

ILLICIT ARMS TRADE AND CONFLICT IN AFRICA: AN ASSESSMENT OF INTERNATIONAL ARMS CONTROL MEASURES

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Abstract

The dimensions and proportions of inter and intra-state conflicts have led to the labelling of Africa as a crisis-ridden continent; but one that cannot be ignored easily. This is because Africa plays an important role in global economy through her abundant natural resources. However, one peculiar occurrence in these richly endowed countries is conflict. Many of these conflicts have earned intractable status because of the constant flow of arms to warring parties. Regulating these conflicts may be an uphill task unless arms supplies to the warring parties are checked. This paper examines how the flow of arms into Africa can be mitigated through the concerted effort of African states and the international community's arms control measures. Data for this study were drawn from documented materials like textbooks, journal articles, magazines, newspapers, and internet while analysis was done qualitatively. Findings of the study reveal that arms control measures in Africa are not sufficient to check the menace. It is suggested that the democratic peace theory should be made to reflect internally through peace and good governance so as not to give the citizens any reason to take up arms against one another.

Key words: arms proliferation, small arms, conflict.

Introduction

The history of Africa is inundated with cases of inter and intra-state conflicts. Instances can be cited with the Hutu-Tutsi ethnic conflict in Rwanda; conflict in Sudan which resulted to the emergence of South Sudan on the 9th of July, 2011 as the newest state in Africa; Eritrea – Djibouti boundary face off among others. The centrality of arms proliferation to the

sustenance of these conflicts cannot be over-emphasized. Corroborating this assertion, the Bureau of Intelligence and Research (2001:3) declared that:

Arms transfers and trafficking remain one of sub-Saharan Africa's major security problems. Africa continues to have the greatest number of armed conflicts of any continent. In mid-2001, latent or open hostilities affected Angola, Burundi, Chad, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Eritrea-Ethiopia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Liberia, Nigeria-Cameroon, Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zimbabwe. The influx of light weapons financed by cash, diamonds, or other commodities did not cause Africa's wars but it has prolonged them and made them more lethal.

These conflicts have been so pervasive to the extent that Africa is seen as a crisis-ridden continent which cannot be over-looked. This is because Africa plays an important role in the economic history of the world through her abundant natural resource endowment. These natural resources include oil and natural gas (mostly gotten from the Gulf of Guinea); uranium, diamond, cobalt and others. African countries that are richly endowed include Nigeria, Angola, Sudan, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Democratic Republic of Congo, amongst several others. Underscoring the importance of the Gulf of Guinea States, Ezirim (2010:97) aptly noted that:

Rich in oil and gas, the Gulf has become so strategic that every part of the world is making frantic efforts to be part of the process of emerging global resource market given the volatility in the Middle East, and the withdrawal of the American, European and other western economies therefrom.

However, one peculiar occurrence in these naturally endowed countries is civil unrest or conflict.

Thus in Africa, there have been several cases of civil unrest often backed up with arms. Most of these uprisings have resulted to the death of millions in Somalia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Democratic Republic of

Congo, and Burundi amongst others. In the 1994 mass killing in Rwanda alone, about 500,000 including the President, Juvenal Habyarimana, were reportedly killed (Echezona, 1998). In Nigeria, a good number of casualties were recorded during the period the uprising in the Niger Delta was at its peak while the Boko Haram sect has been persistent in inflicting human and material casualties on the Nigerian State. Many of these conflicts can be said to have earned intractable status (Somalia for instance) because of the constant flow of arms and ammunitions to the warring parties. The Arms Survey, an organization advocating for the control of arms, claims that at least 1,134 companies in 98 countries worldwide are involved in some aspect of the production of arms and ammunition (Arms Survey Report, 2003). Regulating these conflicts may be an uphill task unless arms supplies to the warring parties are checked.

Given this scenario, Wezeman, Wezeman and Beraud-Sudreau (2011) asserted that any arms transfer to the sub-Saharan region tends to elicit questions bordering on whether they will contribute to provoke or prolong armed conflicts, aggravate inter and intrastate tensions, or weaken civilian-led governments. The fact that there is lack of objective and verifiable information on arms transfers in the region does not help matters. Thus, at the global level, there has been worldwide debate and considerable efforts aimed at making policies which will control arms flows. The objective of this paper, therefore, is to evaluate these arms control measures or policies with the aim of ascertaining degree of success and/or failure.

Background of the Problem

The development and use of arms or weapons and other instruments of violence is closely related to the development of human society. As Oche (2005:2) rightly puts it:

In the quest for survival and security, man has found it necessary to acquire weapons for the purposes of hunting, self or group defence against external threats and conflicts with real or even perceived enemies.

The acquisition of weapons for self and/or group defence can thus be said to be the precursor to the penchant to acquire arms by all means – legal or illegal. This was necessary in a typical Hobbesian state of nature in which might was right; nicely suiting the condition of war of all against all. Thus, as

sovereign states developed their values, norms, interests, cultures and ideologies, and as societies desired peace as a common good, it became necessary for the state to regulate the ownership and use of all instruments of violence, particularly firearms.

The modern State, in the opinion of Weber as expressed in his 1919 essay; *Politics as a Vocation*, is defined based on the claim to the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force in the enforcement of its order. The assumption, therefore, is that only the state apparatus is allowed to use arms solely for the purpose of maintaining public order. The situation whereby arms are found in the possession of individuals necessitated the adoption of arms control measures not just at the national level, but also at regional/continental levels.

Arms proliferation is the rapid and often excessive spread or increase in the number of available arms and ammunitions. Civil unrest, on the other hand, is a broad term which is typically used by law enforcement agents to describe one or more forms of disturbance caused by a group of people. Thus, civil unrest is typically a symptom of, and a form of protest against major socio-political problems and the intensity, seriousness and severity of action coincides with public expression of displeasure. Civil unrests can come in the form of unauthorized parades, obstructions, riots, protests, sabotage and other forms of crime. Its purpose is to demonstrate to the public and the government but it can also escalate into general chaos.

The Arms Survey, an organization advocating for the control of arms, claims that at least 1,134 companies in 98 countries worldwide are involved in some aspect of the production of arms and ammunition (Arms Survey Report 2003:33). According to the Report, the largest exporters of arms by volume are the European Union and the United States. In addition, massive exports of arms by the United States, the former Soviet Union, China, Germany, Belgium and Brazil during the Cold War took place commercially as well as to support ideological movements. These arms have survived many conflicts and many are said to be in the hands of ruthless arms dealers or small governments who move them between conflict areas just like in the case of Democratic Republic of Congo and Somalia.

