



Kazakh Army soldiers march during the opening ceremony of the Steppe Eagle 2011 joint tactical military exercise, at Ili military range outside Almaty, August 2011.

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Blue Skies and Dark Clouds

KAZAKHSTAN AND SMALL ARMS

INTRODUCTION

In May 2011, two deadly explosions targeted facilities of Kazakhstan's National Security Committee (KNB) in Aktobe Oblast and Astana.¹ One of the attacks was reportedly the first suicide bombing in the country (Lillis, 2011a). Two months later, in the same oblast, authorities conducted a two-week operation in the villages of Shubarshi and Kenkiyak to neutralize an armed group responsible for the killing of two police officers and suspected of religious radicalism. The special units killed nine members of the group and lost two more officers during the intervention (MIA, 2011; Mednikova and Bogatik, 2011). While Kazakhstan is generally perceived as a beacon of stability in an otherwise troubled region, such incidents demonstrate that economic growth and political stability do not render a country immune to home-grown armed violence.

Kazakhstan has been an active participant in the UN small arms process, submitting four national reports on its implementation of the UN Programme of Action since 2005 (PoA-ISS, 2010). The country has carried out a well-developed set of small arms control initiatives, including strengthened controls over private firearm ownership, large-scale civilian weapons collection, and the destruction of excess stockpiles of arms and ammunition inherited from the Soviet Union (RoK, 2010a). Yet beyond Kazakhstan's own national reporting, the country's small arms control efforts, as well as the nature and significance of the threats they are meant to address, have only rarely been studied.² Indeed, the bulk of international attention on small arms issues in Central Asia has been directed at the country's conflict-ridden neighbours.³

This chapter presents the findings of research initiated in April 2010 by the Small Arms Survey. The project, supported by the Government of Norway, was designed to assess levels of small arms availability in the country, evaluate the impact of firearms on crime and security, and review government initiatives to address small arms issues. It relies on a variety of research methods, including a nationwide survey of 1,500 households as well as six focus group discussions with members of communities affected by unintended explosions at munitions sites.⁴

The chapter's main findings include the following:

- Household survey results suggest that civilians in Kazakhstan owned between 190,000 and 225,000 firearms in 2010, which translates into a low per capita rate by international standards. Civilian firearm ownership appears more prominent among young men and in urban areas; it also seems to be motivated by a perceived need for protection against criminals.
- Kazakh authorities report having collected and seized more than 60,000 firearms from civilians between 2003 and 2009. They also destroyed at least 20,000 civilian small arms during the same period.
- Kazakhstan's overall positive security outlook is clouded by an increase in crime rates since 2010, as well as recent incidents of armed violence with terrorist, ethnic, and political undertones.

Map 4.1 Kazakhstan



- Although the country's homicide rate has decreased significantly since the 1990s, it remained above the world average, at more than 8 per 100,000, in 2010. The percentage of homicides and robberies committed with small arms has also increased in recent years, but it remains low when compared with rates elsewhere.
- The Ministry of Defence reported the destruction of more than 1.1 million rounds of surplus conventional ammunition between 2003 and 2009 (out of a declared total of 2.5 million). The Ministry also reported destroying about 38,000 state-held small arms and light weapons between 2002 and 2006.
- Kazakhstan has been disproportionately affected by unplanned explosions at munitions sites, with six major incidents known to have occurred since 2001. Focus group discussions with affected communities revealed that the authorities do not organize emergency response training for the civilian population living near ammunition depots.

This chapter is divided into three main sections. It first analyses Kazakhstan's security outlook and discusses some of the main threats to the country's stability. The second section examines civilian firearms—their availability, government controls over them, and their impact on security in Kazakhstan. Lastly, the chapter examines state-held stockpiles, including government efforts to dispose of surplus and the impact of unplanned explosions at munitions sites.

A SAFE HAVEN UNDER THREAT?

Kazakhstan, the world's largest landlocked country, is home to just 16.6 million inhabitants (AS, 2011). A Soviet Republic until December 1991, it now shares borders with China, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. Unlike some of its Central Asian neighbours, Kazakhstan has been spared civil war and ethnic strife, earning it the reputation of a pillar of stability in an otherwise volatile region.⁵ This section tests this assessment by reviewing key crime and security indicators and by discussing emerging threats to the country's internal stability. It finds that the overall security situation is satisfactory, although it is becoming more vulnerable to emerging negative trends. While crime rates have decreased markedly since Kazakhstan's independence, the past two years have seen a significant deterioration. Recent acts of religiously motivated terrorism, as well as instances of ethnic and political violence, further cloud the picture.

Context

Kazakhstan has prospered economically over the past decade thanks in large measure to its booming oil and gas industries. Gross national income per capita increased from USD 1,260 in 2000 to USD 7,440 in 2010 (World Bank, 2011). Kazakhstan is also Central Asia's primary recipient of foreign direct investment, with USD 50 billion received since 1991, representing around 80 per cent of total investment in the Central Asia region (Hug, 2011, p. 21). Economic growth has generally contributed to improving socio-economic conditions, particularly in the last ten years. From 2001 to 2009, the proportion of the population with income below the minimum food basket declined from 16.1 per cent to 0.6 per cent, while income inequality decreased by 30 per cent (UN, 2010, pp. 18–19). Unemployment officially stood at a low 5.3 per cent for the third quarter of 2011 (AS, 2011).

Growing economic significance and political stability have helped turn Kazakhstan into a regional powerhouse with increasing clout in international forums. In 2010, Kazakhstan became the first Central Asian state and former Soviet Republic to chair the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). During its presidency, Kazakhstan hosted the OSCE's first heads of state summit in 11 years (Lillis, 2011b; OSCE, 2010). The country was also named chair of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in 2011 as well as of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation in 2011–12 (RoK, 2011c; MFA, 2011).

Tarnishing these positive features are persistent concerns with governance in the country. President Nursultan Nazarbayev has led Kazakhstan since 1989 and was last re-elected in April 2011 for a five-year term with 95.5 per cent of the vote. Although the turnout rate of 90 per cent was lauded, foreign observers, including the OSCE, expressed concern at the lack of opposition candidates and noted 'serious irregularities' in the electoral process (Lillis, 2011c; OSCE, 2011). Furthermore, Kazakhstan is accorded a score just above mid-level in the United Nations Development Programme's Human Development Index, ranking 66 out of 169 countries (UNDP, 2010). Shortcomings in the country's healthcare and education systems contribute to the modest ranking and stand in sharp contrast to the flattering macro-economic trends mentioned above (ICG, 2011, pp. 28–33). Social tensions also surfaced in 2011 when massive protests by oil and gas workers demanding higher wages affected the national industry for several months (RFE/RL, 2011). In December 2011, a peaceful strike turned violent, leading to pogroms and deadly clashes in the towns of Zhanaozen and Shetpe, in which at least 17 people died after police and security forces fired on a crowd of rioters (Antoncheva, 2011).

Kazakhstan is becoming more vulnerable to emerging negative trends.

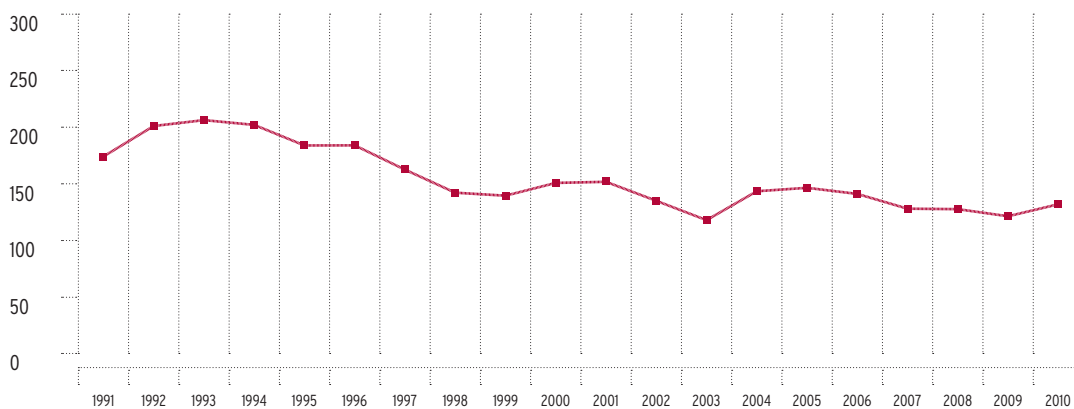
Crime

Similar to the macro-economic trends identified above, the crime situation in Kazakhstan has generally improved over the past 15 to 20 years. Despite some major variations from year to year, the total number of crimes recorded in 2010 was much lower than in 1991 (see Figure 4.1). Violent crime has also fallen markedly since independence. Homicides peaked between 1992 and 1998, a period during which they averaged about 2,500 per year, compared with fewer than 1,400 homicides in 2010 (see Figure 4.2).

Recent crime trends are more worrying. After several years of decline, the general crime rate began increasing in 2010 (see Figure 4.1) and kept growing in the first half of 2011. In January–June 2011, law enforcement agencies recorded 80,685 crimes, an 18.6 per cent increase compared with the same period in 2010 (68,053). Regions where the crime rate in the first half of 2011 increased the most compared to 2010 are the capital Astana (a 105.1 per cent increase), Karagandy Oblast (35.5 per cent), Southern Kazakhstan Oblast (33.1 per cent), Almaty city (20.1 per cent),

Figure 4.1 **Total recorded crimes in Kazakhstan, 1991-2010**

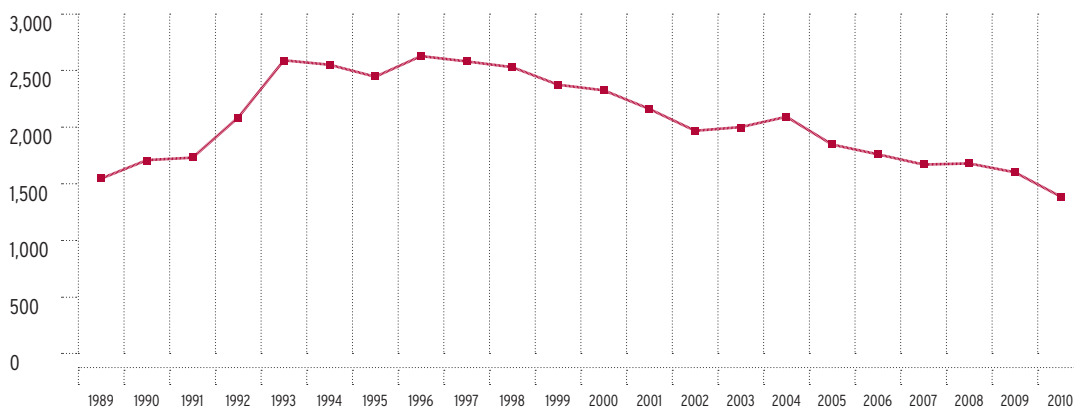
REGISTERED CRIMES ('000s)



Source: AS (2011)

Figure 4.2 **Intentional homicides in Kazakhstan, 1989-2010**

NUMBER OF INTENTIONAL HOMICIDES



Sources: UNICEF (2011) for 1989-2008; PGO (2011a) for 2009 and 2010

Kostanay Oblast (19.2 per cent), Akmola Oblast (17.6 per cent), and Eastern Kazakhstan Oblast (16.9 per cent) (PGO, 2011a; 2011b). Press reports suggest that the increasing crime rate since 2010 is due to a rise in unemployment (Radio Azattyk, 2011). More than three-quarters of the perpetrators arrested over the period January–June 2011 were in fact unemployed, while almost 14 per cent were under the influence of alcohol, and nine per cent were repeat offenders (PGO, 2011a).

