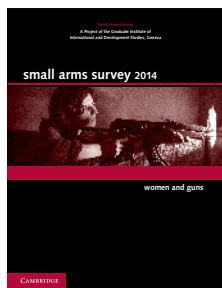


# Small Arms Survey 2014

## WOMEN AND GUNS



The *Small Arms Survey 2014* considers the multiple roles of women in the context of armed violence, security, and the small arms agenda. The volume's thematic section comprises one chapter on violence against women and girls—with a focus on post-conflict Liberia and Nepal—and another on the recent convergence of the small arms agenda with that of women, peace, and security. Complementing these chapters are illustrated testimonies of women with experience as soldiers, rebels, and security personnel. The 'weapons and markets' section assesses the potential impact of the Arms Trade Treaty, presents the 2014 Transparency Barometer and an update on the authorized small arms trade, and analyses recent ammunition depot explosions in the Republic of the Congo. In addition, it examines ammunition circulating in Africa and the Middle East, maps the sources of insurgent weapons in Sudan and South Sudan, and evaluates crime gun records in the United States.

The *Small Arms Survey* is produced annually by a team of researchers based in Geneva, Switzerland, and a worldwide network of local researchers. Policy-makers, diplomats, and non-governmental organizations have come to value it as a vital resource for topical analysis of small arms-related issues and armed violence reduction strategies.

Praise for the 2014 *Survey* from Angela Kane, United Nations High Representative for Disarmament Affairs:

'In words and images, the *Small Arms Survey 2014*, with its usual analytical rigour, helps us understand the latest developments—and future possibilities—in arms control, peace, and security. I have no hesitation recommending it to all those interested in these vital topics.'

### Key findings

#### Violence against women and girls (VAWG)

- Rates of domestic violence are higher wherever it is socially accepted as a justified response to household disputes.
- Attitudes that condone VAWG often pre-date conflicts, but they are reinforced during wars and often persist long past the formal cessation of hostilities.
- In Liberia, women are twice as likely as men to assert that a husband is sometimes justified in beating his wife, suggesting that many women have been socialized to accept domestic violence.
- In Nepal, the caste system, ethnic and economic cleavages, and the profile of the victim appear to influence the type and prevalence of VAWG. For example, women from marginalized groups are at a notably elevated risk of experiencing some type of victimization in their lifetimes.
- At the global level, development sector practitioners seek to change social norms that influence VAWG; these efforts are seen as an indispensable step towards improving the security of women and girls over the long term.

#### Women, peace, and security

- Until 2013, the UN Security Council resolutions (UNSCRs) on women, peace, and security, aside from references to disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR), were silent on the topics of small arms and disarmament.
- Key actors have linked four mandates in the UNSCRs on women, peace, and security to small arms, namely the protection of civilians, including from sexual violence; women's participation in peace and security decision-making; supporting local women's peace and conflict resolution initiatives; and DDR.
- Recent UN monitoring frameworks on UNSCR 1325 include specific indicators and targets pertaining to small arms and disarmament.
- While one-quarter of existing national action plans for the implementation of UNSCR 1325 refer to small arms, they rarely operationalize this policy linkage by requiring concrete actions. Likewise, while national action plans on small arms occasionally mention women, they do not translate this into required actions.
- The Arms Trade Treaty and the UNSCRs on women, peace, and security and on small arms adopted in 2013 firmly connect these two international policy agendas.

### **The Arms Trade Treaty (ATT)**

- The compromises necessary for agreement on the treaty text have left the ATT with few unqualified legal obligations.
- The ATT covers a broad range of transfer-related activities and items, but an absence of definitions and a lack of prescriptive detail may result in uneven and inconsistent implementation.
- The ATT makes a significant contribution to existing legal frameworks by introducing new standards for the international transfer of conventional arms. These gains are, however, more modest in comparison with existing small arms control measures.
- As the treaty applies to exporting and non-exporting states alike, the latter have been and will continue to be involved in ATT-related arms transfer discussions, as well as in the development of global norms to curb irresponsible arms transfers.
- The ATT process has raised the level of attention and scrutiny given to this issue at the global level and will undoubtedly continue to do so. This, in turn, has the potential to change state behaviour.
- While the ATT does not specifically refer to unauthorized retransfers, other instruments and good practice guidelines outline relevant measures. Guidance is scarce, however, on how to respond to suspected or detected cases of unauthorized retransfers.

### **Authorized small arms transfers**

- In 2011, the top exporters of small arms and light weapons (those with annual exports of at least USD 100 million), according to available customs data, were (in descending order) the United States, Italy, Germany, Brazil, Austria, Switzerland, Israel, the Russian Federation, South Korea, Belgium, China, Turkey, Spain, and the Czech Republic.
- In 2011, the top importers of small arms and light weapons (those with annual imports of at least USD 100 million), according to available customs data, were (in descending order) the United States, Canada, Germany, Australia, Thailand, the United Kingdom, France, and Italy.
- The value of the global trade in small arms and light weapons almost doubled between 2001 and 2011, according to the UN Commodity Trade Statistics Database (UN Comtrade). The category of small arms ammunition has seen the greatest increase (USD 959 million or 205 per cent).

