Sourcing the Tools of War:

SMALL ARMS SUPPLIES TO CONFLICT ZONES

6

INTRODUCTION

International illicit arms transfers to conflict and war zones often display features characteristic of newsworthy stories.[1] They tend to involve shady, greedy dealers and financiers with Hollywood-type lifestyles; suspicious means of transport, with airplane registrations being changed mid-flight and jets sometimes touching down on tarmac in the middle of the jungle; and disturbingly ruthless recipients. Some cases embroil politicians and other public figures. No wonder, then, that the media are particularly eager to cover this aspect of the small arms problem.

Given the intense political debates about whether to supply arms and ammunition to areas of conflict, researchers and analysts also devote substantial attention to this issue. The dynamics at work here are complex: states are pitted against religious and human rights groups; exporter states confront states that refuse to authorize particular deals; peace activists denounce gun manufacturers; and so on. Many NGOs, some intergovernmental organizations, and certain governments have reported on transfers of arms—including small arms and light weapons[2]—to various conflict zones, some of them under arms embargo. These reports provide invaluable insight into individual transfers of weapons as well as transfer patterns to particular conflict zones. Much of the writing concentrates on large international transfers to conflict regions—such as those involving many hundreds of weapons or millions of rounds of ammunition.[3]

Today this focus is also partly reflected by the international agenda, which endorses measures to control brokering, improve end-user documentation and controls, and reinforce and extend international arms embargoes. These measures are primarily directed against large illicit shipments of small arms.

This chapter focuses instead on the role of the many different sources of supply in a selected number of recent or current internal conflicts in Africa, the Americas, and Central Asia and the Caucasus. It underscores that sources are varied, and that the focus on large international arms transfers should not obscure the need to study other sources of supply, particularly from a regulatory perspective.

The main conclusions of the chapter are the following:

- As a conflict continues, small arms procurement patterns of governments and of insurgents often become more sophisticated, diverse, and entrenched.
- Transfers to conflict zones include an important ‘ant trade’, a small but steady trickle of weapons that can produce large accumulations over time.
- Through corruption, theft, free distribution, and sales, government stockpiles constitute an important source of small arms in virtually all conflict zones. In some conflicts, they are the dominant source for all combatants.
- Since the 1990s, economic motives—including greed—have been highlighted as key factors in the arms trade. Even in the post-cold war era, however, political affiliations and loyalties remain important in elucidating small arms transfer patterns.[4]

- In long-standing conflicts whose parties have financial resources at their disposal, local production can be an important source of supply. While rare, this can also apply to insurgents.
- In order to stem the flow of small arms to conflict areas, issues such as border control and corruption must be added to the international agenda.

COMPARING ARMS SOURCING

This chapter compares the sources of small arms used in six recent and current internal conflicts on three continents: Colombia and Haiti in the Americas; Liberia and Mali in West Africa; and Tajikistan and Georgia in Central Asia and the Caucasus. These six internal conflicts differ in terms of origin, duration, existence of an arms embargo,[5] the number of casualties, refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs), and other categories of victims, and the number of combatants and belligerent groups. By virtue of these variations, the case studies present a wide range of conflict scenarios. Yet since the conflicts are roughly contemporaneous—covering the early 1990s to the present—they allow for meaningful comparisons. Moreover, pair cases represent countries with relative geographical proximity or likeness, so that they could be expected to tap into similar international trafficking networks, even if conflict scenarios are dissimilar. The sample thus allows for some general—albeit tentative—conclusions on the nature of the sourcing of tools of war.

Different sources complement one another and can change throughout a conflict.

This analysis illustrates the complexity of small arms sourcing, the complementary character of different sources, and the changing nature of sourcing throughout a conflict. It considers the various means by which small arms find their way to conflict areas: domestic production (government-authorized or illicit); theft, leakage, sale, and other outflows of weaponry from existing (mostly state) stockpiles; and transfers from abroad (large- and small-scale legal trade, illicit ant trade, or large-scale trafficking). Through its six case studies—and acknowledging the difficult nature of accessing accurate information in this field—this chapter makes a step towards painting a general picture of weapons sourcing to conflict zones.[6]

From insurgent production to international state support: Colombia and Haiti

At the start of 2005, the Colombian armed conflict and the troubles in Haiti were probably the most serious cases of discord in the Western Hemisphere. Patterns of weapons sourcing in the two cases have been rather distinct, not least because of the varying degree of organization of the warring factions, and important differences in resources. In Colombia, domestic production of small arms (both state-controlled and illicit production), state stockpiles, international authorized trade, and international illicit deals (small-scale and the 'classic' larger transactions involving brokers and forged documentation) have played a part in arming combatants. This case exemplifies how weapon sources can be diversified as a conflict wears on, and as fighters become wealthier. In contrast, small arms sources in Haiti have been less varied. The weapons held by the Haitian government, as well as by the different armed groups active in the country, have consisted mostly of bladed weapons and small arms, many of which have reportedly come from the abolished Haitian Army (IISS, 2004). Despite these differences, however, some similarities exist. One is the role of the ant trade; a second is the part inadvertently played by the United States, which has become a source country of illicit guns shipped by members of the Colombian and Haitian diasporas, among others.

Colombia

This section focuses specifically on the main reported sources of small arms in the 1999–2003 period of the Colombian conflict. Colombia has been plagued by internal conflict for many decades. Since the war began, parties' motivations have shifted, and since the 1980s, the drug trade has helped fuel the conflict. The conflict involves state forces, two guerrilla organizations—the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia, FARC) and the National Liberation Army (Ejército de Liberación Nacional, ELN)—as well as various paramilitary groups, organized under the umbrella of the United Self-Defence Forces of Colombia (Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia, AUC).

Domestic production has been one important source of small arms in this conflict. Government-authorized small arms production is concentrated in the factories of the state-owned Industria Militar (INDUMIL), which are run by the Ministry of Defence. The company supplies weapons to the Colombian military and police. Between 1994 and 2003, INDUMIL produced approximately 37,500 Galil assault rifles under licence from Israel.[7] It also manufactures a large variety of revolvers, grenades, and small arms ammunition.[8] The Colombian leadership plans to make the country self-sufficient in small arms and ammunition (Dreyfus and Lessing, 2003). In 2002, INDUMIL announced that it was to double its annual production of Galil rifles and associated ammunition (Bourne, 2004, p. 235).

Between 1999 and 2003, however, Colombia still imported a wide range of small arms. As the only legal importer of small arms, INDUMIL receives all imports. The company then sells some of the imported guns (mainly hunting rifles, pistols, revolvers, and shotguns) to civilians. INDUMIL officials claim that because of strict control and registration mechanisms, the bulk of legal civilian trade consists of sales to private security companies (Dreyfus and Lessing, 2003).[9] Thus, it seems that authorized imports of small arms most often end up in the Colombian security sector writ large.