Moreover, the ability to procure and keep possession of arms by a large percentage of the public tends to transform civil unrests into violent riots which more often than not, threaten the existing social order. Through this means, the State is pitched against the citizens who dare to possess illegal arms which are meant to be the exclusive preserve of the State. It is

this interface between illicit arms trade and conflict in Africa that this study intends to evaluate using international arms control measures as a yardstick. To this end, therefore, the paper is premised on the following research question: how effective have arms control measures in Africa been?

Methodology

This study adopted the Ex-Post-Facto (After the Fact) research design. The choice of ex post facto design stems from the fact that it is a systematic empirical study in which the independent variables cannot in any way be controlled or manipulated given that the situation of study already exists or has already taken place. The unauthorised sale and acquisition of arms, conflicts and the adoption of certain arms control measures have been ongoing for quite some time now. Ex post facto research will be used in generating data on the journey so far.

Data was sourced from existing records like books, journals, United Nations documents, Small Arms Survey documents, World Bank publications, government and other official publications, internet materials, seminar papers, newspapers, magazines as well as other documents related to illicit arms trade and conflict in Africa as well as international arms control measures.

In this study, the technique generally referred to as Content Analysis was employed. This technique, according to Obikeze (1990:81), was developed as a result of the need for a reliable scientific method for assessing, analyzing and interpreting a large variety of materials. Thus we relied heavily (but not exclusively) on this analytical technique to evaluate the data generated in the course of this study.

Obikeze (1990) while quoting Berelson (1984) explained that Content Analysis is a research technique adopted for the objective, systematic and qualitative analysis and interpretation of information. In essence, therefore, this data analysis technique was applied to ascertain whether the information generated from the various sources do corroborate and validate or invalidate the research question raised and the hypothesis posited for the research work. Objectively, this forms a point of departure from the view of Kerlinger (1973:526) that content analysis is a method of coherent logical deduction from available data to determine the validity of hypothesis in a research process. This method, therefore, will be adopted in testing our hypothesis which states that: arms control measures in Africa have not been successful going by the numerous cases of armed conflict in the continent.

Review of Competing Perspectives

To Cukier (2008), every region of the world, whether peaceful or enmeshed in conflict, is affected by illicit arms trade. This, according to Small Arms Survey (2003), is a consequence of the existence of multiplicity of governments under embargo like Zimbabwe (2002 till date); Sudan (1994-date); Democratic Republic of Congo (2003-date); Rwanda (1994-2008); Somalia (1992 until partially lifted for one year in 2013); Sierra Leone (1997-date) [Government of the UK, 2013] among others as well as insurgent groups or movements which create viable markets for illicit arms. Thus there are cases of intra and inter-state illicit weapons trade. Trade in illicit arms has been on the increase in recent times. According to Small Arms Survey (2002:109), while the legitimate global small arms market is estimated at \$4 billion a year, the illicit trade is estimated at close to \$1 billion.

Small Arms Survey (2001:165) discloses that it is the illicit trade in small arms, more than any other aspect of the global arms business, that exacerbates civil conflict, corruption, crime, and random acts of violence. This view is supported by Keili (2008), Heinrich (2006), Oche (2005) and Bah (2004). Heinrich (2006) focused her discussion on small arms and light weapons and how its proliferation affects development. The misuse of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) is committed by ordinary civilians, by individual criminals, organized gangs, rebel groups, as well as by state security forces. The particular danger of SALW arises from their low costs and general availability, their lethality, their portability and their easy handling. These characteristics are important factors in the increased civilian possession and misuse of SALW.

Keili (2008) in his work entitled *'Small Arms and Light Weapons Transfer in West Africa: A Stock-Taking'* contended that West Africa has for many years been the most unstable sub region on the continent. Since 1960, of the 15 member-states that make up the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) most have been through several military coups, 37 of which were successful. One causative factor for such unprecedented insurrection, according to Keili, is the proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) throughout the sub region. Thus, unchecked movement of SALW has led to the escalation of conflicts with the attendant destruction, untold hardship, poverty and underdevelopment.

On the magnitude of small arms proliferation in the sub region, Keili noted that the conflict-ridden West African sub region is an evidence of large influx of small arms and light weapons (SALW) proliferation. These large

quantities of arms have filled the region giving rise to rampant misuse by both state and non-state actors. In the opinion of Keili, therefore, 'the widespread availability of small arms to abusive actors poses a threat of unprecedented magnitude to West Africa, far greater than that of HIV/AIDS in terms of its socio-economic and human consequences' (Keili, 2008:5). Socio-economic and human consequences is understood within the context of the amount of resources committed to the procurement of arms, resources devoted to the resolution of conflicts exacerbated by the easy availability of arms as well as the destruction of lives and property.

Oche (2005) on his part argued that illicit arms trade can be attributed to long-standing pervasive political and social ills – poor governance, corruption, the breakdown of law and order, the collapsing of economies – which have led to the diversion of large quantities of arms from government armouries and security forces into the hands of civilians, warlords and criminal enterprises. Again, many African states have been found wanting in the task of providing basic security for their people. This heightens the demand for arms which will be used in self-protection or defence.

Bah (2004:3) sums these up by asserting that:

The proliferation and misuse of illicit small arms in West Africa can be attributed to, in the main, the following factors: weapons left over from the anti-colonial struggles (especially in Guinea-Bissau); the advent of military rule and one-party dictatorships; the super-power competition for allies; local arms producers (gunsmiths); lost or stolen weapons from state security services, and leakage from government armouries; returning peacekeepers; and, finally, the massive flow of weapons from Central and Eastern Europe following the end of the Cold War and the loosening of controls on the arms industry due to the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Added to the above is the activity of arms traffickers. Arms traders play a key role in the proliferation of arms within the African continent. The operations of arms traffickers have also been blamed for some coup attempts in Africa. For instance, the 2004 Equatorial Guinea coup d'état attempt, also known as the Wonga coup, which was an alleged coup attempt against the

government of Equatorial Guinea in order to replace President Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo with exiled opposition politician, Severo Moto, carried out by mercenaries and organised by mainly British financiers (Leigh, 2004). Equatorial Guinea is located within the Gulf of Guinea and has vast oil and gas reserves (Sengupta, 2008). One US official called it "the new Kuwait" (Leigh, 2004). Prosecutors alleged Equatorial Guinea's opposition leader, Severo Moto, was to be installed as the new president in return for preferential oil rights to corporations affiliated to those involved with the coup (Leigh, 2004). It received international media attention after the reported involvement of Sir Mark Thatcher, son of former British Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, in funding the coup. On August 25, 2004, Mark Thatcher was arrested under anti-mercenary laws in South Africa after being accused of helping to finance the coup to remove President Obiang (Barnett, 2004). Thatcher was arrested at his home in Constantia, Cape Town, South Africa, in August 2004 and was charged with contravening two sections of South Africa's "Foreign Military Assistance Act", which bans South African residents from taking part in any foreign military activity. The charges related to "possible funding and logistical assistance in relation to the attempted coup in Equatorial Guinea" said to be organized by Thatcher's friend, Simon Mann. He was released on 2 million rand bail (*The Guardian*, 2004).