Furthermore, despite the important decrease since 1991, Kazakhstan's homicide rate still stood at 8.35 per 100,000 people in 2010—higher than the estimated world rate of 6 per 100,000 and Central Asia's rate of 6.5 per 100,000.⁶ Reported homicide rates for other countries in the region are clearly lower: 7.8 per 100,000 in Kyrgyzstan (2009),

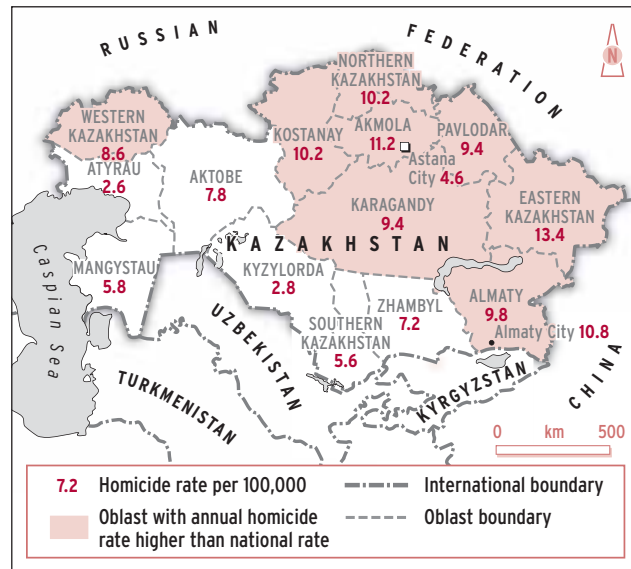
1.9 in Tajikistan (2009), 3.8 in Turkmenistan (2006), and 3.0 in Uzbekistan (2007) (UNICEF, 2011). It is unclear whether Kazakhstan's higher rate actually reflects higher homicide levels, or instead more accurate recording and systematic reporting of homicides. Indeed, reporting rates are usually lower in developing countries than in richer states (van Dijk, van Kesteren, and Smit, 2007, p. 17). It may be more appropriate to compare these rates to those of the Russian Federation, a country that ranks just above Kazakhstan in the Human Development Index and whose homicide rate is higher than Kazakhstan's, at 12.5 per 100,000 in 2009 (UNDP, 2010; UNICEF, 2011).

Geographically speaking, as Map 4.2 illustrates, homicide rates in the first half of 2011 were consistently above the national average in eastern and northern Kazakhstan, as well as in oil-producing Western Kazakhstan Oblast. Eastern Kazakhstan Oblast tops the list with an annual homicide rate of 13.4 per 100,000 and also experiences the country's second-highest general crime rate after Almaty city (AS, 2011; PGO, 2011a). Authorities, including then regional police chief and subsequently minister of internal affairs Kalmukhanbet Kasymov, have pointed to alcohol and drug abuse as the main causes of Eastern Kazakhstan's high crime rates. The fact that numerous prisons are located in the east of the country may also explain the phenomenon, as released criminals tend to stay and repeat offences in the oblast in which they were detained (Chernyavskaya, 2010).

Victimization and security perceptions

Results of the household survey conducted for this study reveal a relatively high rate of crime and violent incidents (see Box 4.1). Overall, 5.1 per cent of respondents reported that at least one member of their household had been the victim of a crime or violent encounter over the previous 12 months. Victims suffered injuries in one-third of these cases. The most commonly cited incidents were robberies (40 per cent of reported cases), assaults (34 per cent),

Map 4.2 Homicide rates per oblast, 2011*



Note: * The homicide rates for the cities Astana and Almaty are not included in the oblast rates. Shaded areas exhibit annual homicide rates above the national rate (8.4 per 100,000 population). Annual homicide rates are calculated based on data available at the time of writing; that is, homicides figures were multiplied by two to provide an annual rate.

Sources: AS (2011); PGO (2011a)

Box 4.1 Household survey on perceptions of security and firearms

In order to measure public perceptions of firearms and security in Kazakhstan, the Small Arms Survey subcontracted the Almaty-based Center for the Study of Public Opinion (CIOM) to carry out a nationwide survey of 1,500 people aged 18-60 (see Annexe 4.1). The survey was carried out in July 2010 using face-to-face interviews at the respondents' homes.

Kazakhstan comprises a total of 14 oblasts that are grouped together in six regions, all of which are characterized by similar geographical, climatic, and economic features. The survey sample covered one oblast per region—Aktobe in the western region, Almaty in the Almaty region, Eastern Kazakhstan in the eastern region, Karagandy in the central region, Pavlodar in the northern region, and Southern Kazakhstan in the southern region—as well as the country's two largest cities, Almaty and Astana. In each surveyed oblast, CIOM randomly selected villages, towns, and cities in order to reflect the rural-urban distribution of the population of the entire region. Interviewers chose households using random selection methods and identified respondents based on age and sex quotas.⁷ CIOM verified 23 per cent of interviews through phone calls or onsite supervision. The confidence level of the study is 95 per cent, and the confidence interval is 2.5.

The Small Arms Survey applied statistical weighting to ensure that the final sample's demographic characteristics (such as the distribution of respondents by region, urban vs. rural settings, sex, age, and ethnicity) were commensurate with those of the national population. The weighting also factored in non-response rates. This allows for the extrapolation of results to the national population and for the comparison of findings by region, rural or urban setting, sex, and age group.

Source: CIOM (2010)

Security personnel guard the site of a shootout in the village of Boraldai, near Almaty, December 2011.
© Vladimir Tretyakov/Reuters



threats and intimidation (13 per cent), rape and sexual assaults (5 per cent), and burglaries (4 per cent). The survey also found that almost three-quarters of victims of crime and violence were between 15 and 29 years old. Across all age groups, the sex distribution of victims was 56 per cent women and 44 per cent men. In roughly 60 per cent of cases, crimes were perpetrated in the street or at a public gathering, as opposed to in someone's home. Crimes usually occurred during the day or early evening. In 44 per cent of all cases, respondents said they had not reported the crime to the authorities (CIOM, 2010).

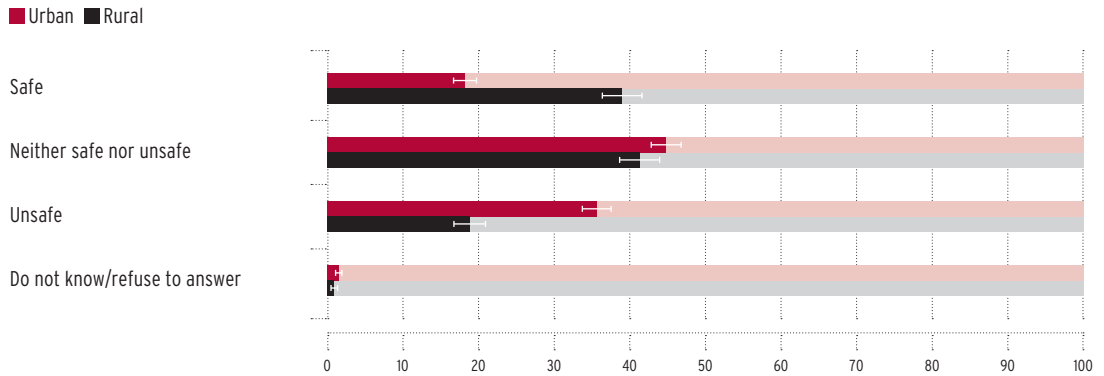
Despite relatively significant crime and victimization rates, survey respondents expressed mixed perceptions about their personal security. On the one hand, when asked about the most serious problems affecting them, they described the security of the members of their household as a relatively minor concern, ranking it fourth behind lack of or inadequate employment, healthcare, and clean water. On the other hand, almost two-thirds of respondents said they were concerned that a member of their household could become the victim of a crime or a violent encounter. Compared to



the national average, a greater proportion of respondents in Astana, Aktobe, Eastern Kazakhstan, and Pavlodar Oblasts expressed concern that members of their household might become victims of crime or violence. In line with the distribution of crime statistics discussed above, Eastern Kazakhstan topped this list with more than 80 per cent of interviewees expressing concern, compared with only 18.5 per cent in Southern Kazakhstan Oblast. While respondents said they felt safe at home and during the day, they described the situation outside and at night in different terms. Indeed, more than 40 per cent of respondents stated that they would feel unsafe or somewhat unsafe after sunset (CIOM, 2010).

Respondents also pointed to greater feelings of insecurity in urban areas. Nineteen per cent of respondents living in rural areas answered that there were no safety or security concerns, compared with just 3 per cent among residents of urban areas. Similarly, 26 per cent of urban respondents identified high crime rates as their main security concern, versus 15 per cent among rural respondents (CIOM, 2010). Figure 4.3 illustrates these differences, showing that, compared to their rural counterparts, about twice as many urban respondents consider their communities unsafe.

Figure 4.3 Responses to the household survey question, 'Do you consider your city/town/village safe, unsafe, or neither?' (n=1,500), (percentage)



Note: Lines on each bar reveal the corresponding confidence interval. There were significant differences between responses from rural and urban interviewees regarding the extent to which they described their area to be 'safe' or 'unsafe'; such differences were not significant with respect to the response 'neither safe nor unsafe'.

Source: CIOM (2010)

Organized violence

While the threat of large-scale political, ethnic, and terrorist violence in Kazakhstan appears less pronounced than elsewhere in Central Asia,⁸ recent incidents have led Kazakh government officials to voice their concern (Lillis, 2011d). The following sections provide examples of organized violence within Kazakhstan itself. They have been grouped according to the political, ethnic, or terrorist nature of the incident, as reported by independent and government sources.

Political violence

Examples of political violence in Kazakhstan include the February 2006 shooting of prominent opposition leader Altynbek Sarsenbayev as well as his bodyguard and driver. They were found on the outskirts of Almaty, all three of them with their hands tied behind their backs and wounds to the back and head. The official investigation concluded that a senate official ordered the assassination of Sarsenbayev, allegedly motivated by long-lasting 'personal enmity', while a former



police officer was found guilty of organizing and carrying out the contract killing with assistance from the KNB's elite Arystan special unit officers (RFE/RL, 2006a; 2006b; 2008). In November 2005, another leading opposition figure—Zamanbek Nurkadilov—was found shot dead in his home. Despite two gunshot wounds to the chest and one to the head, the police officially ruled his death to be a suicide, claiming that no signs of a forced entry had been detected (RFE/RL, 2005).

Ethnic violence

Despite the absence of large-scale ethnic strife in Kazakhstan, security agencies organized robust interventions to suppress a number of localized clashes between ethnic Kazakhs and minority groups.⁹ In March 2007, for example, a minor brawl during a game of billiards erupted into a violent shoot-out between ethnic Kazakhs and Chechens in the villages of Malovodnoye and Kazatkom, in Almaty Oblast. The incident resulted in the death of five people, with several others wounded. The authorities managed to stop the violence only after bringing in special police forces, and the area remained cordoned off for several weeks to ensure that order was fully restored. Reports circulated in the press that armed people from other regions of the country intended to come to the scene of these events but

were stopped by the police (RFE/RL, 2007; Saydullin, 2007a).

There were also allegations that firearms were used in Mayatas and other villages of the Southern Kazakhstan Oblast when the Kazakh population burned down houses and the property of local Kurds after the arrest of a 16-year-old Kurd suspected of raping a four-year-old Kazakh boy in late October 2007. According to press reports, up to 500 law enforcement personnel were involved in restoring order, and three policemen were injured during the operation (Dzhani, 2007; Saydullin, 2007b; IWPR, 2007).

Terrorist violence

While the revival of Islam in Kazakhstan in the 1990s did not lead to a large-scale emergence of radical religious organizations, some extremist groups have intensified their activities in the country.¹⁰ Compared to the late 1990s and early 2000s, when the majority of criminal cases related to religious extremism



People gather for the funeral of opposition figure Zamanbek Nurkadilov, found shot dead in his home, Almaty, November 2005. © Pavel Mikheev/Reuters

concerned the seizure of prohibited literature, Kazakhstan's security and law enforcement services now report more arrests of members of extremist groups who are in possession of firearms and ammunition and allegedly planning terrorist acts or even the overthrow of the government (USDoS, 2010; Vybornova, 2011).

The years 2010 and 2011 saw a sharp increase in the number of incidents of armed violence that were reportedly related to religious extremism. The 2011 attacks against KNB facilities and the above-mentioned special forces' intervention in Shubarshi and Kenkiyak made most headlines, but several other events of a terrorist nature have also occurred. In April 2011, two suspected religious extremists were killed, and a third was arrested, in a night-time assault on an apartment in Almaty. The suspects, armed with sub-machine guns and grenades, offered strong resistance, wounding 11 special police unit members (Benditskiy, 2011). There have also been several cases of Kazakh nationals being recruited by religious extremists and being killed or arrested by Russian security services for participating in guerrilla activities in the northern Caucasus (Nurseitova, 2011).