### **Transparency in the small arms trade**

- The 2014 edition of the Small Arms Trade Transparency Barometer identifies Switzerland, Germany, Serbia, and the United Kingdom as the most transparent of the major exporters, while Iran, North Korea, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates are the least transparent.
- Although overall transparency improved slightly since last year, with more countries improving or maintaining their level of transparency than not, the Barometer shows that more than half of the countries under review do not provide any information on licences granted or refused, despite the categories' overall importance to transparency.
- The ATT offers an important opportunity to increase transparency of small arms transfers. Yet, to achieve this goal, ATT reporting needs to take its inspiration not only from the UN Register of Conventional Arms, but also from UN Comtrade and national arms export reports.

### **Mpila ammunition depot explosions**

- On 4 March 2012, a series of explosions destroyed several military barracks in the Mpila area of Brazzaville, Republic of the Congo (RoC), killing at least 300 people, injuring more than 2,500, and displacing more than 120,000.
- According to ammunition technicians and EOD specialists familiar with the event, inadequate ammunition stockpile management is the root cause of the Mpila ammunition depot explosions.
- The ammunition types destroyed included a mix of pyrotechnics, small arms ammunition, grenades, mines, large-calibre projectiles, rockets, missiles, and aircraft bombs amassed haphazardly in the Mpila depot's explosive storehouses.
- The unchecked expansion of the civilian population around an explosive storage area containing such types and quantities of ammunition places people at high risk in the case of an explosion.
- A partial estimate of the total damage and loss—mainly in terms of direct physical impact on the private sector—exceeds XAF 336 billion (USD 672 million).
- At the time of writing, post-explosion progress in stockpile management practices was slow, indicating a lack of buy-in from RoC authorities, as well as donor fatigue and wariness from potential sponsors.

### **Ammunition tracing in conflict zones**

- An analysis of the characteristics of small-calibre ammunition documented since 2010 in seven countries and territories—Côte d'Ivoire, Libya, Somalia, Somaliland, South Sudan, Sudan, and Syria—shows that it was produced in 39 different countries.
- Production plants located in China and the Soviet Union (the territory now constituting the Russian Federation) account for the greatest share—a combined 37 per cent—of the ammunition samples. The prevalence of cartridges of Sudanese and Iranian manufacture is also noteworthy.
- More than three-quarters of the ammunition samples were Eastern Bloc-calibre cartridges, and more than half were produced during the cold war—highlighting the role of old ammunition in fuelling armed conflict and underlining the importance of reducing stockpile surpluses.
- The presence of newly produced ammunition in several countries illustrates how quickly this materiel can be diverted or retransferred to situations of armed conflict.
- The presence of different types of unmarked cartridges in all but one of the countries and territories under review raises new hurdles for arms monitoring efforts. Markings on certain packaging points to Ethiopia as the manufacturer of some of this ammunition, but in the other cases it is difficult to identify producers conclusively.

### **Weapons tracing in Sudan and South Sudan**

- Non-state armed groups in Sudan and South Sudan have access to a variety of types and quantities of arms and ammunition, including civil war-era weapons, as well as newer Chinese and Sudanese weapons and ammunition.
- Investigators have documented newer (post-2000) Sudanese-manufactured small- and medium-calibre ammunition in large quantities among non-state armed groups in Sudan and South Sudan.
- The Government of Sudan's stockpiles are the primary source of weapons to non-state armed groups of all allegiances in Sudan and South Sudan, through deliberate arming and battlefield capture.
- Investigations reveal that South Sudanese armed groups are in possession of an increasing number of weapons whose factory marks, including serial numbers, have been removed, a tactic designed to undermine identification and tracing.
- By responding to information requests from investigators, exporting states have shown a willingness to cooperate in the process of weapons and ammunition tracing in conflict zones.

### **Illicit weapons in the United States**

- More than three-quarters (77 per cent) of the firearms seized from felons, drug traffickers, and gang members in the eight US cities and towns studied were handguns.
- At least 70 per cent of the seized handguns were semi-automatic pistols of various makes, models, and calibres—the most common type of firearm recovered from criminals in the municipalities studied.
- Seizure rates for handguns and long guns in the United States are the inverse of those in Mexico, where approximately 72 per cent of the seized weapons studied in the second phase of this project were long guns.
- Rifles accounted for only a small fraction of seized firearms: less than 12 per cent, with only about half of them semi-automatic models, including those commonly termed 'assault rifles'. This is noteworthy given widespread civilian ownership of rifles in the United States and their frequent seizure from criminals in Mexico.
- Despite a ban on the importation of firearms from China, a large proportion of the seized semi-automatic rifles were Chinese-made.

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