On 13 January 2005, Mark Thatcher, in a South African court, pleaded guilty to helping finance a coup plot in Equatorial Guinea. South African police were able to prove that Mr Thatcher had transferred about US\$285,000 to the mercenaries that were to execute the operation and had met and talking frequently to them prior to the coup attempt (Afrol News, 2007). After pleading guilty, he was given a four-year suspended jail sentence and a fine of R3, 000, 000 rand (about US \$560,000), according to Afrol News (2007).

All the above reasons are by no means exhaustive as there are several other factors responsible for illicit arms trade in Africa. One notable gap, however, is that none of the above studies aimed at assessing international arms control measures in Africa. It is this gap in the existing literature that this paper aims to fill.

Review of AU and UN Regimes on Arms Trade/Flow

African governments have taken a number of collective and regional measures to counter the spread of small arms and light weapons in the continent. Sabala (2004) observed that the adverse impacts of small arms

and light weapons began to attract the attention of African leaders in 1996 when under the auspices of the Organisation for African Unity (OAU); a decision was taken to tackle the issue of arms proliferation. Having declared a commitment to fight this menace, efforts were made to combat it from the sub-regional to the continental level. To begin with, the OAU held its 35th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government in Algiers, Algeria, from 12th to 14th July, 1999, and adopted Decision AHG/Dec.137 (LXX). The body made a resolution to develop an African strategy to tackle the issues emanating from proliferation, circulation and illicit trafficking of SALW and draft a common agenda for presentation to the UN conference of 2001 (BASIC, 2000). At this meeting, OAU's Assembly of Heads of State and Governments addressed the problem of SALW in the continent; a common position was agreed upon as well as recommendations for adopting policies, institutional arrangements and operational plans for tackling the impact from illegal trafficking, proliferation, piling up and illicit use of SALW.

The Bamako Declaration

The Bamako Declaration of 2000 came in preparation for the UN Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects which was organized under the UN Program of Action (UNPoA) for the prevention, combating and eradication of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects scheduled to hold in New York, from 9th to 20th July, 2001. This forum marked the beginning of efforts to check the spread of illicit small arms and light weapons in Africa.

The meeting was held in pursuance of the Decision AHG/Dec. 137 (LXX), adopted by the 35th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government held in Algiers, Algeria, from 12th to 14th July, 1999, which called for an African approach to the problems posed by the illicit proliferation, circulation and trafficking of small arms and light weapons, and for the convening of a Ministerial preparatory conference on this matter prior to the holding of the United Nations Conference; and the decisions adopted on this matter by the Council of Ministers, at its 68th Ordinary Session held in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, from 1st to 6th June, 1998 (CM/Dec. 432 (LXVIII)), the 71st Ordinary Session held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 6th to 10th March, 2000 (CM/Dec.501 (LXXI)), and the 72nd Ordinary Session held in Lome, Togo, from 6th to 8th July, 2000 (CM/Dec.527 (LXXII)).

The Bamako Declaration expressed the grave concern of OAU members that the problem of the illicit proliferation, circulation and trafficking of small arms and light weapons continues to have devastating consequences for stability and development in Africa. It was recognised that this problem:

- (i) Sustains conflicts, exacerbates violence, contributes to the displacement of innocent populations and threatens international humanitarian law, as well as fuels crime and encourages terrorism;
- (ii) Promotes a culture of violence and destabilizes societies by creating a propitious environment for criminal and contraband activities, in particular, the looting of precious minerals and the illicit trafficking in and abuse of, narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and endangered species;
- (iii) Has adverse effects on security and development, especially on women, refugees and other vulnerable groups, as well as on infrastructure and property;
- (iv) Also has devastating consequences on children, a number of whom are victims of armed conflict, while others are forced to become child soldiers;
- (v) Undermines good governance, peace efforts and negotiations, jeopardizes the respect for fundamental human rights, and hinders economic development;
- (vi) Relates to the combating and the eradication of the illicit proliferation, circulation and trafficking of small arms and light weapons, and control of their proliferation;
- (vii) Is both one of supply and demand, transcends borders and calls for cooperation at all levels: local, national, regional, continental and international.

It was agreed at the meeting that, in order to promote peace, security, stability and sustainable development on the continent, it is vital to address the problem of the illicit proliferation, circulation and trafficking of small arms and light weapons in a comprehensive, integrated, sustainable and efficient manner through:

- (i) Ensuring that the behaviour and conduct of Member States and suppliers are not only transparent but also go beyond narrow national interests;

- (ii) The promotion of measures aimed at restoring peace, security and confidence among and between Member States with a view to reducing the resort to arms;
- (iii) The promotion of structures and processes to strengthen democracy, the observance of human rights, the rule of law and good governance, as well as economic recovery and growth;
- (iv) The promotion of conflict prevention measures and the pursuit of negotiated solutions to conflicts;
- (v) The promotion of comprehensive solutions to the problem of the illicit proliferation circulation and trafficking of small arms and light weapons that:
 - ❖ include both control and reduction, as well as supply and demand aspects;
 - ❖ are based on the coordination and harmonization of the efforts of Member States at regional, continental and international levels;
 - ❖ involve civil society in support of the central role of governments, in this regard.
- (vi) The enhancement of the capacity of Member States to identify, seize and destroy illicit weapons and to put in place measures to control the circulation, possession, transfer and use of small arms and light weapons;
- (vii) The promotion of a culture of peace by encouraging education and public awareness programmes on the problem of the illicit proliferation, circulation and trafficking of small arms and light weapons, involving all sectors of society;
- (viii) The institutionalization of national and regional programmes for action aimed at preventing, controlling and eradicating the illicit proliferation, circulation and trafficking of small arms and light weapons in Africa; and,
- (ix) The respect for international humanitarian law.

The Bamako Declaration equally recommended actions to be taken at the national, regional and international levels. They include: Creation of national coordination agencies for small arms; enhancement of the capacity of national law enforcement and security agencies and officials, including training and upgrading of equipment and resources; destruction of surplus and confiscated weapons; development and implementation of public

awareness programmes; and, conclusion of bilateral arrangements for small arms control in common frontier zones. These actions (especially at the national level) are essential for the full and successful fulfilment of the Bamako Declaration. It can thus be surmised that the core objective of the Bamako Declaration is to position a framework of action against illegal trafficking and proliferation of small arms and light weapons in Africa.