Although initially reluctant to label such incidents 'terrorist' in nature, the Kazakh government has recently changed its stance. In August 2011, law enforcement officials for the first time publicly announced that they had foiled a terrorist plot in oil-rich Atyrau Oblast. In a September 2011 speech to Parliament, President Nazarbayev himself acknowledged that the country faced a problem with extremism and pledged to tackle it (Lillis, 2011d).

CIVILIAN SMALL ARMS: UNDER CONTROL, IN DEMAND

This section examines the prevalence and sources of civilian-held firearms, reviews government efforts to control them, and assesses the role they play in insecurity in Kazakhstan. Generally speaking, civilian ownership of firearms is relatively low and appears to be tightly controlled by the authorities. Firearms availability and related insecurity are more pronounced in urban areas, however. Although firearms are rarely used in criminal acts, the proportion of homicides and robberies perpetrated with firearms increased between 2006 and 2010.

A pheasant hunter in Zhetisay, November 2009.
© Carolyn Drake/Panos Pictures





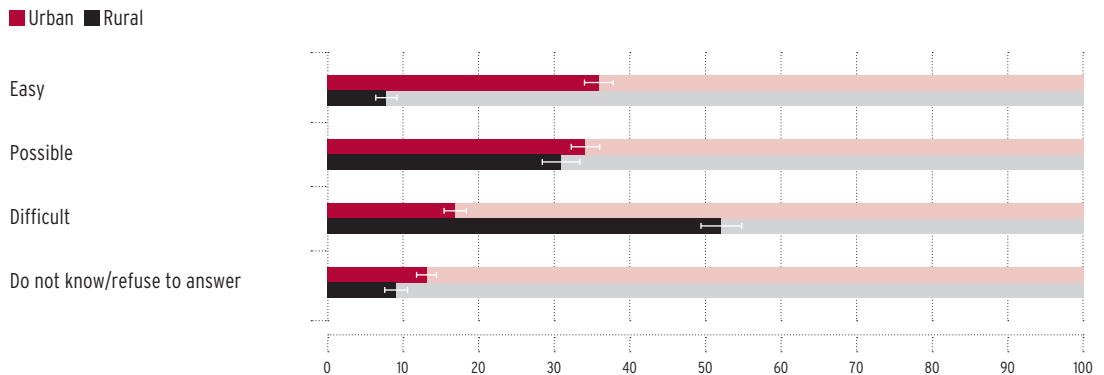
Civilian holdings

General population

About 4.4 per cent of household survey respondents said that someone in their household owned at least one firearm, with an average of five firearms for every 100 households (CIOM, 2010). The types of firearms most frequently owned were hunting rifles (61 per cent of gun-owning households), pistols or revolvers (22 per cent), air pistols (6 per cent), gas pistols (4 per cent), and air guns (4 per cent); the remaining holdings were identified as other firearms (1 per cent) and unspecified firearms (2 per cent) (CIOM, 2010). Applied nationally to Kazakhstan's 4.15 million households, this finding suggests that there are 207,500 privately owned firearms in the country or, taking into account the survey's confidence interval, a range of roughly 190,000–225,000 civilian firearms.¹¹ This translates into fewer than 1.3 firearms for every 100 Kazakhs, a low rate that places Kazakhstan at 142nd position in international rankings (Small Arms Survey, 2007).

Although household survey respondents can be expected to under-report sensitive issues such as firearm ownership, other sources suggest that 190,000–225,000 is a plausible estimate of the number of firearms in civilian hands in Kazakhstan. Previous studies also found that Kazakhstan's population of 16.6 million is relatively poorly armed by international standards. An earlier estimate offered a range of 100,000–300,000 firearms (Small Arms Survey, 2007). In 2010, the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) reportedly inspected more than 139,000 firearm owners (MIA, 2010a).¹²

Figure 4.4 Responses to the household survey question, 'How easy or difficult do you think it is to acquire a firearm in your city/town/village?' (n=1,500), (percentage)



Note: Lines on each bar reveal the corresponding confidence interval.

Source: CIOM (2010)

The household survey also provides insight into motivations for firearm ownership, highlighting differences across urban and rural settings. While only 16 per cent of respondents in rural areas selected criminal intent as one of the top three reasons why people in their communities owned firearms, 74 per cent cited hunting.¹³ In contrast, 45 per cent of respondents in urban areas identified criminal intent as one of the top three motivations, while only 37 per cent selected hunting (CIOM, 2010). Responses also suggest that firearms are more accessible in urban settings than in rural areas (see Figure 4.4).

Private security companies

The first private security companies appeared in Kazakhstan in the early to mid-1990s, but it was not until 2000 that the government adopted legislation to regulate them, namely the Law on Security Activity (Bayekenov, 2004; RoK, 2000b). It requires private security companies to obtain a licence for the provision of security services from the Directorate of State Guard Service (under the MIA Committee of Administrative Police and its regional divisions) (MIA, 2004).

According to the Association of Security Organizations of the Republic of Kazakhstan, in 2010 there were about 3,000 private security companies in Kazakhstan that employed nearly 60,000 people, a threefold increase compared to 2001 (Tashimov, 2010; Vasilyeva, 2002). At the same time, the MIA reported that the sector employed some 77,500 guards, 21,500 of whom worked for just two companies, the Kazakhstan Temir Zholy railway operator (14,000) and KazMunaiGas (7,500) (Vesti.kz, 2010; Foster, 2010). These numbers suggest that there are roughly as many private security guards as police officers in Kazakhstan, as the police numbered 69,529 in 2008 (UNODC, n.d.).

The law authorizes private security companies to arm their personnel, but the government introduced some limitations to this right in December 2010, notwithstanding strong opposition from Kazakhstan Temir Zholy and KazMunaiGas (Foster, 2011). Private security companies are now banned from using rifled long- and short-barrelled firearms, and they can only use smooth-bore firearms or barrel-less firearms with non-lethal ('traumatic') cartridges. They are also authorized to use 'electric' weapons (RoK, 2000b; 2010b). Prior to the legislative amendment, private security companies possessed about 7,000 rifled firearms (Foster, 2011).

Foreign security companies are banned from working in Kazakhstan, while foreign legal entities and nationals cannot provide security services or establish private security companies in the country. Recent legislative changes

entitle domestic providers of security services to cooperate with foreign security companies in the sharing of experience, advanced training of their personnel, and use of modern security equipment and technology, provided they comply with the legal requirements related to the protection of state secrets (RoK, 2000b; 2010b). The December 2010 legislative amendments also prohibit non-security companies from relying on in-house security operations, in effect requiring them to outsource (Foster, 2011). The only exception is made for security operations established by Kazakhstan's national companies (RoK, 2000b; 2010b).

Sources

Authorized trade

At least 36 companies sell firearms and ammunition in Kazakhstan's civilian market.¹⁴ They sell a variety of pistols (such as the Steyr MA1); bolt-action rifles (such as the Steyr Classic, Elite, and Scout as well as the CZ 452, 527, and 550); and semi-automatic rifles (such as the CZ 858 and Saiga) (Chebotarev, 2010). Few of these companies actually produce civilian weapons or ammunition in Kazakhstan, however. Anna LLP, based in Almaty, is one of the few manufacturers of small arms ammunition for hunting and sports shooting destined for the Kazakh civilian market (Chebotarev, 2010). Kazakhstan Engineering reportedly had a project to set up an enterprise in Petropavlovsk to produce 5.45 mm, 7.62 mm, and 9 mm ammunition, and possibly hunting ammunition. The project had been valued at USD 19 million and production had been expected to start in mid-2007. Kazakhstan Engineering was also reported to have been in talks with Kyrgyzstan about purchasing an ammunition factory in Bishkek, but neither project appears to have materialized (Barabanov, 2008, pp. 32–33). With respect to weapons, the Western Kazakhstan Machine-Building Company (ZKMK, previously known as the Metallist factory) continues to produce a small quantity of hunting rifles (Barabanov, 2008, p. 31; Kenzhegalieva, 2007).¹⁵

Table 4.1 Value of reported Kazakh small arms imports, by UN Comtrade category, 1992–2008 (in USD)

Types of weapon (UN Comtrade category)	Reported by Kazakhstan	Reported by exporters
Sporting and hunting shotguns (930320)	6,792,782	23,105,081
Small arms ammunition (930630)	5,041,847	5,068,017
Sporting and hunting rifles (930330)	3,030,318	9,128,726
Pistols and revolvers (9302)	2,828,276	1,112,119
Shotgun cartridges (930621)	2,483,837	2,165,181
Military rifles, machine guns, and other (930190)	2,186,057	236,166
Air gun pellets, lead shot, and parts of shotgun cartridges (930629)	995,054	3,534,458
Military weapons (9301)	980,700	22,674
Parts and accessories of shotguns or rifles (930529)	523,721	52,004,510
Parts and accessories of revolvers or pistols (930510)	298,295	364,574
Shotgun barrels (930521)	3,952	48,764
Total	25,164,839	96,790,270

Source: UN Comtrade (n.d.)

Due to Kazakhstan's relatively low capacity to produce small arms domestically, most weapons and ammunition sold in the country are imported. Available customs data, as reported in the UN Comtrade database, suggests that Kazakhstan imports significantly more small arms than it exports (UN Comtrade, n.d.).¹⁶ Trading partners reported that Kazakhstan imported close to USD 100 million worth of small arms and ammunition (civilian and military) for the period 1992–2008 (see Table 4.1). Yet reported Kazakh exports for the same period amounted to just USD 2 million (see Table 4.1; UN Comtrade, n.d.).¹⁷

Reported Kazakh imports consist for the most part of sporting and hunting shotguns, rifles, and small arms ammunition—categories usually destined for the civilian market (see Table 4.1). Reports to the UN Register of Conventional Arms confirm this trend, as the largest imports of equipment by quantity for the years 2008–10 concerned hunting weapons (UNODA, n.d.; see Table 4.2). In 2009, Kazakhstan imported a variety of hunting and sporting rifles from countries including Italy (243, 308, 300 Winchester and 30.06 SPR 9.2 x 62), the Russian Federation (MP 161K calibre 22LR, 'Vepr' carbines, 'Saiga', 'Tiger', 'Sobol', 'Korshun', 'CM-2KO', 'Bars-4-1', 'Los', and 'Biathlon-7-3, 7-4'), and the Czech Republic and Germany (various other models) (UNODA, n.d.).

Overall, the available data suggests that Germany and the Russian Federation are the largest and most regular exporters of small arms to Kazakhstan (see Table 4.3). In 2008, Israel declared a large export of parts and accessories of shotguns and rifles (a category usually destined for the civilian market) worth USD 51 million (see Table 4.3; UN Comtrade, n.d.). While this value would make Israel Kazakhstan's top source of arms, UN Comtrade data suggests that Israel is not as regular an arms exporter as Germany or the Russian Federation. Furthermore, the Israeli transfer is not confirmed by data reported by Kazakhstan (UN Comtrade, n.d.).

Table 4.2 Small arms imports as reported by Kazakhstan to the UN Register of Conventional Arms, by category, 2008-10

Exporting country	Year	Type of weapon	Quantity
Germany	2010	Hand-held under-barrel and mounted grenade launchers	18
Czech Republic	2009	Revolvers and self-loading pistols	500
Russian Federation	2009	Revolvers and self-loading pistols	400
United States	2009	Sniper rifles	2
Germany	2009	Sniper rifles of 338 calibre	14
Italy	2009	Hunting rifles	54
Russian Federation	2009	Hunting carbines	1,380
Russian Federation	2009	Hunting and sport weapons	330
Czech Republic	2009	Hunting and sport weapons	1,155
Germany	2009	Hunting and sport weapons	446
Austria	2009	Hunting and sport weapons	50
Austria	2008	Revolvers and self-loading pistols	100
Total			4,449

Source: UNODA (n.d.)