Colombia's largest reported small arms suppliers in 1999–2003 were (in order of significance): the United States (chiefly military weapons, including large quantities of machine guns, ammunition, and parts and accessories for military weapons);[10] Israel (primarily military weapons and their parts and accessories);[11] Brazil (principally ammunition);[12] South Africa (mostly military weapons);[13] the Czech Republic (predominantly pistols);[14] and Italy (mainly pistols).[15] The United States reportedly accounted for approximately one-half of all Colombian small arms imports;[16] it exported a large amount of small arms under the framework of the International Narcotics Control Program (Plan Colombia). US small arms exports to Colombia are thus part of a much larger programme of military assistance and training offered by the United States as part of its 'war on drugs'.[17]

While the Colombian government obtains its small arms from domestic production and government-authorized imports, the insurgent groups and paramilitaries have relied on other sources. In most cases, the sources of small arms available to the AUC and its opponents are similar, but there are some differences. The AUC has unofficially received weapons from army units in Colombia, which has not been the case for the FARC and the ELN (Kurth Cronin, 2004, p. 107). Colombian military and police stockpiles have nevertheless been a key source of small arms for the FARC and the ELN. They have either captured weapons in assaults and skirmishes or purchased them from corrupt officers (Jaramillo, 1999, p. 205). The local black market has been a second source (Jaramillo, 1999, p. 205). In addition, some small arms have reportedly been extracted directly from INDUMIL factories, procured from workers, or through theft from storage facilities (Cragin and Hoffman, 2003, p. 45).

The FARC's illicit small arms production is unique in terms of its scale and the sophistication of the products and manufacturing methods.

In the past decade, insurgent and paramilitary sourcing has changed quite radically, in particular for the FARC. First, as a result of its involvement in the drug economy, the FARC has been able to create a comparatively large-scale, illicit small arms industry, producing sub-machine guns and light weapons such as mortars and hand and mortar grenades (Dreyfus and Lessing, 2003). The group's production differs from much of the illicit, or so-called craft, production conducted elsewhere in the world due to its large volume as well as the sophistication of its products and the manufacturing methods. The FARC reportedly uses front companies to buy machinery and raw materials on the national and international markets; the group copies weapon and ammunition models from hardware designs produced by INDUMIL or foreign companies.[18] Neither the AUC nor the ELN has comparable production capabilities.

Second, with the end of the cold war, large amounts of small arms became available on the wider Latin American illicit markets; in the 1980s, the Soviet Union and the United States had shipped some of these weapons—many of which originated in the former Soviet bloc—to El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua (bound for governments or insurgents).[19] A study published by the RAND Corporation in 2003 asserts that 'thousands, or even tens of thousands, of weapons' shipped by the United States to Central America at various times 'likely remain in caches throughout [the region]' (Cragin and Hoffman, 2003, p. 12). A much-publicized case of a transfer involving cold war-era weapons was the November 2001 shipment of 3,000 Nicaraguan-sourced AK-47s and five million rounds of ammunition to the AUC using forged documentation from Panama (OAS, 2003). Approximately one-third of all small arms trafficked into Colombia between 1998 and mid-2001 was reportedly sourced in El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, and, to a lesser degree, Costa Rica (Cragin and Hoffman, 2003, p. 21). Not all of this trafficking was in cold war weaponry, however: newer small arms originated in the Caribbean, Mexico, and the United States (Cragin and Hoffman, 2003, p. 23).

The FARC's burgeoning amounts of cash (stemming from its increasing involvement in the drug trade) permitted it to purchase more small arms abroad, from Central America and a number of other sources.[20] The AUC has a relatively long history of buying small arms on the international illicit market. The group's money is obtained through its participation in the drug economy as well as from 'protection' services supplied to large landowners to end kidnappings by the FARC and the ELN (Cragin and Hoffman, 2003, p. 7).

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A police director inspects a box of mortars seized from paramilitary groups in northern Colombia in July 2000. The arsenal comprised automatic guns, mortars, machine guns, and almost 100 grenades.

Besides Central America, the insurgents and paramilitaries have reportedly enjoyed access to other sources of illicit small arms. Several US indictments of traffickers, often of Colombian origin, provide an initial indication of illicit trafficking links between Colombia and the United States (AP, 2004a; 2004c; Seper, 2004; Grech, 2000). Oftentimes, such trafficking allegedly involves transiting through Central American countries (Colombia, Policía Nacional, 2001). All three of Colombia's main armed groups have been engaged in trafficking from the United States (Jaramillo, 1999, p. 207). The AUC, for instance, has reportedly used intermediaries to purchase weapons in US states with liberal gun regulations and export them illegally (Jaramillo, 1999, p. 207).

Illicit small arms have also come from Brazil, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, Venezuela, and other South American countries (AI, 2003, pp. 25–27; Cragin and Hoffman, 2003, pp. 28—32; Bourne, 2004, p. 165). Colombian intelligence sources reveal that FARC forces operating in the south of the country during the 1990s frequently purchased Brazilian-made ammunition and pistols in Paraguay: the weapons were then transported on illegal flights from the Triple Border Area between Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay. Such trafficking has declined of late because of the stricter import and sale controls implemented by Paraguay in 2000 and 2002.[21]

It is sometimes difficult to determine whether a shipment is trafficked without state involvement or actually sponsored by the state. In particular, it is unclear whether alleged Venezuelan transfers to the FARC were state-sponsored or whether they were facilitated by lax stockpile management and security within the Venezuelan Armed Forces.[22] A 2004 study by the International Crisis Group reports that elements of the Ecuadorian military have allegedly been involved in arms trafficking to Colombia, especially to the FARC (ICG, 2004, p. 13).

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Over time, a number of large transfers of illicit small arms destined for the FARC, the ELN, or the AUC have come to light. The above-mentioned Nicaragua–Panama–AUC shipment is one; another is the 1999 shipment of 10,000 AK-47s to the FARC, implicating former Peruvian President Alberto Fujimori and the head of the Peruvian intelligence service, Vladimiro Montesinos.[23] At least from 1998 to 2001, however, the bulk of the trafficking apparently consisted of 'ant trade' transactions, with small arms constantly trickling into Colombia by land, sea, and air via hundreds of routes. This approach 'preclude[s] the need for forged end-user certificates, sophisticated cover-ups, or any other methods typically used by state-sponsored traffickers or criminal syndicates' (Cragin and Hoffman, 2003, p. xviii). Air trafficking, for example, has relied mainly on small single-engine charter planes carrying not more than a few hundred assault rifles without ammunition (Cragin and Hoffman, 2003, p. 38).

The Colombian example demonstrates how diverse the sources of small arms to a conflict zone can be. They include domestic production, leakages from stockpiles (including those of factories), and most of the various forms of legal and illicit trade. In the Haitian case, the circumstances are rather different.