As a follow-up to the Bamako Declaration, the African Union (AU) established the Peace and Security Council of the African Union on the 9th of July, 2002. Eboh and Mazal (2003) noted that the Council was created as a standing decision-making organ for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts and as a collective security and early-warning arrangement to facilitate timely and efficient response to conflict and crisis situations in Africa.

The Nairobi Declaration (2000)

In reaction to the call for action at the national and regional levels, on March 15, 2000, Foreign Affairs Ministers from 11 countries from the Great Lakes and Horn of Africa regions signed what is known as the Nairobi Declaration. These countries include Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, Ethiopia, Burundi, Rwanda, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Uganda, Tanzania, Eritrea and Djibouti (Thusi, 2003). This is basically a policy document outlining how governments should cooperate to fight the illegal proliferation of small arms. In April 2004, 11 countries from the Great Lakes and Horn of Africa region adopted the Nairobi Protocol for the Prevention, Control and Reduction of SALW. As at May, 2013, the number of signatories stands at 14 countries and there is a regional secretariat, RECSA, in Nairobi.

The ECOWAS Moratorium (2006)

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) adopted a landmark binding Convention to reduce armed violence in the sub-region. The ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms, Light Weapons, their ammunition and other associated material was signed by Heads of State and Government on 14th June, 2006 in Abuja (Nigeria). This completes the transformation of the 1998 ECOWAS Moratorium on Light Weapons into a legally-binding instrument.

The Moratorium was a voluntary measure adopted by the ECOWAS Heads of State and Government in 1998. It was the first – and so far only – regional moratorium on the importing, exporting and manufacturing of small

arms, and as such was an important first step to addressing the crisis at a regional level. Because the Moratorium was voluntary, it had little or no monitoring mechanism. The new Convention has a monitoring and implementation mechanism and is intended to be a permanent commitment to reducing the armed violence that has plagued West Africa.

The United Nations Firearms Protocol (2001)

The *UN Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, their Parts and Components and Ammunition* (Firearms Protocol), was adopted in 2001 by the General Assembly (GA) with Resolution 55/255 and entered into force on 3rd June, 2005. The Firearms Protocol constituted, for a long time, the only global legally-binding instrument addressing the issue of small arms prior to the adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) on June 2, 2013. Shortly after the adoption of the Firearms Protocol, the principal UN policy framework to address the small arms and light weapons issue was established by the *UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects* (PoA). This important document is the result of an extensive study, conducted by a UN Panel of Governmental Experts, which began in the late 1990s following the publication of the document: *Supplement to an Agenda for Peace*, and culminated in the *2001 UN Conference on the Illicit Trade of Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects*. The implementation of the policy framework provided by the PoA has led to the negotiation of other agreements both at the regional and global level. A significant example is the International Tracing Instrument (ITI), a political instrument adopted by the GA on December 8, 2005 to enable states to identify and trace, in a timely and reliable manner, illicit small arms and light weapons (UNPoA, 2008).

The purpose of this Protocol, as stated in *Article 2*, is to promote, facilitate and strengthen cooperation among States Parties in order to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms, their parts and components and ammunition. The Protocol provides for a series of control measures and normative provisions covering multiple aspects of the small arms issue:

- (1) The Protocol requires States to establish as criminal offences the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms as well as tampering with markings on firearms.
- (2) The Protocol requires that States implement a series of control measures on firearms and ammunition such as maintaining records on

firearms markings and transactions, marking firearms for the purposes of identification and tracing and establishing effective export, import and transit licensing systems. Importantly, the Protocol requires mandatory marking not only at the time of manufacture, but also at the time of import to facilitate the identification and tracing of each firearm.

- (3) The Protocol calls for cooperation at the bilateral, regional and international levels in the exchange of information, tracing of firearms, training, technical, financial and material assistance among states to mitigate the illicit trade in and manufacture of firearms. Further, it encourages states to seek support and cooperation amongst manufacturers, dealers, importers, exporters, brokers and commercial carriers of firearms.
- (4) The Protocol calls for the regulation of arms brokering and the inclusion of information on brokers and brokering activities in exchanges of information between states (UNPoA, 2008).

The Protocol is not designed to apply to all possible transfers in firearms. Particularly, *Article 4* states that it shall not apply to state-to-state transactions or to state transfers where the application of the Protocol would prejudice a state's right to maintain national security as specified within the United Nations Charter.

All measures and provisions within the Protocol can be grouped within the following four categories, or the four pillars upon which the Protocol is built:

- Definitions
- Control measures
- Substantive criminal law; and,
- Information exchange.

A Legislative Guide focusing on these four pillars was released in 2004 by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to assist states in the implementation of the Firearms Protocol.

Guidelines for the Implementation of the Firearms Protocol is intended to help Member States establish and strengthen the institutions and mechanisms needed to effectively implement the Protocol. The guidelines will provide technical assistance to states on implementing the operational measures in the Protocol and will address such issues as marking of firearms,

implementation of security measures and how to establish effective export, import and transit licensing systems (UNPoA, 2008).

The second instrument is *Model Legislation*, key features of which will include provisions on the criminalization of illicit manufacturing and trafficking in firearms, record-keeping, marking, controlling exports, and the import and transit of firearms, their parts, components and ammunition.

As recognized in the PoA, the Firearms Protocol, when effectively implemented, complements and reinforces global efforts to combat the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. The Firearms Protocol and the PoA require the implementation by states of many of the same measures on small arms including sharing information to facilitate the identification of groups involved in illegal manufacturing and trafficking in arms, ensuring that arms are marked adequately, maintaining records on the manufacture and trade in arms and establishing effective import and export licensing mechanisms (UNPoA, 2008). States that implement the Firearms Protocol are therefore also fulfilling many of their obligations under the PoA.

