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THESIS

**SMALL ARMS PROLIFERATION AND HOMEGROWN
TERRORISM IN THE GREAT LAKES REGION:
UGANDA'S EXPERIENCE**

by

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December 2016

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GREAT LAKES REGION: UGANDA'S EXPERIENCE**

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ABSTRACT

Illicit arms are responsible for high death rates in the Great Lakes region. The phenomenon of small arms and light weapons (SALW) proliferation owes to historical factors, porous borders, and the prevalence of regional armed conflicts that offer markets for illicit arms and is compounded by poor arms management and control measures within the region. The effects of SALW on the social, economic, and political arenas in Uganda and in other states in the region are enormous. Ad hoc measures and the lack of regional consensus in implementation allow illicit arms to flow to homegrown terrorists. Although not the only cause of homegrown terrorism, SALW have remained a significant driver in creating a fragile security environment in which homegrown terrorism thrives. This thesis addresses the causes and effects of SALW proliferation in Uganda and the Great Lakes region. Specifically, it explores the nexus between homegrown terrorism and SALW proliferation. The study concludes by providing policy recommendations to combat homegrown terrorism and the effects of SALW proliferation in Uganda and the Great Lakes region.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACSRT	African Center for Study and Research of Terrorism
ADF	Allied Democratic Front
AMISOM	African Mission to Somalia
AU	African Union
AU-RTF	African Union Regional Task Force
CAR	Central Africa Republic
CFR	Central Firearm Registry
CI	Crime Intelligence
DDRR	Disarmament Demobilization Rehabilitation and Reintegration
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EAC	East African Community
ESO	External Security Organization
EU	European Union
GLR	Great Lakes Region
ICGLR	International Conference on the Great Lakes Region
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
ISO	Internal Security Organization
JATT	Joint Anti-terrorism Task Force
JIC	Joint Intelligence Center
KIDDP	Karamojong Integrated Disarmament and Development Program
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
MI	Military Intelligence
NAP	National Action Plan
NFP	National Focal Point
NRA	National Resistance Army
NRA	National Resistance Movement
PEAP	Poverty Eradication Action Plan
PISCES	Personal Identification Secure Comparison System
RECSA	Regional Center for Small Arms and Light Weapons

SALW	Small Arms and Light Weapons
UN	United Nations
UPDF	Uganda Peoples Defense Forces
U.S.	United States
WNBF	West Nile Bank Front

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I. INTRODUCTION

Because they are easy to acquire and to use, small arms and light weapons (SALW) are common in most countries, especially in Africa. SALW also figure significantly in homegrown terrorism, insurgencies, cultures of violence, and the militarization of civil societies in Uganda, throughout the Horn of Africa, and across the entire Great Lakes Region.¹

Because of SALW in Uganda and in the Great Lakes Region, the threat of homegrown terrorism remains a critical challenge to the security of the state. For example, the attack on Kicwamba Technical Institute by the Allied Democratic Front (ADF) on 11 June 1998, left more than 80 students dead, 60 seriously injured, others abducted, and buildings set ablaze.² Similarly, the Al-Shabaab suicide attackers terrorized Ugandans watching the World Soccer Championship finals in Kampala on 11 July 2010. In this attack, *Al Jazeera* reported that, “86 people were killed, including nine Ethiopians, an Irish woman, and one Asian; more than 85 people were wounded.”³ In both incidents, the perpetrators took advantage of negligent security monitoring mechanisms and poor policing of borders to smuggle in SALW that later were used in the commission of terrorist activities.⁴

A. MAJOR RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This thesis examines measures that authorities in Uganda and in the countries of the Great Lakes region can use to minimize the spread of small arms and light weapons, and combat homegrown terrorism. To this end, the thesis also asks the questions: What

¹ “Small Arms and Light Weapons Control: A Training Manual,” Safer World, February 2012, <http://www.org.uk/downloads/pubdocs/small-arms-and-light-weapons-full.pdf>.

² “HRW Condemns Deadly Attack by Ugandan Rebels on School Children,” Human Rights Watch, 10 June 1998, <http://www.hrw.org/news/1998/06/09/hrw-condemns-attack-ugandan-rebels-school-children>.