Haiti

The past few years have seen Haiti teetering between civil unrest and full-fledged civil war. In February 2004, street battles broke out between the groups supporting President Jean-Bertrand Aristide on the one side, and those opposing him on the other. Aristide's forced resignation and expatriation soon followed.

Haiti's numerous armed groups procured some of their guns directly from the Haitian Army (Forces Armées d'Haïti, or FADH), which unlawfully overthrew Aristide in 1991 following his victory in the country's first-ever democratic elections. Soon after a US-led multinational force restored him to power in 1994, Aristide abolished the FADH. Yet before disbanding, the

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Supporters of exiled leader Jean-Bertrand Aristide brandish guns during a protest in Port-au-Prince in March 2004.

FADH distributed an assortment of weapons to supporting militias, and many soldiers and police officers deserted, allegedly taking at least their handguns with them (Arthur, 2002, pp. 1, 3).

The informal militias were not systematically disarmed although the UN-sponsored multinational force deployed on Haitian soil between 1994 and 1997 had a disarmament mandate (Stotzky, 1997, p. 160). The force seized heavy weapons from the FADH and confiscated small arms found in caches or carried in public, but militia members could keep their guns if they did not display them openly (Bailey et al., 1998, p. 229). During a gun buy-back scheme, which ran from September 1994 to March 1995, the United States purchased 3,389 weapons[24]; official US information sources reported that many of these were old and unserviceable (US GAO, 2000, pp. 21–22). The gun buy-back initiative allegedly only helped people to rearm with better guns, as they were provided with the necessary funds (Stohl, 2004); US commanders labelled it a 'dismal failure' (US GAO, 2000, p. 22).

The failed attempt to disarm the militias in the mid-1990s was widely criticized. It raised concerns among Haitians and international observers with the UN and the Organization of American States (OAS) that anti-democratic forces could use the weaponry they had been able to keep to overthrow the elected government once again (Stotzky, 1997, p. 160; Stohl, 2004).

Despite the efforts of the US authorities to stem the trade, a steady trickle of illicit small arms has flowed from the United States to Haiti.

In 1991 the United States placed an embargo on the export of defence articles and defence services to Haiti.[25] Despite US authorities' efforts to stem the remaining trade, a steady trickle of illicit small arms has flowed from the United States to its southern neighbour (CCI, 2004, p. 3). Florida—with its relatively liberal gun laws[26]—is reportedly the source of many of the guns that are smuggled into Haiti from the United States (Stohl, 2004; Bergman and Granados, 2004). From 2001 to 2003, 25 per cent of the gun-smuggling cases handled by the Miami office of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) involved firearms bound for Haiti, making the island the top destination for guns illegally exported from south Florida. To a lesser extent, guns are also smuggled from other parts of the United States. Members of the Haitian diaspora were allegedly at the centre of a significant number of gun-smuggling cases (Bergman and de Granados, 2004).

ATF agents have reported that the flow of smuggled small arms to Haiti has been constant, but that there have been peaks during periods of political unrest. The profits derived from smuggling guns from one of the richest countries in the world to one of the poorest have allegedly been high, although reports of black-market prices are notoriously difficult to verify. Smuggling has been organized, but on a small scale. Once 'straw purchasers' (front buyers) procure small arms from individual gun dealers in the United States, other individuals transport them to Haiti. The weapons may be hidden inside electronic equipment or other kinds of innocuous merchandise (Bergman and de Granados, 2004).

The Dominican Republic shares a notoriously porous land border with Haiti. One report states that '[e]vidence does point to a flow of weapons to Haitian rebels from the Dominican Republic in the lead-up to the [2004] unrest'.[27] No detailed information is currently available, however, on the scale and modalities of the alleged trafficking between the Dominican Republic and Haiti. During the crisis, insurgents also allegedly received small arms made in the former Eastern bloc (AK-47 assault rifles and PKM machine guns) and sourced in Central and South America (CCI, 2004, p. 3). Again, few details are available on this alleged trafficking.

One of the very few reported authorized international arms transfers involved South Africa. The government reportedly approved the arms licence without delay, anticipating that the 5,000 pieces of ammunition, 200 smoke grenades, and 200 bullet-proof vests would fortify Aristide's police units during the 2004 crisis. Yet the consignment did not reach Haiti's shores in time to assist the embattled president. Rather, it was returned to South Africa after a stopover in Jamaica (BBC Worldwide Monitoring, 2004; *Business Day*, 2004).

The brief case studies of Colombia and Haiti show that the ant trade can be important in the illicit flow of guns into zones of conflict. They also reveal that the principal regional power, the United States, has at times played a significant role in providing authorized small arms; moreover, it has been an inadvertent source of illicit shipments organized by members of the respective diasporas and others. Finally, leakage from military stockpiles has been a problem in both countries. In other respects, the two nations are very different, with Colombian production having no equivalent in Haiti, and legal and illicit trade in small arms being incomparably larger and more sophisticated in Colombia.

International shipments versus internal stockpiles: Mali and Liberia

The Malian and Liberian conflicts are dissimilar in terms of scale, duration, and intensity. Weapons procurement patterns also differ significantly. In Liberia, important international shipments of small arms to both government and insurgent forces appear to have been motivated by the prospect of political and financial gain. In contrast, pre-existing stocks of small arms were of paramount importance in Mali and sourcing was not influenced by the development of arms markets in the former Soviet Union and Central and Eastern Europe from the early 1990s onwards. The opposite was true of Liberia. Liberian arms sourcing patterns are often perceived as typical of the West African region.[28] The Malian case reveals, however, that the picture is not uniform.

Mali[29]

In simple terms, the Tuareg–Arab insurgency in northern Mali (1990–96) stemmed from long-standing separatist aims among the nomadic Tuareg and Arabs. These aspirations were fuelled by the government's marginalization of northern Mali and the repression of its people. Initially one single movement, the insurgents quickly split into several groups based on tribal and clan affiliations. Primarily, these were:

- the Popular Movement of Azawad (Mouvement Populaire de Libération de l'Azawad, MPLA),
- the Popular Front for the Liberation of Azawad (Front Populaire de Libération de l'Azawad, FPLA),
- the Revolutionary Alliance for the Liberation of Azawad (Armée Révolutionnaire de Libération de l'Azawad, ARLA), and
- the Arabic Islamic Front of Azawad (Front Islamique Arabe de l'Azawad, FIAA). All of these acted under the loose umbrella of the Movement of Azawad United Fronts (Mouvements et Fronts Unis de l'Azawad, MFUA).[30]
- Aside from the Malian Army, the main group fighting this coalition was the Ganda Koy Patriotic Movement (Mouvement Patriotique de Ganda Koy, MPGK), a militia composed of sedentary peoples.

At the outset of the insurgency, Malian armed groups relied almost exclusively on weapons captured in combat or looted from state armouries.