Table 1: Global Arms Control Agreements

Year	Agreement/Event
1993	A US Code of Conduct bill started and has been introduced in successive sessions of Congress since.
1995	A group of Nobel Peace Laureates, led by former Costa Rican President, Oscar Arias, proposed a comprehensive International Code of Conduct.
1998	ECOWAS agreed to a Moratorium on the Importation, Exportation and Manufacture of Light Weapons.
1998	The European Union accepted a regional Code of Conduct.
1999	US Congress passed the International Code of Conduct Act, requiring the administration to pursue a multilateral agreement on uniform, strict export standards.
2000	At the December US-EU Summit, the US and EU agreed to work together on this type of agreement.
2001	The United Nations Conference on Small Arms led to a Program of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in all its aspects. The aim was to decide the steps nations should take to prevent the illicit trade in small arms. An initial proposal by NGOs for an Arms Trade Treaty

	was also circulated with strong backing by many national and international lawyers and government experts.
2003	The OAS in November agreed to a Model Regulations for the Control of Brokers of Firearms, their Parts, Components and Ammunition, applying a detailed set of transfer criteria based on international law to control arms brokering.
2004	In April, 11 countries from the Great Lakes and Horn of Africa region adopted the Nairobi Protocol for the Prevention, Control and Reduction of SALW.
2006	In October, the first steps were taken at the UN towards a global Arms Trade Treaty.
2008	On October 31, 147 states at the UN voted overwhelmingly to move forward with work on an Arms Trade Treaty. Only the US and Zimbabwe voted against it.

Sources: Compiled by the authors from data released by Federation of American Scientists; OXFAM and the Control of Arms Campaign; the Arias Foundation for Peace and Human Progress; <http://www.globalissues.org/article/80/a-code-of-conduct-for-arms-sales>.

Common themes embedded in the above codes include: not selling arms to non-democratic regimes, or autocratic regimes that will likely use the weapons to commit human rights abuses; not selling weapons where internal or external conflicts may be fuelled; not selling weapons that could undermine development and thus increase poverty.

In order to ensure a cohesive and effective response to the problem of the illicit trade and manufacture of small arms, UNODC seeks to ensure that its efforts in assisting states with ratification and implementation of the Protocol are complementary to the efforts of other UN offices in assisting with implementation of the PoA as well as the International Tracing Instrument. Under the auspices of the UN Coordinating Action on Small Arms (CASA), UNODC and UNODA in particular have been strengthening the level of cooperation in information sharing and organization of seminars and workshops, as well as the implementation of a capacity building project.

Extent of Adequacy

The fact that Africa has remained conflict-prone due to the large influx of small arms and light weapons raises questions over the extent of adequacy of the various arms proliferation measures in Africa in particular

and the globe in general. Doubts have been voiced by the G78 concerning the UN Firearms Protocol to the effect:

That the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in all its aspects will in fact introduce a new global resolve to seriously address the small arms problem is still far from certain. Some key objectives for the conference have not been embraced as relevant by all states. Having gone through the three sessions of the conference Preparatory Committee (PrepCom), states remain substantially divided on what the scope of the conference should be – with some states insisting that it must be about illicit trafficking only, and thus focused on improved policing and crime control measures, while other states, and most NGOs following the process, insist that the control of illicit small arms is inextricably linked to effective control over legal arms.

Continuing, the G78 observed that large numbers of licit arms come into illicit possession and use due to the absence of restraint in the supply of arms and the lack of universal laws and standards for control, and due to the failure to address effectively the adverse social, political and economic conditions that lead to violence and generate demand for small arms and light weapons. Again, the International Action Network on Small Arms' (IANSA) 2004 review equally indicated that although there have been notable efforts by NGOs, the United Nations (UN) and national governments, the proliferation and illicit trafficking of SALW is still rampant with serious human consequences. Given this position, it can be surmised that the UN Firearms Protocol have not done enough in checking the spread of arms.

With regards to the ECOWAS Moratorium, it has been observed by Eboh and Mazal (2003) that there exists a significant gap between signing/ratification of international legal instruments, particularly international humanitarian law, and implementation of the stipulations and requirements of these legal instruments. Explaining further, they noted that even though practically all West African states have signed the Mines Ban Treaty, very few of them have been able to supply regular and detailed

Article 7 reports detailing their stockpiles. Where implementation takes place, it is often cosmetic, comprising more of form than substance. A major negative element regarding UN documents formally adopted by states is that they often retain their UN identity, and state officials often do not demonstrate much sense of ownership. Knowledge of the documents is largely limited to civil servants working on these issues, or to scholars studying the process (United Nations Department for Disarmament Affairs, 2003). Along with the UN Firearms Protocol, not much is known about it outside official circles, and it can be considered as being too distant from its intended public. In other words, there is little or no awareness/publicity on issues related to arms control measures.

Another shortfall pointed out by Eboh and Mazal (2003) is that there is a clear lack of capacity to fully implement the UNPoA. According to them:

The state institutions mandated to implement it are under-funded and under-staffed. There is also a clear lack of basic office facilities. Simple internet connection is still a rarity in most offices. UN agencies in the region are also ill-equipped to deal with the implementation of the UNPoA. Only NGOs have made some efforts to publicise and raise awareness about the 2001 and 2003 New York conferences (Eboh & Mazal, 2003:15).

NGOs have been active in organising seminars and workshops and other sensitisation activities and in organising and coordinating SALW control work both at the national and sub-regional levels through the establishment of various networks.

The authors equally pointed out that in practical terms, there is no major difference between the original premise and provisions of the extra-regional small arms control instruments and the ECOWAS Moratorium. Their major demands appear to be essentially the same. This is so because the Bamako Declaration, the UNPoA, and the Moratorium all provide for national coordination agencies, destruction of surplus arms and public awareness programmes. For example, while the Moratorium demands that a National Commission be established, the UNPoA also calls for the establishment of a national coordination agency or body and institutional infrastructure

responsible for policy guidance, research and monitoring of efforts to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in SALW in all its aspects (UNPoA Section II paragraph 4). For all intents and purposes, the National Commission in most states also serve as the National Points of Contact. West African states do not have the financial and technical capacity to afford two different bodies to coordinate small arms issues within and between states.

Arms Trade Treaty: New Wine In A New Bottle?

The Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) which was initiated on October 3, 2003 by Amnesty International, Oxford Committee for Famine Relief (OXFAM) and International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA), brings a humanitarian dimension to arms control measures. According to Brian Wood, Head of Arms Control and Human Rights, Amnesty International:

The originality of the Arms Trade Treaty idea was that – for the first time in history – states would have to consider international human rights and humanitarian law, as well as international criminal law, as a basis on which to decide whether an arms transfer across borders should go ahead. That is the kernel of the idea of the ATT... And that principle remains at the heart of the treaty (Wood, 2013:1).

This means that it is the desire to know if and how arms trafficking will promote the respect of international human rights or encourage the abuse of same. This move could not have come at a better time given the fact that arms proliferation have led to the violation of human rights.

