common practices. Malhotra (2011) identified globalization factors that facilitate proliferation of illicit trade in arms:

- (a) Political and economic integration are coupled with lesser restrictions in migration and human movement. This helps the arms dealers to fortify their present business connections and tap new ones. Dealers migrate to various regions, motivated by business expansion or reduced operational risks.
- (b) Banking reforms and capital mobility have aided the black market to spread its trade internationally, utilizing every angle of the well linked financial market. This also gives rise to offshore markets and tax shelters. An illustration of banking innovation is E-money. Banks have introduced cards bearing microchips, which are able to store large sums of money. These cards are portable outside conventional channels or can be easily bartered among individuals.
- (c) The linkage of banks with the internet has posed a new challenge in combating illegitimate activities in the financial sector. E-banking has digitized money making it prone

to criminality. Even though, it has numerous benefits for the world at large, it is misused for money laundering, credit card scams and check-kiting. Adding to this, economic integration among regions blesses arm brokers with more opportunities to shelter their money, by investing in different stock exchanges. Numerous other illegal practices are a by-product of a deregulated financial sector, but money laundering is at the apex. Money Laundering or 'cleansing of money' is an unlawful practice of concealing the point of origin, identity or destination of the funds, when performing a particular financial transaction. The criminals manoeuvre money across borders gaining from banks in countries with lax anti-laundering policies.

(d) Profound expansion of commercial airline and freight industry (making transport cheaper and easier) are instrumental in increased penetration of arms in conflict zones. Global merger of airline companies, supply chains, shipping firms make it tough to supervise unlawful practices in air and water.

(e) The growth of global communication in the past two decades has been unfathomable. This has enhanced the ability of arms dealers to communicate internationally through the web at a cheap rate.

Local Manufacturing:

Home-made weapons: These usually circulate in small quantities, used by militia groups that do not have resources to acquire proper weapons and ammunition. An example is the case of the 200-plus Obo scouts of the Central Africa Republic (CAR), who have grouped together since 2008 to fight the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). Too poor for military-grade weapons or even the kind of firearms American hunters take for granted, these ad hoc groupings have set about building an arsenal of homemade, single-barrel shotguns loaded Nigeria also has a significant local supply of legitimate and illicit SALW through local manufactures. (Wali,2005). Section 22 of the *Firearms Act* prohibits the manufacture of firearms. However, the government established Defence Industries Corporation of Nigeria (DICON) set up in 1964 via the *Defence Industries Corporation of Nigeria Act*, is legally empowered to produce arms and ammunitions in the country mainly for use by the military and the police. Given the legal status of its mandate, this does not constitute a significant source of illicit small arms.

However, this is not the case with the cluster of unlicensed local craftsmen located in different parts of the country, who produce on the aggregate, a substantial quantity of illicit guns in contravention of section 22 of the *Firearms Act*. The clandestine nature of their activities negates due diligence, transparency and regulation as required by international standards. It also makes their products difficult to trace and makes the SALW position of Nigeria opaque.

Protracted military rule,

Corruption adds to SALW proliferation. However, a major dynamic in the proliferation of illicit SALW in Nigeria is the legacy of protracted military rule. Until the return to civilian rule in May 1999, the country had been under military rule during 75% of its existence. This led to the entrenchment of a militarised national psyche and a culture of violence. The widespread use of SALW to take over and maintain a grip on power had its own effects on the attitude and perception of Nigerians regarding the role of violence in society in general, and the use of SALW in particular. Following years of protracted transition programmes and worsening civil-military relations, the military lost control of their monopoly over the means of coercion, as various groups within the society increasingly sought military responses to military oppression. This created the impression that political power flowed from the barrel of the gun. Many civilians sought power either by being allies of the military or by acquiring their own weapons.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Arms proliferation poses serious security threats to any state or human society. In most third world countries, it exacerbates insecurity and stimulates volatility of crimes that attract some economic benefits and others that unleash dastard consequences on human safety.

The injustices associated with the distribution of nation's wealth and other political or economic benefits by government, are found to nurture grievances to astonishing destructive level. With grandiose public display of wealth by the rich in the midst of widespread poverty, hardship and intractable unemployment rate, crime becomes a waiting employer of the displaced and frustrated class, who seek to dislocate the economic rewarding system and restructure the imbalance. In the event, it creates socio-economic and political problem that the state authority battles with scarce resources and inadequate security personnel. With persistent material scarcity and inability of individuals and groups to meet their simple financial obligation, it results in implosion of tendencies towards commission of crimes. These are made possible by arms and weapons, which are at the beck and call of the prospective users. The major concern is the fact that production and exportation of these arms and weapons of war by the developed countries of the world have assumed a threatening dimension and contradicts the clamour for global peace and security that drives the visions of the UNO which lie on maintaining a peaceful world. The fact that virtually all the UNSC permanent members are the prime movers in arms production and export endangers human existence and survival. It aggravates internal crisis; generates armed conflicts at most destinations and produces dislocated world order; one which is characterized by widening human annihilation which is inconsistent with the principle of global security. This trend is worsened by local production and circulation that bridges the yawning supply gap from external sources. In that vein, attention must focus on enforcement of all laws on arms proliferation by government to enhance national and global security.

As earlier noted, the demand and supply factors of SALW proliferation are mutually dependent. Therefore, addressing one without the other may not produce the desired results.

For instance, addressing the supply factor without simultaneously addressing the demand end may create a situation where arms become more expensive to acquire without necessarily preventing their acquisition, since those acquiring it may still be able to afford it. In such a situation, SALW will remain affordable to groups like the Niger Delta militias that generate large funds from illegal oil bunkering activities and those sponsored by politicians and other influence members of the society. Moreover, as long as the need for SALW subsists, persons in need of same will always circumvent legal restrictions on obtaining them regardless of the vigilance of the law. An effective approach requires coordinated and sustained legislative, administrative and judicial strategies that address the factors encouraging demand for arms and concurrently dam the outlets through which illicit arms are proliferated. The strategies should go beyond the national level because of the cross-border implications of SALW.

The UN should invoke all treaties and laws relating to arms proliferation and other weapons of war to limit their circulation and use for criminal and subversive operations. Nigerian leaderships should develop a proactive strategy that facilitates mopping up of arms from various rural locations with the assistance of community leaders, police and other stakeholders. The seeming failure of police to brace up with the task of securing lives and property has made communities, local and state authorities to turn to alternative security arrangements (Vigilante or Neighbourhood Watch). Arming of these groups should be approached with sense of caution. Police should be well equipped and motivated to perform their constitutional and professional duties. This will save further arms from drifting into unauthorized hands with the potentials for security breaches. Generally, it will be mirage and unimaginative dreaming, to hope that the world will be secure when the concern of the developed world is to continue to export these weapons to the third world countries, which have the potential for deepening ethnic antagonism and religious volatility, including political violence commonly experienced in their societies. Such crises become an excellent opportunity to create viable markets for the arms (despite arms embargo) to further increase the spate of the violence with the consequent damages. There will be considerable differences in the rates of conflict/crime in Nigeria in particular and the world in general if there is adequate reduction in arms production and curtailment in the number of illegal arms in the hands of unauthorized publics.

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