Despite the weapons losses suffered by the Malian Army in the course of the conflict, there are no reports confirming Mali's acquisition of new small arms during this period (Heyman, 2000, pp. 461–62). While such procurement cannot be ruled out, it appears that the Malian military relied to a great extent on arms the country acquired from the Soviet Union and states of the Warsaw Treaty Organization in the 1970s and 1980s (Heyman, 2000, p. 460); the army also seems to have used stocks remaining from the French colonial era.

At the outset of the insurgency, Malian groups had few arms. The MPLA is even said to have launched the insurgency with a single AK-47 (Humphreys and ag Mohamed, 2003, p. 3). Many of the attacks on the government during the first six months of the conflict were aimed specifically at seizing weapons and ammunition, as well as petrol, cars, and food (Lecocq, 2002, p. 232). In the first assault on a government post in Tideremen on 28 June 1990, MPLA fighters seized a dozen assault rifles; in a subsequent attack in Ménaka, they managed to procure around 500 weapons, including 124 assault rifles (Humphreys and ag Mohamed, 2003, p. 3). The rebels' arsenal was thus largely built out of existing army stocks. The MPGK also relied to a great extent on army stockpiles, as a number of its fighters were former Malian soldiers, including deserters who took their weapons with them (Poulton and ag Youssouf, 1998, p. 71; Keita, 1998, p. 20; Baqué, 1995). Some soldiers also sold their guns to MPGK combatants during the rebellion.

Table 6.1 lists various old models of small arms (including remnants of the colonial period) in the hands of Malian insurgent groups and the MPGK. That their arsenals comprised Chinese and Soviet armaments supports the assumption that many of these weapons were seized from the Malian Army.[31] Since these models could be easily obtained in the wider West African sub-region, some may have been smuggled into Mali from neighbouring countries.

Table 6.1 highlights the overall scarcity of modern small arms, and also illustrates how long small arms can remain in circulation. German Second World War-era guns, for instance, were being used 50 years after they were manufactured. During the fighting, light weapons, and especially light weapon ammunition, were particularly scarce.[32]

Table 6.1 Reported small arms and light weapons used by Malian armed groups during the rebellion (1990–96), sourced mainly from Malian state stockpiles

Small arms (country of manufacture, years of production or service)	
Revolvers	Arminius Model 10 (Germany, 1895-1945), Astra 357 Police (Spain, 1980-), Manurhin MR73 (France, 1973-), Nagant: Russian Model 1895 (Belgium and Russia/USSR, 1895-1950)
Pistols	Astra A-50 (Spain, 1960-), Beretta Model 1931 (Italy, 1931-45), Beretta Model 1934 (Italy, 1934-45), Beretta M 951 (Italy, 1953-82), Browning 1903 (Belgium, 1903-), Browning 1910 (Belgium, 1910-), Browning High Power Model 1935 (Belgium, 1935-), MAB PA-15 (France, 1975-90), Makarov (USSR/Russian Federation, 1952-), Sauer M38H (Germany, 1938-45), Stechkin (USSR, 1951-75), Tokarev (USSR/Russian Federation, 1930-)
Rifles and carbines	Mannlicher-Carcano TS (Italy, 1891-1918), MAS M1e 1936 (France, 1936-55), Mauser Karabiner 98k (Germany, 1935-45), Mosin-Nagant rifle (Russia/USSR, 1892-1950)
Assault rifles	Chinese-type 68 rifle (China, 1970-), FN Cal (Belgium, 1966-75), FN FNC (Belgium, 1979-), FN Minimi (Belgium, 1982-), Heckler & Koch G3 (Germany, 1964-), Kalashnikov AK-47 (Romania and USSR/Russian Federation, 1947-) and Type 56 (China, 1958-), Simonov SKS (USSR/Russian Federation, 1946-)
Light machine guns	12.7 mm Gepard M2 (Hungary, 1994-), PK (USSR/Russian Federation, 1964-), RPK (USSR/Russian Federation, 1955-), 7.62 mm RPD (USSR/Russian Federation, 1962-)
Light weapons (country of manufacture, years of production or service)	
Heavy machine guns	DShK (USSR, 1938-80), Type 77 (China, 1980-)
Portable anti-tank guns*	RPG-7
Mortars*	60 mm and 81/82 mm

* Note: For portable anti-tank guns and mortars, ex-combatants did not provide data to help determine the country of manufacture or years of production or service. This lack of information reflects the scarcity and relative unimportance of these weapon types during the rebellion, to which the ex-combatants attested during focus group discussions.

Source: Small Arms Survey focus group discussions with former unit commanders of the MPGK and the MFUA, Bamako, 2–3 September 2004; country and dates of production and service from Hogg (2002)

Reports have indicated that illicit workshops in Mali produce 'craft' hunting rifles, shotguns, and pistols;[33] nevertheless, Malian armed groups appear to have relied solely on industrially produced weapons.

International sourcing of small arms to Malian armed groups was limited to the diaspora in neighbouring countries and to some smaller-scale cross-border purchases. Malian armed groups, by and large, did not receive material military support from foreign governments. While some Tuareg fighters had received training and weapons from Libya in the 1980s, such backing had ceased by the time of the rebellion (Keita, 2002, p. 9; Lecocq, 2004, pp. 312–13).

The significance of diaspora support is difficult to assess, but it is likely to have been only of secondary importance when compared to seizures and purchases from the army. The Songhoy diaspora in Ghana and Nigeria reportedly provided arms and money to the MPGK (Keita, 1998, p. 20). Members of the diaspora apparently paid individual 'transporters' to carry and deliver weapons to the MPGK in Gao.

As for purchases made abroad, Tuareg and Arab groups dispatched special expeditions to buy small arms on the illicit market in Mauritania. The arms were transported using caravans of camels and donkeys or, when available, 4x4 vehicles. These trafficking networks were relatively insignificant and limited to traditional smuggling routes in the early stages of the rebellion. Over the years, they were expanded to other countries in the region (including states in the Mano River Union basin); some remain active today and contribute to continued small arms proliferation in the north of the country. While Chadian, Mauritanian, and Nigerian black markets were the main source of illegal weapons for Malian armed groups in the early 1990s, the illicit arms supply had become more diverse by 1996, with weapons seemingly originating in several of West Africa's conflict hot spots.