The need to check the poorly regulated international arms trade have, therefore, been attracting the attention of world leaders for a long time. How this desire to control arms flow came about is aptly captured by Amnesty International (2013:2) thus:

In 1919, horrified by the slaughter of the First World War, the newly formed League of Nations tried to restrict and reduce international arms transfers of the type that had led to death and destruction on a massive scale during the war. But those efforts in the 1920s and 1930s to establish a treaty were variously designed on

the basis of old colonial rivalries – and soon collapsed. Countries with empires and ambitions returned to massive re-arming through production and transfers, leading to another catastrophic global war that erupted in 1939. In the wake of the Second World War's atrocities and loss of life on a scale never before seen, the emerging international community established three pillars – the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the UN Charter, and the Geneva Conventions.

Continuing, Amnesty International disclosed that even though the UN Charter had given a mandate to the Security Council to establish a system for the regulation of arms, for more than 60 years, the Security Council never even projected a system for the conventional arms trade, despite the trade continuing to grow and stimulate the very violations the three new global standards were meant to restrict.

With the series of crises which inundated the late 1980s and 1990s (the first Gulf War [1990-91], the Balkans Conflicts, the 1994 Rwanda genocide and conflicts in Africa's Great Lakes region, West Africa, Afghanistan and in Central America amongst others) impressed upon the international community the need to move forward with attempts to control the global arms trade.

The U.N. Arms Trade Treaty that aims to keep weapons out of the hands of human rights abusers and criminals first got the overwhelming approval of the 193-nation U.N. General Assembly on June 2nd, 2013. Monday, June 3, 2013 witnessed the landmark signing of the Arms Trade Treaty, the first of its kind. Delegates from dozens of countries gathered in New York on Monday and signed the first treaty to regulate the \$70 billion global conventional arms trade, but the United States, according to Charbonneau (2013) was not among them.

Argentina's Foreign Minister, Hector Timerman, was the first to append his signature when the signing ceremony opened at U.N. headquarters on Monday. The United Nations said 62 countries from Europe, Latin America, Asia and Africa signed the treaty in the morning (Charbonneau, 2013). German Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle was due to sign shortly, making Germany the 63rd nation to join the pact. U.N. High

Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Angela Kane, told *Reuters* that several more states would likely be signing in the coming days, taking the initial tally to roughly 66. The United States, the world's number one arms exporter, will sign the treaty as soon as all the official U.N. translations of the document are completed, U.S. Secretary of State, John Kerry, said in a statement.

The endorsement of the ATT can be said to mark the dawn of a new era. This is aptly captured in the words of Anna Macdonald, Head of Arms Control, Oxfam, when she asserted that:

The signing of the Arms Trade Treaty gives hope to the millions affected by armed violence every day. Gunrunners and dictators have been sent a clear message that their time of easy access to weapons is up. For generations the arms trade has been shrouded in secrecy but from now on it will be open to scrutiny (Reuters, 2013:7).

The Arms Trade Treaty aims to set standards for all cross-border transfers of conventional weapons ranging from small firearms to tanks and attack helicopters. It would create binding requirements for states to review cross-border contracts to ensure that weapons will not be used in human rights abuses, terrorism, violations of humanitarian law or organized crime. It should be noted that Iran, Syria and North Korea cast the only votes against the Treaty in April. The same three states had prevented a treaty-drafting conference at the U.N. headquarters in March from reaching the required consensus to adopt the pact. The Treaty will enter into force 90 days after 50 nations have ratified it. The Foreign Minister of Finland, Erkki Tuomioja, said the Treaty could come into force in slightly more than a year depending on how quickly national ratifications come.

The introduction of the ATT and the positive reactions that it has elicited from the international community is a further indication of the ineffectiveness of the hitherto existing international arms control measures. When fully operational, the ATT is expected to curb the flow of arms across national borders. It is also expected to ensure that humanitarian considerations are put to the fore in any arms transfer deal. This will help regulate the acquisition and use of arms for human rights violations. Be that as it may, it remains to be seen how these laudable objectives will be

attained given the often existent gap between the endorsement of treaties and its judicious observance.

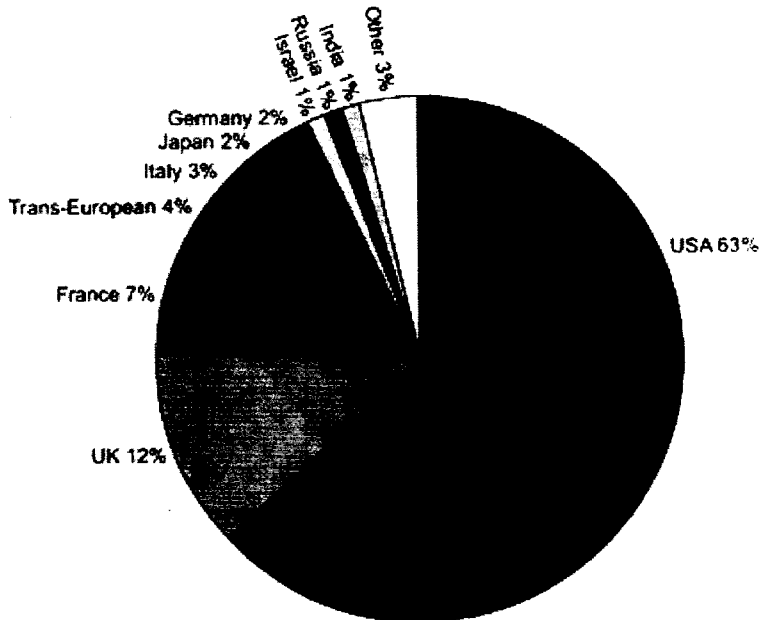
Challenge of Arms Flow

Arms flow poses major challenges to efforts aimed at combating it. Most of these hurdles revolve around the enforcement, or otherwise, of sanctions against arms proliferation on the side of both individual states and the UN. This fact is aptly captured by the Bureau of Intelligence and Research (2001:2) when it stated that:

Arms transfers and trafficking have continued to spiral, in part, because the international community has not effectively enforced UN sanctions, criminalized embargo violations, penalized financial institutions that act as conduits for weapons purchases, failed to promote indigenous controls over African arms production and sales to countries under UN arms embargoes, or taken actions against countries that serve as arms trans-shipment points. Numerous international and regional programs aspire to reduce the flow of weapons into sub Saharan Africa. These initiatives have succeeded only in documenting the devastating impact that arms transfers have on Africa.