Table 4.3 Value of reported Kazakh small arms imports, by exporting country, 1992-2008 (in USD)

Exporting countries	Value reported by Kazakhstan	Value reported by exporters
Armenia	79,399	0
Austria	785,943	929,181
Belarus	219,300	0
Belgium	180,730	0
Brazil	0	8,987
Bulgaria	126,394	0
Canada	127,604	526,349
Cyprus	83,816	799,176
Czech Republic	795,764	1,900,134
Denmark	0	1,376
Finland	151,877	86,895
France	2,200	394,739
Germany	3,752,977	15,590,047
Israel	12,399	51,517,000
Italy	1,999,114	3,678,802
Kyrgyzstan	5,800	495,999
Latvia	0	22,393
Pakistan	0	676
Poland	0	212,399
Russian Federation	15,708,843	15,556,753
Serbia and Montenegro	1,100	0
South Korea	800	0
Spain	188,707	619,291
Sweden	55,910	157,119
Switzerland	54,406	445,282
Turkey	474,071	1,610,490
Turkmenistan	7,800	0
Ukraine	92,511	0
United Arab Emirates	0	98,300
United Kingdom	92,018	1,052,048
United States	164,660	1,086,834
Unspecified	696	0
Total	25,164,839	96,790,270

Source: UN Comtrade (n.d.)

While the available trade data provides interesting insight, it remains incomplete. As reflected in Tables 4.1 and 4.3, the values of small arms trade reported to UN Comtrade by Kazakhstan differ markedly from those submitted by its trading partners. Overall, the partners have reported exports worth about four times as much as the imports that Kazakhstan has declared. The values of imports Kazakhstan has reported from European states are consistently much lower than the figures given by those countries, with the exception of Belgium and Finland; yet figures for the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan are almost identical (see Table 4.3). Table 4.1 also shows lower reporting by Kazakhstan for sporting and hunting shotguns and, to a lesser extent, rifles.¹⁸

Illicit sources

Cases of illicit weapons manufacture more than tripled between 2006 and 2010.

Some sources of illicit weapons in Kazakhstan are internal. Diversion of state stockpiles was a major concern in the late 1990s. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, former Soviet military arsenals in Kazakhstan became a source of small arms and ammunition for both the international and the domestic black markets (Vasilyeva, 2010). Among the most high-profile cases of illegal arms deliveries is the 1995 sale of 57 Igla (SA-18) man-portable air defence systems (MANPADS) and 226 9M313 missiles to the former Yugoslavia, then under a UN Security Council arms embargo (Kenzhetaev, 2002). Kazakh authorities also investigated attempts to supply MIG-21 combat aircraft to North Korea in 1999, as well as Mi-8T helicopters to Sierra Leone in 2000, and found that they involved violations of Kazakh legislation (Holtom, 2010, pp. 5–6). There are no openly available statistics on weapons theft from the country's military stockpiles, but in 2008 the Ministry of Defence acknowledged that the armed forces remained one of the sources of illegal firearms and ammunition for the criminal underworld (Severnyy, 2008).

Another source of illicit supply to the domestic small arms market is craft production. The majority of hand-made firearms seized by police in Kazakhstan are actually gas pistols converted to shoot live rounds.¹⁹ In one case in 2008, Russian authorities in Saratov seized an IZh-79 gas pistol that had been modified to shoot live 9 mm rounds. The investigation established that the perpetrator had brought weapons from Oral, Kazakhstan, where he had an accomplice, a worker at the Metallist factory, who had been converting gas and smooth-bore weapons into rifled firearms and equipping firearms with optic sights at home (Kulikov, 2008). According to official statistics, cases of illicit weapons manufacture increased more than threefold between 2006 and 2010 (MIA, 2010c; PGO, 2011a). Little analysis is available on this increase, although it may be partially explained by tightened firearms regulations, which are discussed below.

The extent of cross-border trafficking of firearms into Kazakhstan is also a concern. Central Asia is located on the 'northern' drug route linking Afghanistan to the Russian Federation and Europe (UNODC, 2008, p. 6). The extent to which drugs and firearms trafficking are intertwined in the region remains unclear, although Kazakh authorities have seized firearms in the framework of anti-drug ('Kanal') as well as migration control ('Nelegal') operations. Kanal operations have been taking place regularly since 2003 and are part of a regional effort initiated by the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), which involves the law enforcement agencies of Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan.

Data on firearms seized during such operations is not available by country but instead for all participating CSTO members. In September 2010, for instance, Kazakhstan, the Russian Federation, and Tajikistan carried out an anti-drug operation named 'Kanal-Yug', resulting in the seizure of more than 1,300 kg of drugs and 220 firearms.²⁰ In 2009, states participating in Kanal and Nelegal collected a total of 1,881 small arms and 52,759 rounds of ammunition; they also initiated 249 criminal law investigations related to the illegal arms trade.²¹ From 16 to 22 November 2010, a larger operation resulted in the seizure of 18 tons of drugs, 1,129 firearms, and 17,000 units of ammunition.²²

According to press reports, there are several routes for the illicit trafficking of firearms into Kazakhstan, with weapons intended mainly for domestic criminal groups. Kazakh police officials claim that the primary source countries are, in order of importance, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan, and Afghanistan (Isabekov, 2008). The majority of seized Kalashnikov assault rifles and Stechkin pistols originate in the northern Caucasus; Makarov pistols come from Rostov, Krasnodar Krai, Moscow, and St. Petersburg; Kalashnikovs, Makarovs, and Tokarevs with inscribed Latin letters and hieroglyphics are brought from Afghanistan through Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan—via the routes used for drug trafficking. Organized crime groups also increasingly use European-made pistols such as the German Sig Sauer, the Italian Beretta, and the Czech CZ smuggled from Western Europe and the Russian Federation (Isabekov, 2008).

Events in neighbouring countries can also trigger the funnelling of illicit firearms to Kazakhstan. In April 2010, Kyrgyzstan experienced a violent uprising that resulted in the overthrow of President Kurmanbek Bakiyev as well as the looting of police and military weapons by protesters, prompting Kazakhstan to close its border temporarily (*Kazakhstan Today*, 2010a). More police and military weapons, including pistols, assault rifles, light machine guns, sniper rifles, grenades, and a grenade launcher, were lost during deadly clashes, in June 2010, between ethnic Kyrgyz and Uzbeks in southern Kyrgyzstan. Despite efforts by Kyrgyzstan to recover lost firearms and ammunition, Kyrgyz authorities reported that, as of September 2010, 146 out of 278 firearms and 26,344 out of 43,045 pieces of ammunition that had been lost in June 2010 were still missing (Kylym Shamy, 2011, p. 8).²³ Kazakhstan has expressed concern that some of the lost Kyrgyz arms may find their way across the border (MFA, 2010).²⁴ Anecdotal reports of arms seizures at the border suggest this concern is justified, although assessing the exact volume of trafficking from Kyrgyzstan is difficult.²⁵

Control measures

National legislation

Overall, Kazakhstan imposes tight controls on the acquisition and possession of small arms, including the registration of all privately owned firearms, requirements for their effective storage, and the screening of prospective owners.²⁶ Kazakh legislation is similar to that of other countries in the region; many elements are holdovers from the Soviet Union. Kazakh legislation has, however, changed over time as part of efforts to address inconsistencies and improve public security.

In December 2010, new legislative amendments were introduced to strengthen the firearms control regime (RoK, 2010b). They include the following:

- a reduction in the number of arms civilians are permitted to own, from five to two;
- obligations for firearm owners to report theft, loss, and unjustified or illegal use of firearms; and
- an obligation for firearm owners to re-register their firearms when moving to a different address (RoK, 2010b).

Kazakh citizens may acquire firearms only for self-defence, sporting, or hunting purposes (RoK, 1998, art. 5).²⁷ The legal age for owning a firearm in Kazakhstan is 18 years. Applicants for a firearms licence cannot have an outstanding conviction for the commission of ‘intent crimes’ and cannot have committed two or more specified administrative offences within the same year (RoK, 1998, arts. 19.2, 19.2-1, 19.5). They are also required to provide a medical certificate of good mental health (RoK, 1998, art. 15.3).

If they meet the above requirements, individuals wishing to possess a firearm are required to obtain a number of licences and permits, each subject to a fee. They must pay a fee of about KZT 4,500 (USD 30 or, more precisely, three MRP²⁸) for a licence to possess firearms, KZT 760 (USD 5, half an MRP) for a permit to purchase a firearm or to store firearms, and KZT 150 (USD 1, one-tenth of an MRP) for registration and re-registration of every firearm (MIA, 2010b).

Kazakhstan imposes tight controls on the acquisition and possession of small arms.

Table 4.4 Weapons collection efforts in Kazakhstan, as reported in national reports on implementation of the UN Programme of Action, 2003-07 and 2009

Action by the state	Type of weapon	Year							Total all years	
		2003		2004	2005	2006		2007		2009
Weapons seized and removed		KNB	MIA			KNB	MIA			
	Automatic weapons	9	27		13			15		
	Combination firearms		42		33			50		
	Gas weapons		1,549		1,118	1		1,249		
	Home-made weapons		354		344	4		244		
	Hunting and sawn-off weapons	137								
	Pistols and revolvers	22	467		372	2		354		
	Rifled weapons (unspecified type)	18				10				
	Rifles and carbines		706		532			435		
	Smooth-bore weapons		10,400		7,195	21		6,231		
	Total seized and removed		13,731		9,607		8,616	n/a	2,305	
Weapons voluntarily surrendered	Gas weapons		1,270		989			761		
	Home-made weapons		95		82			82		
	Rifled weapons		717		618			636		
	Smooth-bore weapons		6,987		4,348			5,043		
	Other							438		
	Total surrendered		9,069		6,037		6,960	n/a	4,453	
Weapons destroyed	Automatic weapons			9	7				22	
	Carbines			41	44				96	
	Combination firearms			20	30				31	
	Gas weapons			467	980				941	

Home-made weapons	259	170	200					
Pistols	51	152	139					
Revolvers	48	228	155					
Rifled weapons (unspecified type)			657					
Rifles	312	347	214					
Smooth-bore weapons	4,501	3,605	3,902					
Total destroyed	5,708	5,563	6,357	n/a	n/a	4,569	22,197	

Note: Total figures represent the sum of the different weapon categories as listed in this table. They sometimes differ slightly from the totals provided in the sources. There was no available reporting for the year 2008.

Sources: RoK (2005; 2006; 2008; 2010a)

Failure to obtain the above permits and register a firearm is punishable by fines ranging from about KZT 1,500 to 15,000 (USD 10–100) (RoK, 2001, arts. 368, 371). Individuals may only purchase ammunition upon presentation of a valid licence to possess and carry firearms (RoK, 2000a, r. 86).

Once registered gun owners obtain licences, they must:

- undergo training in the handling of small arms based on the curriculum developed by the MIA, if acquiring firearms for the first time (RoK, 1998, art. 15.4);
- register their firearms in an official database maintained by the MIA;
- place their firearms in a safety deposit box, a metallic cabinet, or any other storage device that makes it impossible for other persons to access licensed firearms (RoK, 2000a, r. 91);
- report any theft or loss of firearms in their possession (RoK, 2000a, r. 101); and
- renew their licences and permits in a timely manner.²⁹

Kazakh legislation explicitly prohibits civilian possession of short-barrelled shotguns;³⁰ firearms designed for automatic fire; firearms disguised as other objects; cartridges with armour-piercing, incendiary, or percussion bullets, as well as hollow-point ammunition;³¹ and weapons and cartridges that do not meet safety requirements (RoK, 1998, art. 7).³² While the above suggests that civilian possession of automatic rifles is prohibited, it is not clear whether semi-automatic firearms are allowed for civilian ownership, although such weapons can be seen in the country's gun shops.³³ Firearms held by collectors must be deactivated (RoK, 2000a, r. 47). A weapon holder's licence may be revoked if he or she modifies or converts small arms (RoK, 1998, art. 19).

Enforcement and weapons collection

The Kazakh government has collected significant quantities of small arms and light weapons in the past ten years. Information reported in Kazakhstan's national reports on the implementation of the UN Programme of Action reveals that authorities collected some 60,000, and destroyed more than 20,000, firearms between 2003 and 2009 (see Table 4.4). These are considerable numbers given the country's low level of civilian firearm ownership; they represent about one-third of the estimated total weapons held by civilians in 2010.