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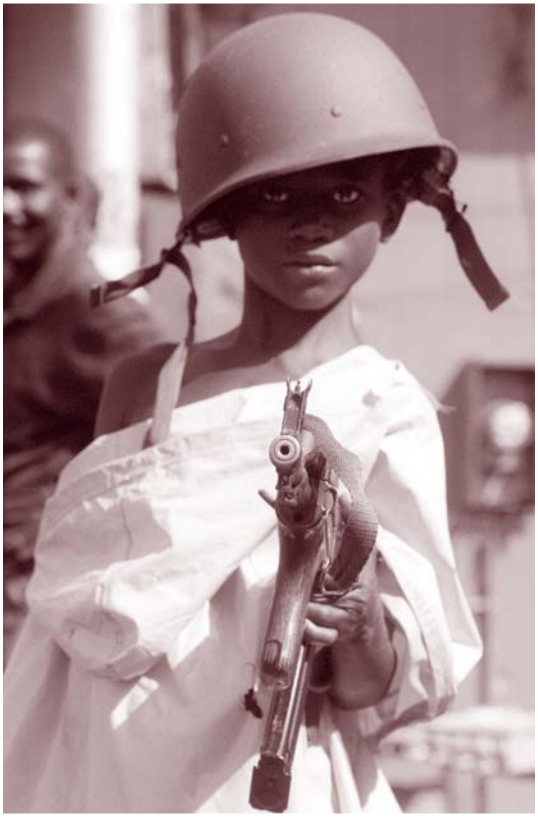
Liberia

Liberia has witnessed internal war for much of the past decade; this section focuses on the most recent outbreak of fighting in 2000–03. In 2000, three years after the country's devastating eight-year civil war had come to an end, Liberia again found itself embroiled in armed conflict. President Charles Taylor, erstwhile leader of the National Patriotic Front for Liberia, or NPFL, faced challenges from two new rebel groups: the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) and the Movement for Democracy in Liberia (MODEL). The Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) and various paramilitary and militia groups fared poorly against the rebels and, by June 2003, the capital, Monrovia, was under siege. In August 2003, Taylor handed over power to Vice-President Moses Blah and went into exile in Nigeria. Within days, peace negotiations took place in Accra, Ghana, and warring parties signed the Comprehensive Peace Agreement.

During the conflict, both rebels and government forces relied extensively on light weapons. Combat would quite systematically begin with a bombardment involving rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs), followed by small arms fire (Brabazon, 2003, p. 9). AFL and pro-government groups mainly used light and medium machine guns, Chinese-made AK-47s, and RPGs (Global Witness, 2003, p. 24). The two insurgent groups possessed a wide variety of small arms and light weapons, from AK-47 assault rifles and M-16 rifles to DSHK 12.7 mm heavy machine guns and SA-7 surface-to-air missiles.[34]



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A 13-year-old boy flaunts his machine-gun and helmet in Monrovia, Liberia.

The insurgents seized a number of small arms from Liberian government forces, including FN FAL rifles, AKM assault rifles, and RPO-type grenade launchers (Brabazon, 2003, p. 9). The group also possessed at least nine SA-7 surface-to-air missiles, which it claimed to have captured from a government-backed armed group (Brabazon, 2003, p. 9).

In Liberia, a significant proportion of the warring parties' very diverse arsenal—particularly ammunition—was obtained from foreign sources.

Yet evidence points to a strong reliance on foreign sources. Investigative reports suggest that a significant proportion of the warring parties' very diverse arsenal—particularly ammunition—was obtained from foreign sources, regional and international. These transfers took place despite the UN Security Council arms embargo that covered the country's entire territory—and hence all parties to the conflict (UNSC, 1992; 2001b).

As illustrated in Table 6.2, investigative reports allege that the Liberian government benefited from several large international small arms shipments in 2000–03. Most likely, these transfers only represent the tip of the iceberg. Brokers based as far away as Hong Kong and mainland China reportedly facilitated the transfer of Chinese-made weapons to Liberia's largest logging company, the Oriental Timber Company, which was under President Taylor's control (Global Witness, 2003, p. 19). Regionally, Burkina Faso and Libya have served as transshipment points for arms exported to the Liberian government (Global Witness, 2003, p. 22; UNSC, 2000, paras. 203–04; 2003b, paras. 95–97).

Table 6.2 Selected reported small arms transfers to the Liberian government, 2000-03

Date	Content	Origin, transit, and broker	Source
July 2000	113 tons of 7.62 mm cartridges	Origin: Ukraine Transit: Côte d'Ivoire	*Financial Times*, 2002; Lallemand, 2002, p. 3; BBC News, 2001b
1 June 2002	1,000 automatic rifles (7.62 x 39 mm), 498,960 cartridges (7.62 x 39 mm M67), 2,000 hand grenades (M75)*	Origin: Serbia, transferred using a false Nigerian end-user certificate Broker: Belgrade-based company	UNSC, 2003a, paras. 69-70, Table 1
7 June 2002	1,000 automatic rifles (7.62 x 39 mm, M67), 1,260,000 cartridges (7.62 x 39 mm, M67), 2,496 hand grenades (M75)*	Additional shipment, part of 1 June 2002 deal	UNSC, 2003a, paras. 69-70, Table 1
29 June 2002	1,500 automatic rifles (7.62 x 39 mm), 2,165,500 cartridges (7.62 x 39 mm)*	Additional shipment, part of the 1 June 2002 deal	UNSC, 2003a, paras. 69-70, Table 1
5 July 2002	180,000 rounds of ammunition (7.62 mm for M84), 15,200 rounds of ammunition (9 mm NATO), 75,000 rounds of ammunition (7.62 mm), 100 missile launchers (RB M57), 60 automatic pistols (M84, 7.65 mm), 20 pistols (CZ99, 9 mm), 10 Black Arrow long-range rifles (M93, 12.7 mm), 5 machine guns (M84, 7.62 mm)*	Additional shipment, part of the 1 June 2002 deal	UNSC, 2003a, paras. 69-70, Table 1; AFP, 2002
23 August 2002	100 missile launchers (RB M57), 2,000 mines for RB M57, 75 machine guns (M84, 7.62 mm), 2,800 automatic rifles (7.62 x 54 mm), 27 pistols (CZ99, 9 mm), 92,400 rounds of ammunition (7.62 x 54 mm), 526,000 rounds of ammunition (7.62 x 39 mm), 19,000 rounds of ammunition (9 mm), 6,000 rounds of ammunition (7.65 mm), 9 hunting rifles*	Additional shipment, part of the 1 June 2002 deal	UNSC, 2003a, paras. 69-70, Table 1
25 August 2002	152 missile launchers, 1,000 mines for RB M57, 5,200 rounds of ammunition for the Black Arrow long-range rifle (M93, 12.7 mm), 183,600 rounds of ammunition, (7.62 x 54 mm), 999,180 rounds of ammunition (7.62 x 39 mm), 2 sets of rubber pipelines, 3 propellers, 1 rotor head, 17 pistol holders*	Additional shipment, part of 1 June 2002 deal	UNSC, 2003a, paras. 69-70, Table 1
6-7 August 2003	Between 20 and 40 tonnes of small arms and ammunition	Origin: Serbia Transit: Libya Broker: Belgrade-based company	UNSC, 2003b, paras. 95-97
November 2003	60 mm mortars, 149 boxes of mortar ammunition, 67 boxes of RPGs, 299 boxes of AK-47 assault rifles, 699,000 rounds of ammunition	n/a	Arms Control Association, 2003, p. 3

*Note: Based on a list provided by the Government of Liberia (UNSC, 2003a; paras. 69–70, Table 1).