Added to the above is the large number of state and non-state actors involved in arms trade, lack of reliable figures on arms trade, lack of transparency and poverty. This perhaps explains why the Small Arms Survey (2001) disclosed that it is not surprising that Africa is a major recipient of small arms. The Report identifies major suppliers of these arms as countries of Eastern Europe, the Commonwealth Independent States (CIS) and China, small arms transfers from Western countries as well as indigenous production of small arms within the region. Corroborating this disclosure by Small Arms Survey, the Peace Pledge Union (2013) credits 63.3% of arms supply to Africa by US companies as can be illustrated with the table below:

Figure showing national shares of arms sales of the top 100 arms-producing companies in the world (excluding China)



Source: Peace Pledge Union, 2013

From the above figure, it could be seen that 40 US companies alone accounted for 63.3% while a combined total of 29.4% was accounted for by 36 West European companies. In all, the Peace Pledge Union revealed that presently, the combined sale of the top 100 arms companies amounts to some \$268 billion. This is unacceptable going by the significant role played by the US as the global watchdog.

Amnesty International surmises the challenge posed by lack of transparency and accountability thus:

- There is no Operative Provision in the Code to address the massive risks posed by the spread of LPO (Licensed Production Overseas), where a company in one country allows a second company in another country to manufacture its products under license.
- There is a lack of reporting and regulation on military, security and policing training provided by various military and security companies.
- There is a lack of monitoring of end-use certificates. As Control Arms noted further above, certificates are sometimes faked, or there is inadequate resources to follow up.

- Transparency and reporting are poor. Information that is vital to enable parliamentarians and the public to hold governments to account is poor. While some countries have improved in this area, (often only after public pressure), very few governments provide sufficient details on products licensed for export, the quantities of weapons exported, who the end user is, etc.

Lack of transparency and corruption in arms trade makes it difficult to know which arms are designated where and the area it eventually ends up in. SAS (2001:170) aptly captures this difficulty when it stated that:

While many small arms transfers to Africa may be technically legal, the lack of transparency with respect to countries such as China, the Russian Federation, Ukraine, and Bulgaria – as well as the fact that many weapons end up in areas of conflict or tension – means that many of them may start out legal, but end up in the grey or black market.

The arms trade is reputed to be one of the most corrupt businesses in the world (Small Arms Survey, 2004 & 2005; Wezeman, Wezeman & Beraud-Sudreau, 2011). This is so because many arms dealers – middlemen – are corrupt and use corrupt means, such as corrupt arms transporters and financiers. Off-shore banking is used to make it extremely difficult to track the finances.

The Nigerian Case

The 'resource curse' (Gelb, 1988; Auty, 1993) or 'paradox of plenty' (Karl, 1997) thesis basically postulates that countries rich in natural resources do not fare well in terms of economic growth and development more generally than countries without such an abundance of natural resources. Although resource wealth is often simply assumed to have had consequences like poverty, conflict, poor human development record among others, empirical evidence supports the links between resource wealth and relatively slower economic growth (Sachs & Warner 2001), civil war/conflict (Collier & Hoeffler, 2004), and authoritarian rule (Ross 2001; Jensen & Wantchekon, 2004). There is also the view that natural resource abundance breeds corruption, bad governance, human rights abuses and violent conflicts (Ross,

2001; Human Rights Watch, 2002; Gary & Karl, 2003; Coalition for International Justice, 2006; Obi, 2007). Several international expert panel reports have equally identified the availability and allocation of natural resources as a key security risk for the 21st century. For many people living in poor but resource-rich countries, the natural resource wealth is not a risk but has long become a fact with disastrous consequences. Thus, if the resource curse thesis which tends to establish a strong link between the abundance of natural resources and conflict is anything to go by, then the Gulf of Guinea will make an interesting study on arms control and conflict.

In a general sense, Nigeria cannot be rated as a country at war even though it has been largely militarised and plagued by armed conflicts and criminality like the recurrent ethno-religious crises in many parts of northern Nigeria, the uprising in the Niger Delta, the Boko Haram insurgency in many northern States, armed robbery, kidnapping and/or hostage taking among others.

Nigeria in 1990 enacted the Firearms Act. Part I of the Act established that "ammunition" means ammunition for any firearm and any component part of any such ammunition, but does not include gun powder or trade powder not intended or used as such a component part; while "firearm" means any lethal barrelled weapon of any description from which any shot, bullet or other missile can be discharged, and includes a prohibited firearm, a personal firearm and a muzzle-loading firearm of any of the categories referred to in Parts I, II and III respectively of the Schedule hereto, and any component part of any such firearm. Part II (4 & 5) of the Firearms Act declared that:

No person shall have in his possession or under his control any firearm of one of the categories specified in Part I of the Schedule hereto (hereinafter referred to as a prohibited firearm) except in accordance with a licence granted by the President acting in his discretion.

No person shall have in his possession or under his firearms control any firearm of one of the categories specified in Part II of the Schedule to this Act (hereinafter referred to as a personal firearm) except in accordance with a licence granted in respect thereof by the Inspector-

General of Police, which licences shall be granted or refused in accordance with principles decided upon by the National Council of Ministers.

From the above excerpt, it could be seen that the Act clearly prohibits the possession of arms. Other Sections of the Act equally prohibits the repairs, manufacture, sale, importation or exportation of arms by non-licensed individuals or bodies. Despite the provision of this Act, the unauthorised possession of arms and ammunitions by individuals and groups is evidenced by most of the activities of these groups. Some factual examples will suffice here.

A 2006 report by Integrated Regional International Networks (IRIN) attributed the persistence of uprising in the Niger Delta to the availability and easy accessibility of arms. However, the growing violence and militarisation in the region has also been a boost to the trade in recent years. The report suggested that smugglers operating out of Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Cameroon and Nigeria have always coordinated the trade. The report further stated that using fast boats, these smugglers cruise to ships in the high seas and obtain guns, the origins of which may be as far afield as Eastern Europe and Asia. In 2005, Dokubo-Asari, leader of the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), told Integrated Regional International Networks (IRIN) that Nigeria's Atlantic waters were indeed the main channel through which his militia obtained weapons. "We are very close to international waters, and it's very easy to get weapons from ships. We have AK-47s, general-purpose machine guns and rocket-propelled grenades", he said in the interview.

The uprising in the Niger Delta has been brought under control through the introduction of the Amnesty Program by the federal government. The Nigerian state did not savour this victory for long before the Boko Haram sect brought another dimension to the security challenge in Nigeria. Thus, the Boko Haram insurgency, which has been likened to terrorism in some quarters, has been characterized mostly with the use of explosives targeted at strategic places like churches, bars and motor parks (or wherever large number of people cluster). These conflict situations coupled with the occasional ethno-religious skirmishes in northern Nigeria has to a large extent, been fuelled and sustained by the possession of small arms. This likelihood could find evidence in the high number of casualties recorded.

