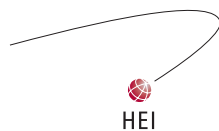


small arms survey 2007

guns and the city



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FOREWORD

Every year gun crime kills about 250,000 people and injures many more. The resources needed to tackle armed violence and deal with its aftermath divert funding from education, health care, and job creation. The fear of being assaulted with a firearm or being caught in crossfire confines people to living behind high walls and locked doors. Gun violence, in short, hurts all of us.

The problem is especially acute in cities, where violent criminal activity is most often concentrated. But cities also provide opportunities for addressing gun violence, especially when the resolve of residents is harnessed.

When I took office in Bogotá in the mid-1990s, armed violence was spiralling out of control and levels of confidence in public security provision had reached record lows. We introduced a programme called ‘security for everyone’ and, with the support of the Catholic Church and the police, we reduced the number of licences to carry firearms in the evening and at weekends throughout the city. We also searched for guns at police roadblocks and drew on individual support and private funding to launch a weapons buy-back programme in 1995 and 1996.

These efforts—aided by media coverage—achieved striking results: a 26 per cent decline in Bogotá’s homicide rate over two years (1995 to 1996) and a gradual shift in the mindset of people who had previously thought it was important to carry a firearm for protection.

Bogotá was not alone in facing high levels of gun violence. During the same period the mayor of Cali introduced temporary restrictions on carrying firearms and other security guarantees such as road checks and an increased police presence. The homicide rate declined notably as a result.

With the support of national and international actors, such interventions can be usefully replicated elsewhere. In Bogotá we relied on individual and private-sector support because we lacked strong national backing. To be even more effective in confronting the perpetrators and facilitators of gun violence, politicians, justice departments, and law enforcement agencies at all levels must work together.

The *Small Arms Survey 2007: Guns and the City* connects the dots between the individuals and organizations whose inaction or actions affect levels of armed violence at the municipal, national, regional, and international levels. In so doing, and in reminding us that we have the means to improve security, this book is essential reading for anyone concerned with mitigating the suffering armed violence causes families and communities around the world.

Antanas Mockus

Former Mayor of Bogotá, Colombia (1995–97 and 2000–03)

June 2007

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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, the project is supported by the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, and by sustained contributions from the governments of Belgium, Canada, Finland, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, and the United Kingdom. The Survey is also grateful for past and current project support received from the Governments of Australia, Denmark, France, Germany, New Zealand, and the United States, as well as from different United Nations agencies, programmes, and institutes.

The objectives of the Small Arms Survey are: to be the principal source of public information on all aspects of small arms and armed violence; 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; to support efforts to address the effects of small arms proliferation and misuse; and to act as a clearinghouse 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, and collaborates with a network of researchers, partner institutions, non-governmental organizations, and governments in more than 50 countries.

NOTES TO READERS

Abbreviations: Lists of abbreviations can be found at the end of each chapter.

Chapter cross-referencing: Chapter cross-references appear capitalized in brackets throughout the text. For example, in Chapter 5 on Urban Landscapes of Armed Violence: ‘Conflict and post-conflict urban armed violence also heavily affects cities ranging from Bujumbura (BURUNDI) to Mogadishu and Kabul.’

Exchange rates: All monetary values are expressed in current US dollars (USD). When other currencies are also cited, unless otherwise indicated, they are converted to USD using the 365-day average exchange rate for the period 1 September 2005 to 31 August 2006.

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. The *Survey*, appearing italicized, refers generally to past and future editions.

Web site: For more detailed information and current developments on small arms issues, readers are invited to visit the Small Arms Survey Web site at www.smallarmssurvey.org.

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A French policeman holds a shotgun shell recovered after his unit was shot upon in Grigny, south of Paris, on the 11th night of urban riots in November 2005. © Franck Prevel/Reuters



Introduction

The global small arms process spawned one disappointment, but also some good news, in 2006. The failure of the UN Programme of Action Review Conference to reach a substantive outcome was followed, within months, by agreement on initial steps towards the negotiation of a legally binding Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). The Review Conference undoubtedly represented a missed opportunity to examine the successes and failures of recent years, consolidate various strands of work, and chart a path forward. Nevertheless, it appears to have had little impact (positive or negative) on national, regional, or international efforts to stem the proliferation and misuse of small arms and light weapons.