Table 4.5 Weapon-related crime in Kazakhstan, 2006-10

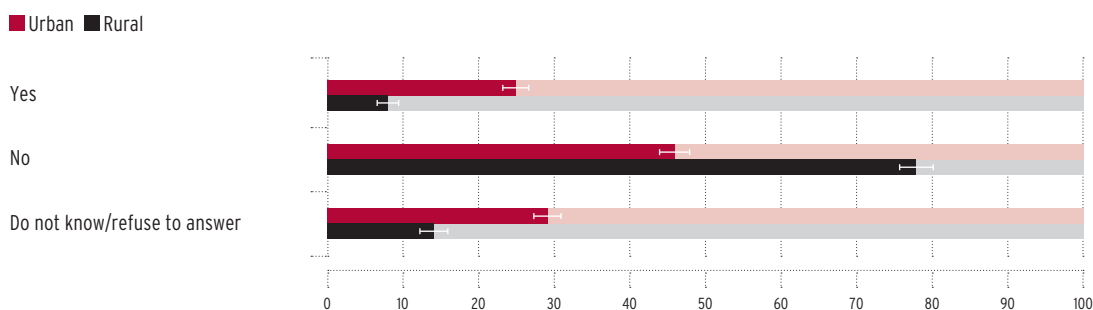
Type of crime	MIA		Prosecutor General's Office		
	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Illegal acquisition, transfer, sale, storage, transportation, or possession of weapons, ammunition, explosive substances, or explosive devices	1,272	1,264	926	1,131	984
Negligent storage of a firearm	9	5	2	3	3
Improper performance of duties related to guarding weapons, ammunition, explosive substances, or explosive devices	0	1	5	1	3
Theft or extortion of weapons, ammunition, explosive substances, or explosive devices	57	51	47	83	59
Violation of weapon handling rules	1	2	1	6	2

Sources: MIA (2010c); PGO (2011a)

Weapons are collected through a combination of voluntary and more forceful schemes. The MIA, as the agency that implements Kazakhstan's firearms legislation, regularly inspects firearms at their places of storage and use, and can seize and destroy unauthorized weapons without compensation (RoK, 1998, art. 30). Table 4.5 provides a breakdown of the different types of weapon-related crimes as recorded in the databases of the MIA and, since 2008, the Prosecutor General's Office.

A 2007 decree established a compensation system for people who surrender arms and ammunition voluntarily to the MIA, with different cash amounts given depending on the type of weapon recovered (RoK, 2007b). All surrendered weapons must be destroyed or dismantled. In 2010, Kazakhstan reported that the government had allocated more than KZT 500 million (USD 3.4 million) in 2008 for the implementation of this legislation, resulting in more than 13,000 firearms being collected (RoK, 2010a, p. 37). As Table 4.5 illustrates, more than 20,000 firearms were also surrendered voluntarily before the adoption of the decree, presumably without any compensation. Official statistics do not reveal

Figure 4.5 Responses to the household survey question, 'In the last two years, have the authorities collected weapons from the population in your city/town/village?' (n=1,500), (percentage)



Note: Lines on each bar reveal the corresponding confidence interval.

Source: CIOM (2010)

the number of weapons collected or seized in each of Kazakhstan's 14 oblasts. Results of the CIOM household survey suggest, however, that weapons collection efforts have mainly targeted urban areas (see Figure 4.5).

Kazakh internal affairs agencies also undertake targeted firearm inspections through an operation named 'Karu'. Launched in 1995, the operation aims to prevent and detect crimes committed with firearms, explosives, and explosive devices and also to remove these items from illicit circulation (RoK, 2008, p. 8). Karu operations occur every three months (RoK, 2008, p. 8); the MIA regularly issues press releases to showcase results. In 2010, for instance, authorities inspected more than 139,000 firearm owners and identified more than 5,700 violations of the rules governing the circulation of firearms and 229 violations of hunting rules. A total of 5,196 registered civilian arms were confiscated in the framework of these efforts (MIA, 2010a).

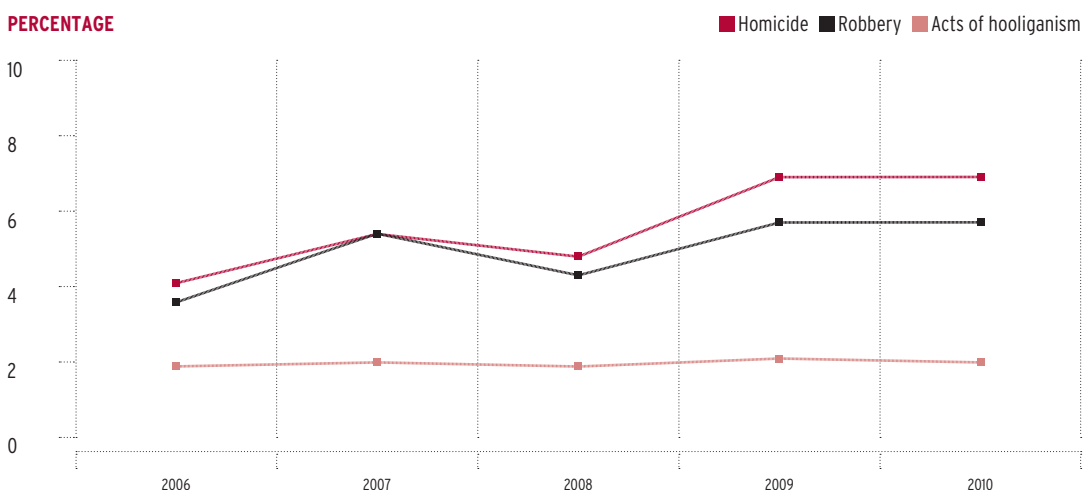
Impact

Overall, firearms do not appear to be a common tool for perpetrating crime in Kazakhstan. In 2006–10 firearms were used in a negligible proportion—between 0.3 and 0.4 per cent—of the total number of crimes recorded in the country (PGO, 2011a). Bladed weapons appear to be more commonly used, although their use decreased from 1 per cent of all crimes in 2006 to 0.5 per cent in 2010 (MIA, 2010c; PGO, 2011a).

The types of crime in which firearms are most frequently used are homicides, robberies, and acts of hooliganism, but their use remains rare overall at below 10 per cent of all cases (see Figure 4.6). In contrast, the proportion of homicides perpetrated with firearms reaches 60 per cent in Latin America and the Caribbean, 24 per cent in Europe, and 22 per cent in Asia.³⁴ That said, the percentage of homicides and robberies committed with firearms in Kazakhstan increased from 4.1 per cent to 6.9 per cent and from 3.4 per cent to 5.7 per cent, respectively, between 2006 and 2010 (see Figure 4.6). Also noteworthy are recent incidents during which prisoners were able to acquire firearms to help them stage escapes, as well as reports of teenagers getting involved in shootings.³⁵

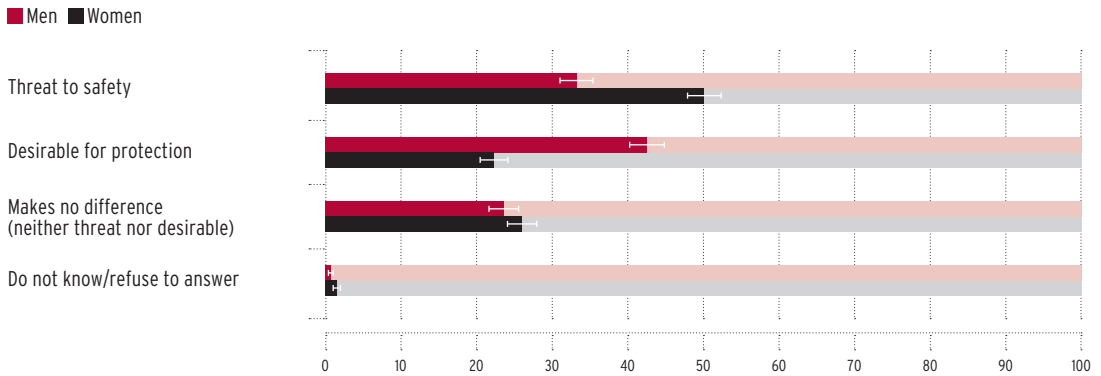
Household survey results suggest that the population does not consider firearms a major problem. While one half of the respondents described firearms as desirable for protection, the other half called them a threat to their safety (CIOM, 2010). More than 60 per cent of respondents nationwide cited personal protection from gangs and criminals

Figure 4.6 Proportion of crimes committed with firearms, 2006-10



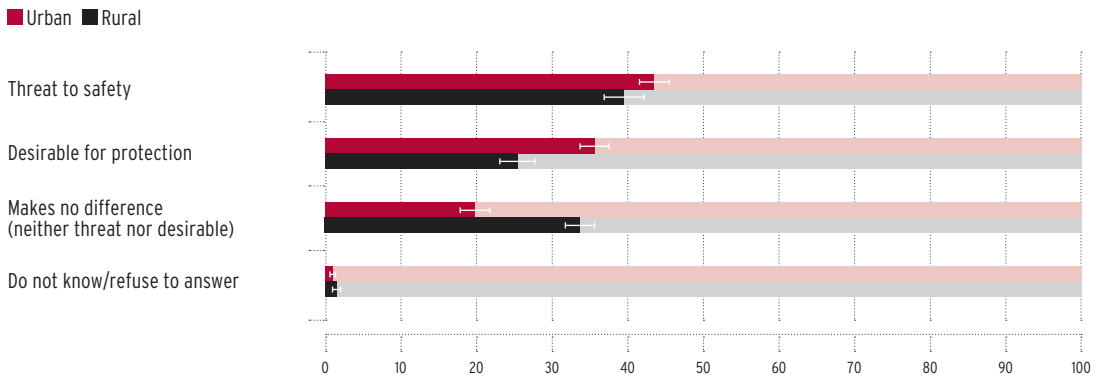
Source: MIA (2010c); PGO (2011a)

Figure 4.7 Responses to the household survey question, 'How do you mainly perceive firearms?' (by sex, n=1,497), (percentage)



Note: Lines on each bar reveal the corresponding confidence interval.
Source: CIOM (2010)

Figure 4.8 Responses to the household survey question, 'How do you mainly perceive firearms?' (n=1,498), (percentage)



Note: Lines on each bar reveal the corresponding confidence interval.
Source: CIOM (2010)

as one of the top three reasons for gun ownership for people living in their areas. There were significant differences between men and women, however. As Figure 4.7 illustrates, 42 per cent of men said that firearms were desirable for protection, as opposed to 22 per cent of women. Similarly, more than half of women identified firearms as threats to safety, as opposed to just one-third of the men.³⁶ Younger respondents, as well as people living in urban areas, were also more likely to associate firearms with protection (CIOM, 2010; see Figure 4.8).