To Elaigwu (2005) and Abdulrahman (2006), no fewer than one hundred (100) conflicts were recorded in Nigeria between 1999 and 2004. Within this period, at least 10,000 people lost their lives while about 800,000 people were displaced (Global Internal Displacement Project, 2005 & Nwabufo, 2005). Similarly, the Jos crisis which has been recurrent since 1994 with its attendant loss of lives and properties deserves special mention. On April 12, 1994, there was riot over the creation of Jos North Local Government Area by the Ibrahim Babangida regime in 1991. On September 7, 2001 another crisis erupted over the Chairmanship seat of the said Local Government. *Newswatch Magazine* of January 22, 2010 reported that more than 1000 people were killed while a similar crisis in 2004 claimed 500 lives. In November 2008, 700 people were also killed in Jos North Local Government crisis. On January 17, 2010, 350 people were killed by recruited armed thugs. Furthermore, *Newswatch Magazine* reported that on March 7, 2010, 500 people were massacred in four villages (Dogo-Nahawa, Zot, Rasat and Kutgot) in Jos South Local Government Area of Plateau State in an ethno-religious crisis.

On the side of the Boko Haram sect, between August 2011 and January 2012, about 44 number of bomb attacks credited to the sect have been recorded leaving a casualty figure of about 1064 deaths (Tell, February 6, 2012). The ancient city of Kano has been reported to be a shadow of itself as the sect seems to have literally over-run the city. According to *Sunday Sun* of January 29, 2012 (p. 9), the multiple bombings in Kano which left about 200 people dead triggered mass exodus of people (especially those from the South-East) from the city. The same ugly story applies to Maiduguri, the Bornu State capital. Just recently, the Governors of the 19 northern States rose from a meeting to express dismay over the havoc wrecked by the sect. The helplessness of the Nigeria State in curtailing the situation has led to the setting up of a committee to work out modalities for granting amnesty to the sect.

Conclusively, it will not be out of place to assert that it is the failure of internal democratic peace that is at the root of armed conflict not just in Nigeria, but the world at large. The theory of democratic peace did well to capture the fact that democratic states do not take up arms against each other. However, the theory failed to explain why many democratic states remain embroiled in internal conflict often over the distribution of public goods. Democratic states wracked with internal domestic unrest stands the

risk of implosion – a situation which cannot be helped by its interaction with other democratic states.

Key Findings

The findings in this study which revolves around the success(es) or failure(s) of international arms control measures are as follows:

- ❖ That arms control measures in Africa have not been successful in curbing internecine wars/conflict in Africa. Examples from Nigeria highlight that if anything, such conflicts appear to be on the increase;
- ❖ That the prohibition of civilians from possessing arms by the various arms control measures reviewed faces cardinal challenges from States that are tasked with its implementation. For instance, under Nigerian law, there is conditional prohibition of arms possession by civilians. This is so because the Firearms Act of 1990 provides that civilians can possess arms as long as they pass through the formal process of registration and procurement of license;
- ❖ That arms control measures are further hampered by the inability of African States to provide security of lives and property in their respective States. For instance, the Nigerian constitution recognises the right of citizens to life but the Nigerian State seem to have reneged on its duty to protect the lives and property of its citizens;
- ❖ That in as much as there has not been many cases of inter-State conflict in Africa of recent (perhaps due to the increasing wave of democratization and the democratic peace theory), cases of intra-State conflict is rampant, due perhaps, to the failure of governance; and,
- ❖ That the porous state of national borders in Africa has been and continues to be a major facilitator of illicit arms trade.

Conclusion

This paper examined illicit arms trade and conflict in Africa and the various international control measures introduced to check its menace. This is necessary because millions of people suffer directly or indirectly from the consequences of illegal arms trade: thousands are killed, others are injured and/or forced to flee from their homes, while many others have to live under constant threat of weapons. It is also evident from the literature that the poorly regulated global trade in conventional arms and ammunition fuels conflict, poverty and human rights abuses.

The problem is compounded by the increasing ability to involve actors in many parts of the globe in the arms trade. For instance, components are sourced from across the world while production and assembly can be done in different countries, sometimes with little controls. Domestic regulation of the arms trade has failed to adapt to these changes. While existing national and regional controls are important, these do not seem to have proven to be enough to stop illicit transfers of arms and ammunition across national borders. This hydra-headed challenge of checking the spread of small arms is not being helped by the fact that it is difficult to ascertain the movement of arms due to insecure national borders as well as corruption in the system.

Another important point to highlight is that it does appear that the same Western States championing liberal democracy and peace in the international system are also the major exporters of arms to Africa; arms which somehow tend to find their way into unauthorised hands. This is contradictory because no real peace can be enforced through the barrel of the gun. Again, arming the populace is a sure way to put the lives and property of those not armed into jeopardy. With the possession of arms by majority of the populace, the stability of the State itself is jeopardised given that the State can be considerably weakened once citizens take up arms against the State. Be that as it may, intra-state conflicts in several African countries coupled with the subversion of State control to armed non-state actors do not augur well for peace and development in the continent.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are deemed suitable:

- Western States should resolve to stop the exportation of arms to the Global South. The arms trade is said to be very profitable hence it's continued thriving. Arms trade can be likened to slave trade which was only brought to a halt when the global powers decided to do away with it.
- Promotion of liberal democracy should be matched with efforts to encourage intra-State peace. Such efforts include the promotion of good governance as well as the promotion of peace among the entire populace.
- African States will do well to tighten security at their respective national borders. Agreed that globalisation is adept at eroding

national borders, this should not be a sufficient excuse not to properly check the movement of people and goods across national borders.

- Efforts should be made to review domestic arms control laws in order to bring them up to date with new trends in arms trafficking. Again, such domestic laws should be made to correspond to international arms control standard.
- Enactment and adoption of arms control measures should be matched with action. A situation whereby there is a wide gap between policy and action does not bode well for effective arms control.
- Enforcement of measures for tracing the source of arms is another notable step. Since consumers drive the demand for virtually every tradable item, they could play a pivotal role in helping clean up this trade. An international initiative to verify the sources of small arms and light weapons can serve as a powerful deterrent.
- National governments should outline an efficient means of collecting illegal arms in their countries. Such weapons are to be destroyed so as to prevent the likelihood of their finding their ways back into the hands of those capable of using them to generate trouble.
- Also, efforts should be made to impose effective sanctions on the various national governments implicated in the acts of fuelling conflict in other African countries through the supply of arms to warring armed groups. This is so because the roles played by Rwanda and Uganda in the DRC conflict in supplying arms steadily to the warring parties largely accounted for the protracted nature of the conflict.

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