Source: Kytömäki (2004)

Information on the small arms sources of the insurgents is more difficult to acquire. Nevertheless, LURD and MODEL appear to have received substantial quantities of small arms from some of the regional powers that opposed President Taylor's regime. The Guinean Armed Forces purportedly provided LURD with weapons, ammunition, and logistical and medical support.[35] Some of the 81 mm mortar rounds that LURD combatants used in the June–July 2003 attacks on Monrovia were reportedly shipped from Iran to Guinea and then smuggled to LURD (HRW, 2003a, pp. 18–25). LURD has also allegedly used mortar ammunition made in the United Arab Emirates, which is likely to have somehow 'leaked' from Guinean stockpiles (HRW, 2003a, pp. 18, 25). Weapons were apparently transported in trucks or carried across the border by forcibly recruited civilians (HRW, 2002b, p. 10).

MODEL, meanwhile, reportedly received small arms and uniforms from Côte d'Ivoire (ICG, 2003c, pp. 10–11). This should not come as a surprise, since a number of MODEL combatants were former members of Lima, a group of Liberian mercenaries who fought alongside Ivorian government troops against Côte d'Ivoire's rebel groups.[36]

The comparison between the disparate conflicts in Liberia and Mali shows how the level of reliance on foreign weapon sources can vary vastly within a sub-region. For Malian armed groups, which lacked financial and natural resources and foreign backing, seizures from state stockpiles were the key source of small arms. The Malian state relied mainly on stocks accumulated before the rebellion. For the Liberian insurgents, state stockpiles were of secondary importance. Because of the considerable diamond and timber resources in their possession, as well as foreign political and military backing, Liberian insurgents were in a position to organize and purchase important consignments of small arms from abroad. The same was true for the Liberian government.

The comparison between Liberia and Mali shows how the level of reliance on foreign weapon sources can vary vastly within a sub-region.

The comparison also reveals that time can be a significant factor in weapons procurement. As a conflict continues, insurgents are often increasingly able to diversify their sources away from mere stockpile seizures. President Taylor's forces and the rebels had already fought for seven years when conflict erupted again in 2000, and hence they could rely on pre-established trafficking networks. This was not the case for Malian groups, which had to start from scratch. As the Malian rebellion wore on, however, insurgent and militia groups also developed increasingly sophisticated trafficking methods, although through different channels and not on the same scale as in Liberia.

The importance of military stockpiles: Tajikistan and Georgia

The Tajik and Georgian civil wars both erupted after the break-up of the Soviet Union. Small arms were important in both conflicts, although government forces in the two countries had access to larger weapons as well. Small arms acquisition patterns in the two cases have some strong similarities. For example, former Soviet stockpiles of small arms were of paramount importance in both conflicts, while domestic production was of little significance. A noteworthy difference is that international supplies played a much greater part in Tajikistan than in Georgia.

Tajikistan[37]

On gaining independence from the Soviet Union in 1991, Tajikistan quickly descended into civil war as a result of regional and political rivalries. The war lasted from 1992 to 1997, with the most intense fighting in 1992–93. The main groups engaged in combat were the Popular Front (Tajik government forces) and the United Tajik Opposition. The war, although relatively short, was ferocious, leading to 60,000–100,000 deaths, 80,000 refugees, and 600,000 IDPs (ICG, 2001, p. i).

In Tajikistan, both external and internal sources of small arms were significant. While the government and the opposition essentially utilized the same internal suppliers (although to differing degrees), external suppliers were more varied.

Fighters in Tajikistan got their small arms from two internal sources: former Soviet military forces based in the country (more often than not siding with Tajik government troops) and local law enforcement units. These two sources were particularly important at the early stages of the conflict (Pirseyedi, 2000, pp. 46–47).

At independence, two branches of the Soviet Armed Forces were represented in the Tajik Soviet Socialist Republic. The first branch comprised five regiments of the 201st Motor Rifle Division (MRD). The second branch consisted of the Soviet border forces serving in Tajikistan—some 8,000 personnel in total—in four commands along the Tajik–Afghan border. The 201st MRD regiments, except the one based in the area of Kulyab, were reportedly sources of supply for both government and opposition factions during the war, with individual officers informally selling small arms or engaging in barter (Pirseyedi, 2000, p. 47).[38] Government fighters and, to a greater extent, opposition forces also stole weapons from the Russian Armed Forces (Pirseyedi, 2000, p. 47). Given that the five regiments possessed more than 15,000 assault rifles, machine guns, and other types of small arms, it is possible that both sides procured (through leakage) as many as several thousand small arms from the 201st MRD.

In contrast, there are few accounts of ex-Soviet border forces selling guns on a large scale, possibly because they were occasionally attacked by the warring parties and thus needed the weapons to defend themselves. An exception seems to have been the border force detachments in the area of Kalaikum, which interviewees and focus group participants frequently identified as a key source of firearms. These detachments were stationed near the Vayho Valley, which later became the opposition's headquarters. Supplies were most probably limited to a few hundred guns.

A Tajik soldier holds his gun and bandolier in December 1992.

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Both the Tajik government and the opposition forces acquired weapons from Soviet military units and local law enforcement structures, but they had different external suppliers.

Local law enforcement structures served as further internal sources of guns. These included the Civil Defence, the state security agency (KGB), the Ministry of the Interior (known as the MVD), and the Presidential Guard—comprising about 20,000–30,000 officers in all. At the outset, mainly government forces used their stockpiles. As tensions intensified, the law enforcement structures split, and some officers opted to side with the opposition, bringing with them weapons at their disposal.[39] Opposition forces also reportedly raided some KGB and MVD stations in Dushanbe and Khatlon.[40]

In addition, high schools and universities were in possession of about 1,800 guns for *voennaya podgotovka* (compulsory military training).[41] The *voennkomat* (military draft commission), with offices across Tajikistan, also had some limited stocks. Both sides were quick to seize weapons from these sources.

While both the Tajik government and opposition forces were able to acquire weapons from Soviet military units and from local law enforcement structures, they had different external suppliers. Uzbekistan sided with the government, and its support 'included significant numbers of small arms and ammunition' (Pirseyedi, 2000, p. 53).

Uzbekistan also encouraged the Afghan warlord Rashid Dostum, an ethnic Uzbek, to help in providing arms (Pirseyedi, 2000, p. 54). In rare cases, government commanders travelled to Afghanistan to purchase weapons.[42]

For the Tajik opposition, Afghanistan represented the main external source of small arms. During the war, thousands of members of the Tajik opposition were based in the country. Along with other fighters, they bought, or swapped weapons within Afghanistan.[43] The money for the weapons apparently came from Pakistan as well as sources in Middle Eastern countries such as Saudi Arabia (Pirseyedi, 2000, p. 54).[44] Another important source of funds was drug trafficking. In 1995, opposition commander Alesha Gorbun reportedly defended the activity, noting that revenue from drug sales was used to buy food, and that 'we … need money for buying weapons in order to defend ourselves' (*Literaturnaya Gazeta,* 1995, p. 12). External sourcing of small arms, it seems, involved a mixture of large and small shipments.