STILL SECRET: SMALL ARMS AND THE STATE

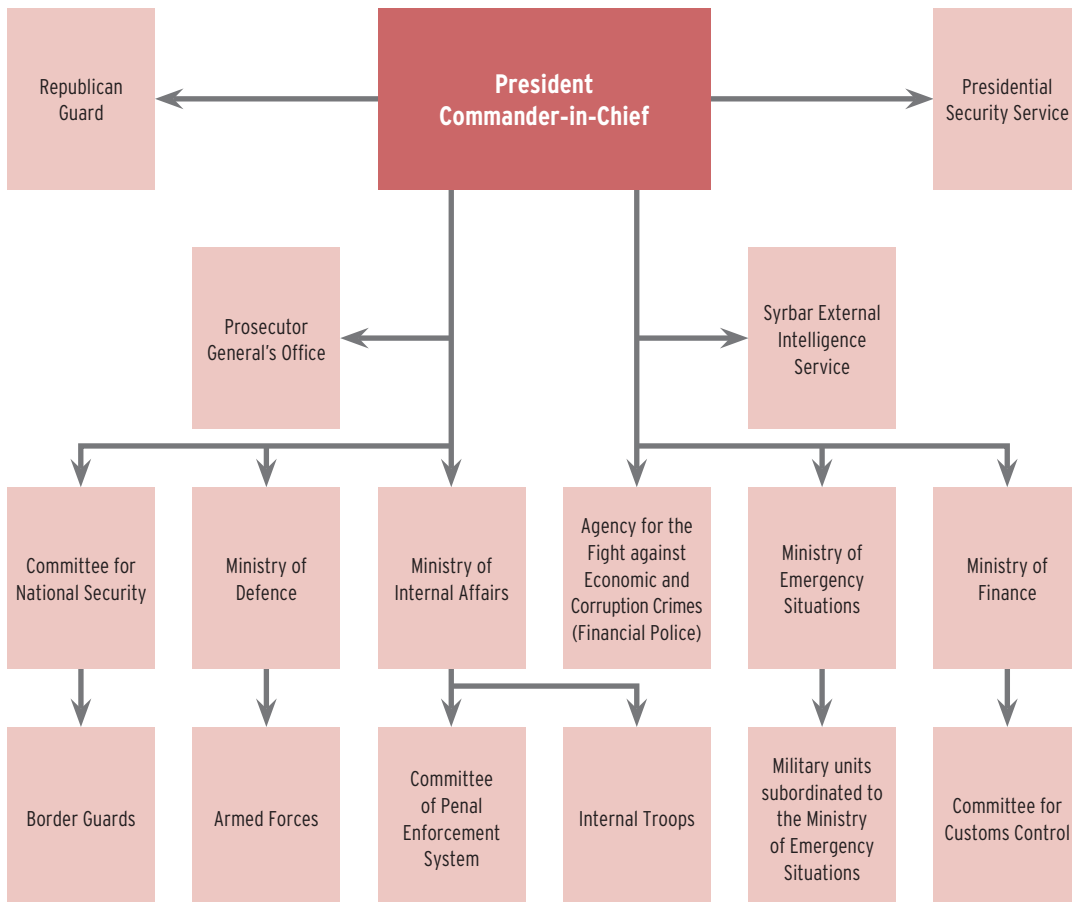
This section reviews publicly available information as well as data provided by the Ministry of Defence (MoD) of Kazakhstan on small arms and ammunition currently in state stockpiles. It also examines the number and types of surplus weapons and ammunition destroyed by the country. Lastly, it analyses the threats associated with state stockpiles, focusing on the consequences for local communities of unplanned explosions at munitions sites.

Stockpiles

Kazakh defence, security, and law enforcement agencies include a number of institutions that answer to different ministries, each responsible for its own small arms stockpiles (see Figure 4.9). Kazakh law defines the size of state security forces and their arms stocks as ‘state secrets’; there is no public information on their strength or equipment.³⁷ *Military Balance*, a secondary source, reports the following strength figures for 2010:

- Army: 30,000;
- Navy: 3,000;
- Air Force: 12,000;
- Ministry of Defence: 4,000;
- Government Guard: 500;
- Internal Security: 20,000 (estimate);
- Presidential Guard: 2,000; and
- State Border Protection Forces: 9,000 (estimate) (IISS, 2010, pp. 364–65).

Figure 4.9 **Kazakhstan’s defence, security, and law enforcement infrastructure**



Source: description of Kazakhstan's government agencies in RoK (2011b)

An informed observer judges the size of the army to be closer to 42,000, with the Navy approximately 2,000 strong, as of mid-2010.³⁸

No inventory of state security forces' small arms holdings has been made public. Secondary reports indicate there are five main ammunition depots in the country (Ashkenazi, 2010, p. 138). Existing estimates go as high as 550,000–950,000 military small arms and light weapons in the country's armouries, and 200,000–400,000 tons of surplus conventional ammunition (Ashkenazi, 2010, p. 138). The weapons estimates are based on the reported strength of the Kazakh armed forces in the late 1990s and early 2000s (a period during which manpower was at its height), combined with estimated weapons-per-soldier multipliers derived from ratios in other countries in the region.³⁹ More recently, Kazakhstan's MoD reported a surplus of 2.5 million units of conventional ammunition for 2003, 1.1 million units of which were destroyed by 2009—implying a remaining 1.4 million units of surplus ammunition in 2010 (RoK, 2011a).

For some agencies, including the Financial Police, Customs, as well as the State Courier Service (subordinated to the Prime Minister's Office), national legislation specifies what types of small arms different agencies are to use (see Table 4.6). Secondary sources report that the armed forces' arsenal includes the following small arms and light weapons (Jane's World Armies, 2010):



A group of international OSCE experts examine the condition of conventional ammunition designated for disposal at the Aris Central Arsenal, near Chemkent, June 2005. © Yurii Kryvos/OSCE

- mortars: 82 mm M37M (150 units), 107 mm M107 (50), 120 mm M-43 (100), 120 mm 2S11 Sani, 120 mm 2S9, Aibat;
- anti-tank weapons: 9K111/AT-4 'Spigot' (200 units), 9P148/AT-5 'Spandrel' (50 units), 9K114 Metis/AT-6 'Spiral', 9K115 Metis/AT-7 'Saxhorn' (24 units), 100 mm T-12 (150 units), RPG-7 (250 units);
- MANPADS: 9K32/9K32M/Strela-2/2M/SA-7a/b 'Grail' (250 units), Strela 3/SA-14 'Gremlin' (50 units), Iгла-1/SA-16 'Gimlet';
- pistols: 5.45 mm PSM, 7.62 mm Tokarev, 9 mm Makarov;
- assault rifles: 5.45 mm AK-74, 7.62 mm AKM;
- sniper rifles: 7.62 mm Dragunov;
- sub-machine guns: 5.45 mm AKS-74U;
- light machine guns: 5.45 mm RPK-74;
- general-purpose machine guns: 7.62 mm PKS; and
- heavy machine guns: 12.7 mm DShK.

Sources

Some 50 factories were involved in the production of conventional arms and defence equipment in Kazakhstan before independence from the Soviet Union. By 1995, only 24 military-industrial factories remained operational (Burnashev and Chernykh, 2010). Among them, the state-owned, Oral-based Metallist company was the only one still producing small arms (Chebotarev, 2010; IA, 2004, p. 21). In April 2003, Metallist was incorporated into ZKMK and converted into a producer of oil and gas equipment. The unpredictability of orders for military weapons from both domestic agencies

Table 4.6 Firearms and ammunition assigned to Kazakh state agencies

Government agency	Weapons	Ammunition
Agency for the Fight against Economic and Corruption Crimes (Financial Police)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5.45 mm PSM pistol; • 9 mm Makarov pistol; • 5.45 mm Kalashnikov assault rifle, model AKS-74 or AKS-74U; • 7.62 mm Kalashnikov assault rifle, model AKM or AKMS; • 9 mm PP-90 sub-machine gun 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5.45 mm small-size centre-fire cartridge; • 5.45 × 18 mm pistol cartridge; • 7.62 mm standard bullet and tracer bullet cartridge; • 9 mm pistol cartridge (9 × 18 mm, 9 × 19 mm)
Committee for Customs Control under the Ministry of Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9 mm Baikal 442 pistol, Makarov pistol, model PM-9; • 12-gauge shotguns, models IZH-81 and Mossberg; • 9 mm Kobalt revolver, also known as RSA/TKB-0216 (Revolver Stechkina-Avraamova, after the names of designers, Stechkin and Avraamov) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9 mm ammunition for handguns; • 12-gauge ammunition for shotguns
State Courier Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9 mm Makarov pistol; • 7.62 mm AK gun, model AKMS; • 9 mm Stechkin automatic pistol 	n/a



President Nursultan Nazarbayev looks at a machine gun during a visit to a military site, April 1998. © Shamil Zhumatov/Reuters

and the international market, as well as growing wage arrears and debt, contributed to this conversion (Chebotarev, 2010). Reports also indicate that ZKMK attempts to develop and manufacture new small arms, such as the 9 mm Kobalt revolver and the folded PP-90 sub-machine gun, were not particularly successful (Barabanov, 2008, p. 31).

Kazakhstan's defence manufacturing sector was given new momentum when President Nazarbayev approved a revised military doctrine on 21 March 2007. The doctrine called for the provision of new models of weapons and equipment for the army as well as the modernization and upgrade of existing armaments (RoK, 2007c, p. 16). On 15 May 2009, the president instructed his government to develop a programme to implement the doctrine, including the technological upgrading of the armed forces and arms-producing facilities (RoK, 2009). Official statements indicate that Kazakhstan intends to manufacture arms not only for its armed forces, but also for export to foreign countries (Akhmetova, 2008, p. 4).

On 27 January 2010, Minister of Defence Adilbek Dzhaksybekov revealed that ZKMK had begun producing ammunition for 30 mm BMP-2-mounted machine guns and continued to produce the NSV 12.7 mm 'Utes' heavy machine gun. While meeting with the minister, the plant management expressed ZKMK's intention to expand production to include more small arms ammunition (Parpura, 2010). During the KADEX-2010 arms exhibition, held in Astana in

May 2010, ZKMK announced it had reached an agreement with Israel Military Industries (IMI) to jointly produce a new-generation ‘WAVE 300–Tolkyn’ small-arms system. This remote-controlled weapon station will reportedly be a combination of the ZKMK-produced NSV 12.7 mm heavy machine gun and the IMI-produced electronic guidance, aiming, and control system. Central Asian states, as well as the Russian Federation, are seen as potential markets for the new weapon (KazTAG, 2010; Kedrov, 2010).

The country’s limited military small arms production capacity appears to be reflected in its low levels of military small arms exports. Reported Kazakh exports of these weapons amounted to just over USD 100,000 for the 1992–2008 period (UN Comtrade, n.d.). Kazspetsekспорт, a state-owned company, is the only entity authorized to export military small arms. The company sells the following types of equipment: 12.7mm NSV machine gun without optical sights; 9 mm PM pistols; 7.62 mm AKM assault rifles; 7.62 mm SKS rifles; 5.45 mm AK-74, AKS-74, and AKS-74U assault rifles; 5.6 mm TOZ-8 and TOZ-17 sports rifles; 26 types of ammunition ranging from 4.5 mm to 23 mm (Chebotarev, 2010).

As domestic production capacity is limited, Kazakhstan is likely to import most of the military small arms it needs for the foreseeable future. According to Defence Vice Minister Ratmir Komratov, the country imports about 70 per cent of its military supplies (of all types) (Moldabayev, 2010, p. 5). Detailed information on military small arms imports is scarce, however. UN Comtrade data as reported by Kazakhstan suggests total imports of military rifles, machine guns, and other light-calibre military weapons amounted to just over USD 3 million for the period 1992–2008, a

Table 4.7 MoD procurement of small arms, parts, and ammunition, 2009

Product	Quantity (units)	Value	
		KZT	USD (rounded)
Small arms and devices for reconnaissance battalions	0	201,989,400	1,383,500
Firing mount for handheld firearms	1	1,700,000	11,600
Sniper rifles	36	126,000,000	863,000
Ammunition, 7.62, 338	4,125	3,300,000	22,600
Large-calibre sniper rifle	2	7,000,000	47,900
Ammunition, 12.7 × 99 mm	1,000	3,500,000	24,000
Closed collimating sight	222	26,640,000	182,500
AK-107 machine gun (Russian Federation)	100	38,000,000	260,300
5.66 mm APS (underwater assault rifle)	44	16,368,000	112,100
5.66 mm APS ammunition for underwater firing	50,000	46,500,000	318,500
5.66 mm ammunition for underwater firing	9,000	8,680,000	59,500
4.5 mm SPP-1 (underwater pistol)	44	12,584,000	86,200
4.5 mm SPS ammunition for underwater firing	50,000	39,500,000	270,500
Installation and acquisition of shotgun rib for sub-machine guns	1,000	15,000,000	102,700

Source: MoD (2009)

relatively small proportion of the country's reported total small arms imports (see Table 4.1). The low value of exports of military small arms to Kazakhstan, as reported by its trading partners, probably reflects the fact that many of the states that regularly export to Kazakhstan, such as the Russian Federation, do not report on military transfers to Comtrade. Kazakh reports to the UN Register on Conventional Arms include some information on military imports. In 2009, for instance, Kazakhstan reported importing sniper rifles from the United States and Germany, as well as grenade launchers from Switzerland (UNODA, n.d.). Imports as reported by Kazakhstan fall well below the actual scale of procurement, however. MoD data, for instance, reveals the procurement of KZT 547 million (USD 3.7 million) worth of small arms and ammunition for 2009 alone (see Table 4.7).