Since 2001, an estimated USD 660 million has been invested in about 600 different activities in at least 94 states (Maze and Parker, 2006). These range from national capacity-building to stockpile management, post-conflict disarmament, surplus weapons destruction, and research and awareness-raising. In addition to the ATT resolution, significant initiatives of the past year included the following:

- a UN Group of Governmental Experts examined the prospects for enhanced regulation of international arms brokering to stem the illicit trafficking in arms;
- the Swiss government, together with the UN Development Programme, hosted a ministerial-level summit that saw 42 states endorse the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development, committing them to achieving measurable reductions in armed violence by 2015;
- large-scale post-conflict disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) efforts involving more than 1.25 million ex-combatants in more than 22 countries were conducted in places as diverse as Angola, Colombia, Eritrea, and Indonesia (Caramés, Fisas, and Sanz, 2007);
- a large-scale NATO- and European-led programme was launched to destroy surplus weapons and ammunition stocks in Ukraine, estimated to have the world's third-largest arsenal (Griffiths, 2007);
- the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) negotiated and signed a legally binding convention designed to strengthen regional initiatives to stem illicit weapons trafficking and misuse (Berkol, 2007).

These diverse initiatives, some diplomatic, some programmatic, testify to the continued high level of engagement with the issue of small arms and armed violence, and the recognition, at least in some regions, of the need for broad-based multilateral action, whether within or alongside the UN system.

New perspectives

Since 2007 has been declared (somewhat arbitrarily) the first year to see more than half of the world's population living in cities, it seems appropriate to focus on urban armed violence as a distinct problem requiring policies and programmes that engage local governments and actors around the world. A range of innovative initiatives have been launched by urban leaders in such places as Bogotá, Boston, Johannesburg, Rio de Janeiro, and St. Louis. Programmes

tackling small arms and violence have also been initiated by networks of urban leaders, such as the anti-gang initiative led by Los Angeles officials or the bi-partisan Mayors Against Illegal Guns initiative that involves more than 200 mayors in more than 40 US states.

Urban settings pose particular challenges to armed violence prevention and reduction. They are sites of large-scale violent criminal activity, principally because of the opportunities and anonymity offered by modern cities. They are also zones of political unrest and instability, where violence is mobilized and manipulated for political ends. Even so, cities are often densely regulated and effectively governed spaces, providing many opportunities for policies and programmes that address the different risks and vulnerabilities to armed violence, beyond a focus on weapons alone.

Chapter highlights

The *Small Arms Survey 2007* follows the traditional structure, with the first section comprising chapters that update or extend our knowledge on the production, transfer, stockpiles and holdings of weapons, and measures to regulate or control them. The highlights in this section include a relatively comprehensive—if still tentative—map of the global distribution of weapons in civilian hands, a review of new initiatives and continuing debates relating to arms transfer controls, and an in-depth look at licensed (and unlicensed) production as a vector of proliferation.

The thematic section opens with a photo essay by award-winning combat photographer Lucian Read on the impact of small arms in the Philippines. It is followed by the lead chapter, ‘Guns in the City’, and two case studies: one on urban armed violence in Brazil, the other on armed violence in Bujumbura, Burundi.

The last section offers a study of the link between conflict and the cost of firearms, using a global database of Kalashnikov prices, and a chapter that draws on field research in Brazil and Uganda to document the diversion of ammunition to non-state actors. The final chapter presents initial findings from our large-scale project mapping arms, armed violence, and insecurity in South Sudan following the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in 2005. The full range of publications from this project can be found at: www.smallarmssurvey.org/sudan.

Update chapters

Chapter 1 (Production): Licensed and unlicensed production of small arms, light weapons, and their ammunition is the focus of this year’s production chapter. It highlights the importance of this neglected, but quantitatively significant, aspect of the industry. Based on new research, it shows that 60–80 per cent of all current military small arms production is undertaken by firms that have acquired the production know-how from others.

Since this involves the transfer of technology from a restricted number of original owners to a larger number of producers, licensed and unlicensed production multiplies the sources of small arms. As small arms technology proliferates, the risk of irresponsible transfer and misuse also increases. This chapter presents major problem scenarios and the best practices that can remedy them. It concludes that the most effective counter-proliferation strategies target the initial export of production know-how.