Georgia[45]

In contrast to Tajikistan, government armed units and insurgent groups depended more exclusively on internally sourced small arms in the three intertwined conflicts that shook Georgia between 1989 and 1993: the South Ossetian conflict, the Abkhaz conflict, and the Georgian civil war. As the Small Arms Survey has already published extensively on Georgia, only a short summary regarding weapons sourcing during the conflict is provided here.

The bulk of weapons in the hands of all of the warring parties in Georgia came from internal holdings, mainly from the substantial ex-Soviet military presence on Georgian territory. In the early phases of the conflict (between 1989 and 1991), however, few small arms and light weapons were leaked from Soviet military stockpiles. Instead, the main sources were non-military in nature, namely police and postal guards, the so-called Voluntary Society of Supporters for the Air Force and Navy (which normally provided military training to civilians), and communist youth organizations. Quantities were small: tens, rather than hundreds or thousands, of guns. Another significant source during this period was personal holdings such as Second World War Mosin rifles.

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Armed men aim into a square in Tbilisi, Georgia, in December 1991.

In 1991–93, in contrast, weapons from Soviet stockpiles became widely available, due to the political, economic, and social consequences of the collapse of the Soviet Union. Armed groups seized some weapons, but many were sold, and thousands of Soviet small arms were handed out for free by disintegrating Russian military structures. As a result, an estimated 40,000 small arms and light weapons rapidly found their way into the hands of the various militias.

During the conflict period, there were only two widely reported cases of external procurement: a shipment from Romania of around 1,000 AK-47 assault rifles; and smaller consignments of assault rifles and pistols from the Czech Republic (Darchiashvili, 2003, p. 93).

During the Georgian conflict period, there were only two reported—and relatively small—shipments of small arms from abroad.

This brief comparison reveals that former Soviet stockpiles were a crucial small arms source for all parties in the Georgian and Tajik conflicts. All possible types of leakage occurred: theft, seizure, sales, and handouts. In general, handouts were politically motivated. In the Tajik conflict, weapons from other states in the region were also of significance, especially for the opposition; in the Georgian civil war as a whole, this was not the case.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has examined the full range of sources of small arms in a sample of conflicts in the Americas, Africa, and Central Asia and the Caucasus. It recognizes the importance of large international transfers in weapons sourcing to many war zones; at the same time, however, it reinforces lesser-known research findings regarding the role of production, government stockpiles, and the so-called ant trade in the fuelling conflict. The chapter thereby emphasizes that the focus on large international deals needs to be put into perspective.

In developing a more comprehensive approach to conflict sourcing, the role of politics must not be overlooked. Small arms proliferation is essentially a political issue—as the politically motivated leakages from military stockpiles and state-sponsored transfers in the above case studies demonstrate. In such instances, political solutions to the conflicts themselves are key to resolving the small arms problem.

The case studies indicate that government stockpiles are an important source of weapons in many war zones, through corruption, theft, seizure, distribution, and sales. In some conflicts, they are even the main source of small arms for all combatants. As a result, decisions regarding small arms exports may take on new weight, given that the weapons of a country that is stable today may be used in a conflict a few years hence.

The Colombian, Haitian, and, to some extent, Malian and Tajik case studies show that the ant trade can be a non-negligible, although elusive, source of small arms. As pointed out in the case of Colombia, in the long run, persistent smaller shipments of small arms can be more significant in terms of volume than occasional large-scale trafficking of guns. Where the ant trade is important, policy responses become more complicated. In addition to controlling brokering, streamlining end-user certificates, and establishing arms embargoes, an effective policy also needs to tackle corruption and make the control of border regions and of the border itself more effective.

A related lesson comes from the Colombian, Haitian, and Malian case studies, which provide some preliminary indications that diasporas play a poorly understood role in gun smuggling. Analysts have stressed the overall importance of diasporas in supporting insurgencies, but more research is required to shed light on their precise role in transferring guns.[46]

This study also concludes that there are often important differences between countries within the same subregion. Liberia and Mali are both members of the Economic Community of West African States, yet their sourcing of the tools of war could hardly be more different. These findings suggest that geographical proximity does not necessarily imply that countries are tapping into similar international trafficking networks. Natural and other resources, foreign political backing, and local histories can overshadow the geographic factor. To combat the proliferation and misuse of small arms, therefore, policies must be tailored to individual states. While regional approaches are useful, their limitations must also be clearly understood.

Lastly, where conflicts become more drawn-out, insurgents are often able to diversify their sources of small arms. This development may take place alongside the growth of a supporting war economy, as noted in the cases of Colombia, Liberia, and Tajikistan. Tackling conflicts early is crucial to preventing weapons procurement patterns from becoming increasingly sophisticated and entrenched—and thus central to efforts to minimize human suffering and material loss.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AFL	Armed Forces of Liberia
ATF	Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (United States)
AUC	Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia
ELN	Ejército de Liberación Nacional
FADH	Forces Armées d'Haïti (Haitian Army)
FARC	Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia
IDPs	Internally displaced persons
INDUMIL	Industria Militar (Colombia)
LURD	Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy
MFUA	Mouvements et Fronts Unis de l'Azawad (Mali)
MODEL	Movement for Democracy in Liberia
MPGK	Mouvement Patriotique de Ganda Koy (Mali)
MPLA	Mouvement Populaire de Libération de l'Azawad (Mali)
MRD	Motorized Rifle Division
MVD	Ministry of the Interior (Russian Federation)
OAS	Organization of American States
RPGs	Rocket-propelled grenades
ZAR	South African rand

ENDNOTES

[1] This chapter uses the terms trafficking, illegal and illicit trade, and smuggling interchangeably.

[2] This chapter uses the terms 'small arms', 'small arms and light weapons', 'guns', and 'weapons' interchangeably. The system of categorization is taken to include small arms ammunition, although it should be noted that information on ammunition is scarce, and more research on this subject is needed.

[3] For a similar analysis of current literature, see Bourne (2004).

[4] See also Small Arms Survey (2002, pp. 129–30).

[5] Imposed by the European Union (EU), the UN, or the United States.

[6] In order to focus on the aspect of weapons sourcing, the chapter provides minimal details relating to the conflicts in general.

[7] For further details, see Small Arms Survey (2004, p. 23).

[8] For further details, see Dreyfus and Lessing (2003).