Control measures

The Security Council of the Republic of Kazakhstan's Inter-Departmental Commission on the sale of weapons, military technology, and dual-use goods decides how to deal with surplus weapons and ammunition, based on recommendations made by the MoD's Military-Technical Commission (RoK, 2008, p. 13). Until recently, KazArsenal was the only

Table 4.8 Surplus conventional ammunition destroyed by the Ministry of Defence, 2003-09⁴⁰

Type	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	Total
37 mm for AZP-39	0	0	0	33,943	9,138	68,823	64,262	176,166
57mm for ZiS-2	0	0	0	2,447	2	21,903	0	24,352
76 mm for ZiS-3	0	0	2,430	46,552	3,292	43,937	0	96,211
85 mm for D-44	8,061	84,126	25,935	52,411	67,679	67,292	0	305,504
85 mm for D-48	0	0	0	9,926	0	0	0	9,926
100 mm for KS-19	0	18,400	0	912	43,828	77,574	0	140,714
115 mm for U-5TS	0	0	0	0	0	4,957	0	4,957
122 mm for D-25TS	0	970	0	0	0	0	0	970
122 mm for M-30	4,127	34,000	50,250	69,692	1,158	6,438	0	165,665
130 mm for M-46	0	0	1,628	0	0	9,553	0	11,181
152 mm for D-20	304	0	0	3,991	17,133	412	0	21,840
152 mm for D-1	3,200	0	0	0	0	0	0	3,200
203 mm for 2S7	0	0	0	0	326	4,761	0	5,087
82 mm mines	0	0	0	0	87,728	4,727	0	92,455
120 mm mines	0	0	0	0	50,777	0	0	50,777
160 mm mines	0	0	0	0	4,952	0	0	4,952
240 mm mines	0	0	0	0	0	1,395	0	1,395
Total	15,692	137,496	80,243	219,874	286,013	311,772	64,262	1,115,352

Source: RoK (2011a, p. 1)

contractor licensed to destroy ammunition in Kazakhstan, but it had no experience dismantling complex ammunition such as MANPADS missiles (NAMSA, 2007, pp. 2–3). KazArsenal’s ammunition disposal facilities were located in Kapshagay and Arys, and were reportedly able to destroy up to 250,000 pieces of ammunition per year, depending on the calibre (OSCE, 2005, pp. 4–5). Following the March 2009 explosion at KazArsenal’s Arys branch, the government announced the suspension of ammunition disposal activities in Kazakhstan until the causes of the incident were established and improved safety procedures introduced (Kazinform, 2009). On 3 September 2010, the government issued a decree that provided for the creation of a new entity that would be entrusted to process and destroy surplus ammunition (RoK, 2011a, p. 1).

Available information points to substantial progress in the destruction of surplus conventional ammunition by the MoD. In 2003, following an August 2001 ammunition depot explosion in Tokyrau, the Ministry of Defence adopted a ‘Comprehensive Programme of Disposal of Conventional Ammunition that Are No Longer Used by the Kazakhstan Armed Forces’, which envisioned the destruction of 2.5 million units of conventional ammunition in 2003–07, with 161,000 pieces of calibre 85–152 mm reportedly destroyed in 2003–04. Funding shortages led to an extension of the programme by 7.5 years (OSCE, 2005, p. 3). In December 2009, the MoD announced that 1.5 million pieces of ammunition were to be disposed of (BBC Monitoring/Interfax, 2009). In early 2011, the Ministry informed the Small Arms Survey that it had destroyed 1,115,352 units of conventional ammunition between 2003 and 2009, 939,244 of which were destroyed by detonation (RoK, 2011a, p. 1; see Table 4.8). This suggests that some 1.4 million rounds of ammunition out of the original 2.5 million remained in surplus as of 2010. These figures concern only the Ministry of Defence, however, and not the other institutions listed in Figure 4.9, for which no comparable data is available.

The Ministry of Defence also reported destroying 37,792 units of small arms and light weapons in 2002–06, but there is no information available on remaining levels of surplus arms, if any (RoK, 2011a, p. 2; see Table 4.9). Another report states that the MoD destroyed some 27,723 out of 45,000 weapons earmarked for destruction in 2007 (NAMSA, 2007, p. 2). Kazakhstan has undertaken the destruction of excess stockpiles unilaterally, despite some opportunities for international collaboration. A project designed in partnership with the NATO Ammunition Supply Agency envisioned the destruction of 16,653 small arms and 350 MANPADS missiles and launching tubes in 2007. Officially due to administrative reasons, the project was never implemented, however (NAMSA, 2007, pp. 2–3).

Table 4.9 Surplus small arms and light weapons destroyed by the Ministry of Defence, 2003–06

Type	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	Total
Grenade launchers	0	43	436	566	0	1,045
Rifles and carbines	147	10,937	143	9,586	42	20,855
Machine guns	0	2,960	2,742	2,910	2	8,614
Sub-machine guns/ assault rifles	50	10	0	5,415	0	5,475
Pistols	1,090	573	0	140	0	1,803
Total	1,287	14,523	3,321	18,617	44	37,792

Source: RoK (2011a, p. 2)

Unplanned explosions at munitions sites

Since 2001, six large-scale explosions are known to have occurred at ammunition storage facilities in Kazakhstan. As of late 2011, these explosions made Kazakhstan the 13th most-affected country in the world by such incidents (Small Arms Survey, 2011). The Small Arms Survey, with logistical support from CIOM, conducted focus group discussions in August and September 2010 with members of three affected communities—Ortaderesin (near the August 2001 explosion site of Tokyrau), Arys (the March 2009 incident), and Karaoy (the June 2009 incident) (see Box 4.2). Two focus group discussions with eight participants each were held in each location separately with men and women. Participants were required to have lived in the given location for at least two years prior and since the incident. Discussions focused on respondents' awareness of risks and knowledge of the explosion; impacts such as casualties, property damage, and longer-term consequences on local development and livelihoods; the level of government response; and issues of compensation and preventive measures (see Annexe 4.2).

Risk awareness

In all three locations, the population was aware of the existence of the ammunition depots before the incidents, mainly due to their proximity and because some local residents were employed there as contract workers. In Ortaderesin and Arys, rumours circulated that the depots housed enormous stocks of ammunition and that, if an explosion occurred, it would affect large areas. In Karaoy, residents got used to military exercises that are organized regularly at the two nearby training ranges; some initially mistook the explosion for yet another exercise. In Arys, the explosion occurred on the eve of the Nauryz holiday, and some people first assumed that the military unit was preparing fireworks for celebrations.

Local residents' awareness of the causes of the incidents varies. In Ortaderesin, respondents were not aware of the real cause but put forward several assumptions that surfaced in the press. In fact, the government commission was at the time unable to come to a definitive conclusion as to what had caused the incident (*Kazakhstan Today*, 2002). Respondents in Arys were well aware of the cause of the explosion, partly from press reports, partly from the stories told by fellow residents who had worked at KazArsenal. The investigation, like the press reports that preceded it, concluded that negligence,

Box 4.2 Case study background: the Tokyrau, Arys, and Karaoy ammunition depot explosions

The Tokyrau-10 ammunition depot at the Ministry of Defence's military unit 89533, about 50 km east of Balkhash, Karagandy Oblast, exploded on 8 August 2001 (*Kazakhstan Today*, 2001a). According to Sat Tokpakbayev, then minister of defence, the arsenal included 'several tens of thousands of tons' of artillery ammunition, small arms ammunition, and aircraft bombs. The entire stock, mainly left from the Soviet Union's Afghan campaign and partly transferred from Armenia after the 1988 earthquake, was reportedly slated for destruction (*Kazakhstan Today*, 2001b).

The second explosion took place on 20 March 2009 at the ammunition disposal facility of KazArsenal Research and Production Association Ltd., located at military unit 44859 of the Ministry of Defence, 2 km from the town of Arys, Southern Kazakhstan Oblast (about 100 km from Shymkent) (MoE, 2009a). Large ammunition depots were built near Arys before World War II, and ammunition explosions had taken place there before. The press reported that some ammunition and weapons had been transferred to the depots near Arys after the Soviet Army's withdrawal from Afghanistan (*Kazakhstan Today*, 2009b). The Ministry of Defence had subcontracted KazArsenal, a private entity, to dispose of and reprocess out-of-date ammunition for civilian use (Novitskaya, 2009).

The third explosion took place on 8 June 2009 at the ammunition depot of military unit 2466 of the KNB's Border Guard Service, 1 km from the village of Karaoy, Ile District, Almaty Oblast (40 km from Almaty). The unit serves as a field training centre for the KNB Military Institute that trains border guard officers (MoE, 2009b; *Kazakhstan Today*, 2009e; KazTAG, 2009).

violations of safety rules, and a heavy workload at KazArsenal were the main causes of the incident (Novitskaya, 2009). In Karaoy, most respondents said they had little knowledge about the cause, perhaps because of the sensitivity of the topic due to the affiliation of the ammunition depot with the KNB. Investigators concluded that the depot exploded after a contract sergeant accidentally dropped a thunderflash into a box with explosives (KTK, 2009b; Severnyy, 2009); however, some local residents claim that he was used as a scapegoat. In none of the three cases did the authorities explain the causes of the explosions to the local population.

Respondents in one location implied that the explosions might have been related to illegal sales of weapons and ammunition to third parties. Men in Karaoy mentioned a rumour that an inspection of the ammunition depot inventory had been forthcoming and that the explosion had been set intentionally to conceal traces of theft. Participants in other locations were unwilling to discuss this sensitive topic. After the Tokyrau explosion, allegations surfaced in the press that it had been organized to provide a cover-up for theft (Dzhalilov, 2001).

Casualties and impact

Community reaction was the most dramatic in Arys. The incident took place late in the evening and, according to the focus group participants, led to mass fear, shock, and panic rooted in previously existing fears; the situation reportedly resembled a disorganized war-time evacuation. Taking advantage of the situation, taxi drivers and petrol station owners inflated prices, as confirmed by press reports (Novitskaya, 2009). In Ortaderesin, locals were also frightened but did not panic, instead assisting the military personnel and their families and facilitating an organized evacuation. Yet compared to Arys, Ortaderesin is much farther from the explosion site (about 15 km). In Karaoy, some people panicked and left the village, but the majority remained in their houses. Some participants in all three communities initially had the impression that a war had started; residents said the explosions resembled a war-time artillery fire and bombardment.

While not leading to any immediate fatalities among the civilian population of the settlements, the three events differ in terms of the overall damage and casualties they ultimately caused. The Arys explosion resulted in the death of three KazArsenal workers at the site and inflicted injuries on 17 others (two of whom later died in hospital) (*Kazakhstan Today*, 2009c; KTK, 2009a; Novitskaya, 2009). The closeness and intensity of explosions in Arys also resulted in broken windows, knocked-out doors, and cracked roofs and walls. While there was no damage to the property of local residents in Ortaderesin, a teenage scrap metal hunter, a conscript soldier, and five workers were killed and three were wounded by unexploded ordnance in separate incidents between 2003 and 2009.⁴¹ The explosions also destroyed infrastructure, including the military's housing facility, damaged the local railway and power transmission line, and prompted the authorities to limit the water supply for several days.⁴² Local residents claimed that, although the clean-up activities were officially terminated, many pieces of ammunition remained scattered in the surrounding area and on the bottom of Lake Balkhash and continued to generate interest from scrap metal hunters. Residents of Karaoy reported no damage to property but also knew that a conscript soldier was killed when a concrete wall of the depot crushed him (MoE, 2009b; Konovalov, 2009; ERA-TV, 2009).

Focus group participants in Ortaderesin and Arys claimed that the explosions have had negative effects on the environment and human health, especially on pregnant women and children, and that they resulted in higher household animal mortality. Some Ortaderesin residents reported that the Tokyrau depot had housed uranium-tipped ammunition and that the incident had led to the radioactive contamination of the surrounding area, but that the

Residents said the explosions resembled war-time artillery fire and bombardment.

authorities had told local residents that there was no radiation in the environment. It appears that the Tokyrau arsenal had indeed contained such ammunition, as reported by Kazakhstan's nuclear scientists, who helped remove highly radioactive ammunition and waste from the incident site and placed them for long-term storage at the former Semipalatinsk nuclear test site (Dmitropavlenko et al., 2010).