Chapter 2 (Civilian firearms): Providing the most comprehensive portrait of civilian firearms distribution to date, this chapter analyses official registration data and various estimates and uses statistical modelling to estimate that there are about 650 million weapons in civilian hands worldwide, or roughly one gun for every seven people in the world. This implies that the previous Small Arms Survey estimate of 640 million total weapons will have to be revised upwards (to an estimated 875 million firearms worldwide), and further that civilians own roughly 75 per cent of all firearms, easily outnumbering military and law enforcement small arms.

Definition of small arms and light weapons

The Small Arms Survey uses the term 'small arms and light weapons' broadly to cover both military-style small arms and light weapons as well as commercial firearms (handguns and long guns). When possible, it follows the definition used in the United Nations' Report of the Panel of Governmental Experts on Small Arms (United Nations, 1997):

Small arms: revolvers and self-loading pistols, rifles and carbines, assault rifles, sub-machine guns, and light machine guns.

Light weapons: heavy machine guns, hand-held under-barrel and mounted grenade launchers, portable anti-tank and anti-aircraft guns, recoilless rifles, portable launchers of anti-tank and anti-aircraft missile systems, and mortars of less than 100 mm calibre.

The Survey uses the terms 'firearm' and 'gun' to mean hand-held weapons that fire a projectile through a tube by explosive charge. The terms 'small arms' and 'light weapons' are used more comprehensively to refer to all hand-held, man-portable, explosively or chemically propelled or detonated devices. Unless the context dictates otherwise, no distinction is intended between commercial firearms (such as hunting rifles) and small arms and light weapons designed for military use (such as assault rifles).

The UN definition was agreed through consensus by government officials. It was negotiated, in other words, to serve practical political goals that differ from the needs of research and analysis. While the UN definition is used in the *Survey* as a baseline, the analysis in this and subsequent chapters is broader, allowing consideration of weapons such as home-made (craft) firearms that might be overlooked using the UN definition. The term small arm is used in this chapter to refer both to small arms and light weapons (i.e. the small arms industry) unless otherwise stated, whereas light weapon refers specifically to light weapons.

The chapter also reveals changing patterns of civilian ownership. Civilians are acquiring more powerful firearms and in poorer areas sales of automatic rifles are increasing. There also appears to be a general link between per capita wealth and gun ownership: where gun ownership laws remain unchanged, greater national wealth leads to higher levels of gun ownership.

Chapter 3 (Transfers): Transfers of small arms, light weapons, and ammunition that are authorized by governments are not always legal or responsible. Some authorized transfers contravene international law, including norms relating to human rights and armed conflict. Other transfers can be considered irresponsible because they entail a high risk of diversion to unauthorized recipients. Building on analysis presented in the *Small Arms Survey 2004*, this chapter provides numerous examples of governments transferring weapons even though they knew, or should have known, of circumstances creating a significant risk of misuse.

The chapter also updates and fine-tunes the annual Small Arms Trade Transparency Barometer, revealing that transparency remains poor in many countries.

Chapter 4 (Transfer controls): This chapter takes stock of the latest developments in the global small arms process, with a specific focus on the issue of transfer controls. Key challenges in the area of transfer controls include unpacking relevant *Programme of Action* commitments, deciding whether and how to address the question of transfers to non-state actors, and developing means of effectively implementing transfer licensing criteria.

States have extensive existing responsibilities in relation to the transfer of weapons. Relevant legally binding norms include direct limitations on certain arms transfers, as well as the rule holding states 'complicit' in violations of international law committed with arms they transfer to others despite a known (or knowable) risk of misuse. Guidelines identifying factors to be considered when deciding whether to authorize a particular transfer can help states take a more systematic, rigorous, and objective approach to these decisions.

Urban violence section

Photo essay (Philippines): This year the *Small Arms Survey* showcases award-winning photographer Lucian Read's coverage of the impact of small arms in the Philippines. The photos reveal complex relationships between the firearms and the people who make, want, use, suffer from, and confront them. They capture the gunsmiths who depend on the arms trade for their livelihood, as well as those who buy the finished product. They show the confined bodies and mourners of victims of gun violence, and the attempts to prosecute perpetrators. They also portray efforts to impose a firearm ban in the run-up to the May 2007 elections, while offering a glimpse of opponents of gun control.

Chapter 5 (Urban violence): For the first time in human history, most of the world's inhabitants live in cities rather than rural areas. In recognition of this global shift, the 2007 edition of the *Small Arms Survey* contributes to a growing literature that seeks to identify and develop responses to the particular dynamics of urban armed violence. This chapter observes that rapid and large-scale urbanization is strongly associated with escalating rates of armed violence, whether political or criminal in nature.