[9] Civilians outside the private security sector tend to rely more on unregistered than legally owned firearms. Some figures indicate that more than two-thirds of all civilian firearms are held illegally. These are bought cheaply on the domestic black market (Cragin and Hoffman, 2003, p. 18).

[10] The information on the United States is based on US customs reporting, US national arms export reports, and Colombian import reports to the UN Commodity Trade Statistics Database (UN Comtrade). Source: Norwegian Initiative on Small Arms Transfers (NISAT) database of authorized transfers of small arms and light weapons.

[11] The information on Israel is based on Colombian import reports to UN Comtrade (2004), as Israel does not provide UN Comtrade with data on its arms exports.

[12] The information on Brazil is based primarily on Brazilian export reporting to UN Comtrade (2004).

[13] The information on South Africa is based primarily on Colombian import reporting, as South Africa does not provide UN Comtrade with data on its arms exports. In its 2003 national arms export report, however, South Africa does detail exports to Colombia, amounting to a total of ZAR 53 million (USD 6 million) over a three-year period (2000–02). The South African report only specifies that the transfers were of any type of 'infantry hand-held and portable assault weapons and associated ammunition of a calibre smaller than 12.7mm' (Government of South Africa, 2003). Colombian import data and South African export figures correspond fairly well.

[14] The information on the Czech Republic is based primarily on Czech export reporting to UN Comtrade (2004).

[15] The information on Italy is based primarily on Italian export reporting to UN Comtrade. There are important discrepancies between Italian and Colombian reporting, with the Colombian authorities detailing substantial imports of parts and accessories for military weapons, which are not recorded in Italian data (UN Comtrade, 2004). Both the Colombians and the Italians registered revolvers and pistols.

[16] Based on reporting by exporters, the US share of the total small arms trade in 1999–2003 was approximately 52 per cent. Based on Colombian reports of its small arms imports, its share was close to 54 per cent (UN Comtrade, 2004).

[17] For further details, see Amnesty International (2003, pp. 19–24); Isacson et al. (2004); ICG (2002a; 2004).

[18] For more on FARC production, see Dreyfus and Lessing (2003).

[19] For a discussion of cold war weapons transfers, see Small Arms Survey (2001, Box 5.2, p. 169).

[20] As noted by AUC leader Carlos Castaño: 'While I bought a hundred or two hundred rifles in the arms market, the FARC would get one thousand or two thousand' (cited in Molina, 2001, p. 205). Translation from the Spanish: Lisa Misol, Human Rights Watch.

[21] Interviews by Pablo Dreyfus with Colombian and Brazilian law enforcement officials (July 2003, Bogota, and August 2004, Bogota, respectively).

[22] See Amnesty International (2003, p. 26); Bourne (2004, p. 166; fn. 94, p. 189); Cragin and Hoffman (2003, pp. 28–29); ICG (2004, p. 13).

[23] See AP (2004b); Forero (2004); Amnesty International (2003, p. 27); Small Arms Survey (2001, Box 5.7, p. 187); Faiola (2000).

[24] This figure is significantly lower than the oft-cited 13,000 weapons (Bailey et al., 1998, p. 229; Muggah, 2005; Stohl, 2004).

[25] For information on the US embargo and its 1994 amendment, see the Directorate of Defense Trade Controls of the US Department of States at <http://pmdtc.org/country.htm>. The UN Security Council embargo was in place from 1993–94, and the broader sanctions of the OAS from 1991–94. For a detailed account of these sanctions, see Gibbons (1999).

[26] Florida has no one-handgun-per-month limit on gun purchases or state restrictions on the sale or possession of military-style semi-automatic assault weapons. Nor does the state require licences or permits to buy a gun (Brady Campaign, 2005).

[27] Stohl (2004), see also Mlade (2004). On the porous nature of this border, see Arthur (2002, p. 7).

[28] For instance, there are important similarities between Liberia and Sierra Leone, not only with regard to small arms flows, but also smuggling networks, routes, and actors. Parties involved in the Sierra Leonean civil war benefited from numerous international shipments; see Berman (2000, pp. 3–13).

[29] Unless noted otherwise, this section is based on Small Arms Survey focus group discussions with former unit commanders of the MPGK and the MFUA, Bamako, Mali, 2–3 September 2004.

[30] Azawad is the name of the home country of the Tuareg.

[31] This claim was made during Small Arms Survey focus group discussions with former unit commanders of the MPGK and the MFUA, Bamako, 2–3 September 2004.

[32] The shortage of weapons and ammunition forced Malian armed groups to keep methodical accounts; each base had a person responsible for distributing and counting weapons. Combatants were given different weapons and amounts of ammunition depending on their type of operation. When they ran out of ammunition, armed groups set their rifles to single-shot mode and undertook specific missions to seize more from army barracks and posts. They also systematically recuperated the weapons and ammunition of those who fell during the fighting.

[33] For an overview of 'craft' production in Mali, see Nimaga (2003) and Kante (2004).

[34] Brabazon (2003, pp. 8–9); UNSC (2003a, paras. 109, 112); HRW (2003a, pp. 23–25); Global Witness (2003, pp. 24–25).

[35] See UNSC (2001, paras. 174–78; 2003a, para. 68; 2003b, para. 105); ICG (2002, p. 11); HRW (2002a, p. 10; 2003a, pp. 18–25).

[36] Confidential written correspondence with a Western diplomat based in West Africa, May 2004.

[37] Except where other secondary sources are explicitly cited, this section is based on field research undertaken in 2004 by Stina Torjesen and Neil MacFarlane for the Small Arms Survey (Torjesen, Wille, and MacFarlane, 2005, forthcoming, Annexe 4).

[38] One eyewitness claims that guns were sold off the back of trucks in the centre of Dushanbe in 1992. Interview no. 92, Dushanbe, 30 March 2004; interview no. 134, Dushanbe, 11 August 2004.

[39] Interview no. 75, Dushanbe, 24 February 2004.

[40] Interview no. 132, Dushanbe, 17 July 2004.

[41] Interview no. 90, Dushanbe, 18 March 2004.

[42] One former high-ranking law enforcement officer who fought on the government side claims that he bought 30 grenade launchers for USD 2,000 in Afghanistan in 1991. Interview no. 154, Dushanbe, 25 July 2004.

[43] There was a demand for hunting weapons in Afghanistan; one rifle could thus be swapped for two AK-47s. Interview no. 111, Dushanbe, 25 August 2004.

[44] Interview no. 84, Dushanbe, 26 March 2004.

[45] For a more detailed assessment of small arms in Georgia, see previous Small Arms Survey publications: Demetriou (2002) and Small Arms Survey (2003, ch. 6). Unless otherwise stated, this brief case study is based on these earlier publications.

[46] Diasporas are likely among the most important sponsors of insurgent movements: '[m]igrant communities have sent money, arms, and recruits back to their home countries, which have proven pivotal in sustaining insurgent campaigns' (Byman et al., 2001, p. 41).

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