Government response

According to respondents, firefighters in all three locations acted quickly to arrive at the site after receiving an emergency alert. During the Tokyrau incident, however, they did not intervene until the explosions subsided because of the risk of injury or death (*Kazakhstan Today*, 2001a; 2001c). Similarly, in Karaoy, emergency responders did not approach the site to contain the blaze because of continuous explosions of ammunition (MoE, 2009b; *Kazakhstan Today*, 2009e). In Arys, firefighters suppressed the fire, risking their lives despite a remaining explosion hazard (*Kazakhstan Today*, 2009d).

The evacuations in the three affected communities were organized in different ways. In Ortaderesin, the local authorities oversaw a relatively smooth evacuation, moving more than 400 civilians and military personnel to Balkhash. Some men remained in the village to take care of their property and cattle. Residents in Arys claim that the authorities did not arrange for any transportation to evacuate the civilian population, while the military unit provided two buses and a car to evacuate its personnel and their families. In Karaoy, residents living in the peripheral streets located close to the incident site were evacuated and accommodated in the local community centre, while others stayed at home or left the village independently.

**Authorities do not
organize emergency
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civilians living near
ammunition depots.**

In all three cases, the authorities closed off the affected areas, putting in place police and military cordons and blocking the roads leading to the towns and the villages. Engineer units were called in to search for unexploded ordnance.

Compensation and prevention

Contrary to their expectations, Ortaderesin residents did not receive any government assistance—unlike the military personnel and their families, who were paid, according to respondents, compensation for their lost property. Residents of Arys claimed that they had been promised they would be compensated for all the damage inflicted by the incident but instead only received insignificant compensation for shattered windows. Focus group participants said that funds that had been allocated for assistance were embezzled by local officials. Respondents in Karaoy did not expect government compensation or assistance since the explosions, despite the damage they had inflicted on military property and housing, did not cause any damage to private property.⁴³

The focus groups conducted by the Small Arms Survey also revealed that the authorities in Kazakhstan do not organize emergency response training for the civilian population living near ammunition depots, and that local residents do not know how to behave in emergency situations. Respondents pointed out that there are no designated collection points or evacuation centres such as the Soviet-era bomb shelters, where local residents could gather in the event of an emergency.

Focus group participants in all three locations agreed that, ideally, military facilities, such as ammunition depots and military training ranges, should be located far from human settlements. On the other hand, the majority of participants said they did not strongly object to the location of military facilities near their settlements because they provide much-needed jobs.

CONCLUSION

As of late 2011, the information that the Small Arms Survey was able to gather indicated that security in Kazakhstan had improved since post-Soviet independence. Crime, including homicide, has decreased significantly since the mid-1990s, and criminals appear to use firearms relatively rarely when perpetrating homicides and armed robberies. Civilian respondents put employment, healthcare, and access to water ahead of security when asked about the most serious problems affecting them. Further, the government has a relatively comprehensive set of measures in place to regulate civilian acquisition and possession of small arms.

There are, however, some important caveats to the assumption that Kazakhstan is a secure country in an otherwise unstable region. Threats to Kazakhstan's stability are not limited to events in neighbouring countries; rather, they include a domestic homicide rate that exceeds global and Central Asia averages and a recent increase in the use of firearms in violent crime. Perceptions of insecurity appear to be higher in urban areas, fuelling civilian demand for firearms as a means of self-defence in cities and among young men. Additional negative trends include apparent increases in the illicit manufacture of small arms, and reports of the use of firearms by prisoners and teenagers. The recent surge in terrorist violence on Kazakh territory, combined with prominent cases of ethnic and political violence over the past five years, is especially worrying. While it would be alarmist to speak of an approaching storm, Kazakh skies are not entirely clear.

The six large-scale, unplanned explosions at munitions sites that have occurred in the country since 2001 highlight problems in the management of state stockpiles. The explosions have caused death, injury, and the destruction of private property and public infrastructure. Over the longer term, they have also harmed local environments, livelihoods, and employment. The lack of emergency response training for communities living near depots points to a shortfall of government capacity and will to respond effectively to such accidents. Ensuring the safety and security of state stockpiles, including stores of surplus ammunition, would not only help prevent further accidents, but would also decrease the risk of arms being diverted to unauthorized entities and individuals. While Kazakhstan has taken some unilateral steps in this direction, increased transparency and international cooperation, as is occurring elsewhere, would help the country to benefit from the expanding international knowledge base in this area. ■

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CIOM	Center for the Study of Public Opinion
CSTO	Collective Security Treaty Organization
IMI	Israel Military Industries
KNB	National Security Committee
KZT	Kazakhstan tenge
MANPADS	Man-portable air defence systems
MIA	Ministry of Internal Affairs
MoD	Ministry of Defence
MRP	<i>Mesyachniy raschetniy pokazatel</i> (monthly calculation index)
NISAT	Norwegian Initiative on Small Arms Transfers
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
ZKMK	Zapadno-Kazakhstanskaya Mashinostroitel'naya Kompaniya (Western Kazakhstan Machine-Building Company)

ANNEXES

Online annexes at <<http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/publications/by-type/yearbook/small-arms-survey-2012.html>>

Annexe 4.1. Survey questionnaire

Annexe 4.2. Focus group guide

ENDNOTES

- 1 Kazakhstan is divided into 14 *oblasts*, or administrative units or regions.
- 2 The main studies include Ashkenazi (2010) and IA (2004).
- 3 The Small Arms Survey is no exception, having published studies on Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan (MacFarlane and Torjesen, 2004; Torjesen, Wille, and MacFarlane, 2005).
- 4 The Survey also submitted a number of official requests for information to the relevant ministries and discussed its draft report with government representatives during a workshop co-hosted by the Military Strategic Studies Center in Astana in July 2011.
- 5 See, for instance, Wołowska (2004).
- 6 AS (2011); Geneva Declaration Secretariat (2011, pp. 51, 119); PGO (2011a); author correspondence with Elisabeth Gilgen, researcher, Small Arms Survey, 6 October 2011.
- 7 Quotas were based on the sex and age distribution of the relevant region.
- 8 The 2010 turmoil in Kyrgyzstan is the latest example of such violence. See ICG (2010).
- 9 See, for example, Brill Olcott (2010); IWPR (2007); von Gumpenberg (2007, pp. 23–25).
- 10 For additional background on extremist groups in Kazakhstan, see von Gumpenberg (2007, pp. 28–32) and Omelicheva (2011, pp. 82–132).
- 11 The confidence interval is increased from 2.5 to 3 to take into account the low response rate to this question.
- 12 In spite of several official requests to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, it was not possible to obtain updated official statistics on registered privately held firearms, which the Ministry considers a confidential matter. Author correspondence with Kazakh Ministry of Internal Affairs, 2 August 2011.
- 13 According to the Committee for Forestry and Hunting of the Ministry of Agriculture, there were about 85,000 officially registered hunters in Kazakhstan in 2010 (Koemets, Kolokolova, and Kenzhegaliyeva, 2010).
- 14 See the list of companies at Koramsak (n.d.).
- 15 The authors extend thanks to Paul Holtom for drawing their attention to these reports.
- 16 This comparison and the discussion and tables below rest on UN Comtrade data as downloaded by the Norwegian Initiative on Small Arms Transfers (NISAT). The Small Arms Survey sent its analysis of UN Comtrade data to Kazakhstan's Committee for Customs Control on 28 July 2011 with a request for any comments or clarification. The Committee responded that information related to arms transfers was considered a 'state secret' and was therefore confidential (author correspondence with the Committee for Customs Control, 28 August 2011). Note also that Kazakhstan appears to have withdrawn its submissions from the UN Comtrade database in late 2010; this data is still accessible via the NISAT project, which regularly downloads and saves information (see NISAT, n.d.).
- 17 While this section focuses on civilian-held weapons, data on military weapons is reflected in the tables for informative purposes and to provide a comprehensive overview of available information.
- 18 On the other hand, Kazakhstan has reported a larger volume of imports of military rifles than have exporters (see Table 1). The fact that some countries do not report exports of military equipment to Comtrade may explain these discrepancies.
- 19 See, for example, *Kazakhstan Today* (2003; 2010b); Kazinform (2010); and MIA (2010d).
- 20 Author correspondence with CSTO, 22 February 2011.
- 21 Author correspondence with CSTO, 11 February 2010.
- 22 Author correspondence with CSTO, 22 February 2011.
- 23 Another source reports that in early February 2011 the President of Kyrgyzstan, Roza Otunbayeva, announced that 356 firearms and 63,780 units of ammunition were lost during the June 2010 ethnic violence (P-KR, 2011).
- 24 Statement by a Kazakh government representative at a workshop held by the Small Arms Survey, Astana, 20 July 2011.
- 25 On 24 June 2010, for instance, the Zhambyl Oblast police—in cooperation with border guards—detained a Kyrgyz national for attempting to smuggle a bag with a Kalashnikov automatic rifle, a Makarov pistol, a PSN pistol with silencer, and cartridges of 55 different calibres (MIA, 2010e; *Kazakhstan Today*, 2010c).
- 26 Most of the provisions regulating civilian firearm ownership are laid out in the Criminal Code, in Law No. 339 and Law No. 214-III (RoK, 1997; 1998; 2007a). The government also adopted a number of regulations to implement and enforce this legislation (RoK, 2000a; 2004). The following review is based on these publicly available legal sources.
- 27 Secondary legislation stipulates that applicants must indicate the relevant reason when applying for a purchasing licence, but that they are not required to provide any evidence of a corresponding need for the weapon (RoK, 2000a, rules 78, 79). Individuals wishing to obtain a licence for the purchase, possession, or carrying of hunting rifles must hold a hunter's certificate (RoK, 1998, art. 15.1; 2000a, r. 78).
- 28 MRP (monthly calculation index; in Russian, *mesyachnyi raschetnyy pokazatel*) is a unit used in Kazakhstan to calculate payments such as wages and compensation made under labour legislation as well as taxes, levies, duties, fines, and other fees. As of 1 January 2011, one MRP equalled KZT 1,512 (USD 10).

- 29 Permits for the possession, storage, and carrying of firearms are valid for five years, after which they can be renewed every five years (RoK, 2000a, rules 87, 90). Licences for purchasing firearms are valid for three months (RoK, 2000a, r. 85).
- 30 The law defines short-barrelled shotguns as long-bore firearms of barrel length inferior to 500 mm and with a total length inferior to 800 mm, as well as long-bore firearms that can be modified to a length inferior to 800 mm.
- 31 The law defines hollow-point ammunition as bullets with a displaced centre of gravity.
- 32 The law also prohibits ‘weapons and ammunition that are incompatible with the requirements of forensics’, although it does not specify what this means in practice (RoK, 1998, art. 7).
- 33 Authors’ observation, Almaty, September 2010.
- 34 These rates are based on a selection of countries in each region for which reasonable data was available (Geneva Declaration Secretariat, 2011, p. 100).
- 35 BNews (2011); Interfax-Kazakhstan (2011); *Kazakhstan Today* (2009a); Kutsay (2010); Shemratov (2010).
- 36 Interviewed representatives of companies that sell firearms to the civilian market stated that men are their main customers, suggesting that Kazakh men are more attached to firearms than women (Chebotarev, 2010, p. 15).
- 37 Law prohibits the sharing of such information (RoK, 1999, arts. 11, 14). Anonymous sources indicate that Kazakhstan reports such data as well as arms transfers information within the framework of OSCE information exchange mechanisms. It is not possible to verify this data, however, since national reports to the OSCE are confidential.
- 38 Author correspondence with an informed source, 3 June 2010.
- 39 Author correspondence with Aaron Karp, senior consultant, Small Arms Survey, 22 April 2010.
- 40 Although many types of conventional ammunition are beyond the scope of the Survey’s research, this table is included for informative purposes given that it represents unpublished official information of potential interest to other stakeholders.
- 41 Fomina (2006); ITAR-TASS (2003); *Kazakhstan Today* (2009f); Kazinform (2006).
- 42 Channel One (2001); Gabchenko (2001); *Kazakhstan Today* (2001a; 2001b; 2001d); ITAR-TASS (2001).
- 43 Karaoy lies only 1 km from the incident site, suggesting the explosion must have been less severe than in other cases, since the village did not sustain damage.

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