Individual and collective reactions are based on perceived as well as real insecurities, often involving strategies to contain violence or export it to the urban periphery. The chapter documents a host of municipal approaches to the prevention and reduction of urban armed violence. Ranging from coercive and top-down to compliance-oriented and voluntary approaches, they vary in effectiveness. Successful programmes often combine a variety of strategies.

Chapter 6 (Burundi): This chapter looks at conflict and post-conflict armed violence in Bujumbura, the capital of Burundi. During a drawn-out civil war, Bujumbura was a theatre of armed violence between increasingly segregated and heavily armed neighbourhoods. Since the 2003 ceasefire armed violence rates have declined, though at a slower pace in Bujumbura than in other regions of Burundi.

Recent field research in six of Burundi's 17 provinces finds that the DDR process and civilian disarmament initiatives have produced mixed results. Small arms that were previously used during the conflict are weapons of choice for those perpetrating post-conflict violence in Burundi. In Bujumbura pistols and revolvers are also commonly carried for protection. The persistence of armed violence in Bujumbura—both criminal and politically motivated—suggests that measures targeting small arms proliferation have been inadequate.

Chapter 7 (Brazil): The rate of armed violence in Brazil grew threefold from 1982 to 2002, from 7 to 21 deaths per 100,000. It continued to increase until 2004, when the first signs of a potential decline were noted.

This chapter analyses data on social demographics, public health, and firearms availability from 5,507 municipalities across Brazil. It identifies the risk and protection factors conditioning armed violence across the country. Being male, black, young, and out of school and work are among the variables associated with victimization by armed violence, while suicide is more common among higher-income groups. The chapter finds that social inequality is correlated with armed violence, while poverty is not.

Other topics

Chapter 8 (Economics): Using available information on global prices of various Kalashnikov assault rifles, the chapter examines whether a set of factors influences demand and supply in the small arms market and analyses the relationship between gun prices and civil war. In assessing the role of firearms demand, the chapter tests factors associated with the income and motivation of buyers, concluding that weapons prices do not appear to be associated with homicide rates, economic downturns, or young male demographics. Supply-side factors that affect gun

prices include the effectiveness of a country's regulations, porosity of borders, the level of military spending in neighbouring countries, and recent experience of conflict. A critical finding is that cheaper weapons prices lead to an increased risk of civil war, independently of other conflict risk factors.

Chapter 9 (Ammunition diversion): This chapter presents findings from two pilot studies that are part of the Survey's Ammunition Tracing Project. Employing new methodologies and extensive field research, the chapter charts illicit flows of ammunition in Karamoja, northern Uganda, and Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The chapter reveals evidence that much of the ammunition circulating among non-state actors in the two regions has been illicitly diverted from state security forces. By mapping and quantifying ammunition flows, the chapter provides solid evidence of the critical role that diverted arms and ammunition play in sustaining armed violence. It also provides further inputs for the expanding ammunition debate.

Chapter 10 (South Sudan): Drawing on field research undertaken as part of the Survey's Sudan Human Security Baseline Assessment project, this chapter maps out the numerous security threats facing South Sudan in the aftermath of the January 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA). It underscores the fragility of the peace deal and points to the need for sustained international attention to the region. Conflicts between those supporting the fledgling security framework provided by South Sudanese authorities pursuant to the CPA and various actors seeking to undermine the peace, combined with points of contention among the parties, raise the spectre of renewed North–South conflict.

Conclusion

This edition of the *Small Arms Survey* expands the potential scope of our policy interventions—from a narrow focus on supply-side control measures to a broader menu of instruments rooted in development, humanitarian, criminal justice, and (this year) urban planning perspectives. This does *not* mean that the problem of small arms proliferation and misuse is necessarily also expanding, but rather that our understanding of the different aspects of arms and armed violence—including the means to address their human, social, and economic costs—is deepening. In the long run, this will improve our ability to develop and deploy policies and programmes appropriate to the widely varied contexts associated with small arms proliferation and misuse.

Future editions of the *Survey* will tackle such themes as the public health approach to armed violence; post-conflict DDR; and the importance of small arms to security sector governance. In collaboration with old and new partners, we will continue to work to provide information and analysis that can underpin policies and programmes aimed at reducing and preventing armed violence. ■

Keith Krause

Programme Director, Small Arms Survey

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