³ *Al Jazeera*, “Al-Shabaab Claims Uganda Bombings: Twin Attacks Targeting World Cup Fans in Kampala Kill at Least 74 People,” 13 July 2010, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2010/07/2010711212520826984.html>.

⁴ *Ibid.*

are the common causes of small arms and light weapons proliferation, and what is the relationship between SALW and homegrown terrorism in Uganda as well as in the countries of Great Lakes region? Which policies and strategic issues ought to be considered for future planning against the SALW and homegrown terrorism in Uganda and in the countries of the Great Lakes region?

B. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Retired United Nations (UN) Secretary General Kofi Anan describes SALW as “weapons of mass destruction in slow motion.”⁵ Edward Mogire claims that, “SALW are responsible for the deaths of an estimated 300,000 to 500,000 people around the world each year.”⁶ According to the UN, 80 million AK-47s are in the wrong hands.⁷ Moises Naim, in the article “The Five Wars of Globalization,” observes that, “small arms fueled 46 out of the 49 largest conflicts in the last decade; in 2001, SALW were responsible for an estimated 1000 deaths a day.”⁸

According to Mogire, there are various definitions of SALW, but “the most widely used is the definition proposed by the UN panel of experts on small arms in its 1997 report.”⁹ Mogire summarizes the panel:

Small arms include revolvers, small-loading pistols, rifles and carbines, submachine guns, and assault rifles. Light weapons include heavy machine guns, portable anti-tank guns, recoilless rifles (sometimes mounted), portable launchers of anti-aircraft missile systems sometimes mounted, and mortars of caliber less than 100m. Ammunitions and explosives include cartridges (rounds) for small arms, shells, and missiles for light weapons, mobile containers with missiles or shells for single

⁵ Anup Shah, “Small Arms—They Cause 90% of Civilian Casualties,” *Global Issues*, last updated January 21, 2006. <http://www.globalissue.orgwebsite>.

⁶ Edward Mogire, “The Humanitarian Impact of Small Arms and Light Weapons and the Threat to Security,” *Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei*, 2008, 2. www.lincei.it/rapporti/amaldi/papers/XV-Mogire.pdf.

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ Moises Naim, “The Five Wars of Globalization,” *Foreign Policy* 134, no.1 (2003): 1–5, <http://ForeignPolicy.com/2009/11/035-Wars-off-globalization>.

⁹ Mogire, “The Humanitarian Impact of Small Arms and Light Weapons,” 2.

action anti-aircraft and anti-systems, anti-personnel and anti-tank hand grenades, land mines, and explosives.¹⁰

Christine Beeck et al., in the *Training Manual on SALW Control*, refer to proliferation as “an illicit transfer, destabilizing, accumulation, and misuse of small arms and light weapons especially by non-state actors.”¹¹

The proliferation of small arms and light weapons remains a security concern that threatens global security and undermines economic development especially in the developing world. Typically produced in developed countries, the effects of SALW are graver in Third World countries, where they are used in numerous of conflicts.¹²

Stability in the Great Lakes region of Africa is a significant factor in the security interests of the United States and the international community. The 1998 terrorist attacks on the U.S. embassies in Tanzania and Kenya demonstrated the transnational capability of terrorist and therefore, the threat to U.S. interests in the East Africa.¹³ President George W. Bush acknowledged the significance of stability of African continent to U.S. strategic security interests and created a military command (African Command) to stabilize the continent.¹⁴ In addition, the U.S. Department of Defense highlights the aim of U.S. African Command as “to promote U.S. strategic objectives by working with African states and regional organizations to help strengthen stability and security in the region.”¹⁵ Henry Isoke further argues that, “a peaceful East African region will help the U.S. deployment of its technical assets to collect information about terrorist organizations

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Christine Beck, Lach Fergusson, and Hesta Groenewald, “Small Arms and Light Weapons Control: A Training Manual,” *Safer World*, February 2012, 7. Accessed 15 November 2016, <http://docplayer.net/8253145-small-arms-arms-and-light-weapons-control>.

¹² Mogire, “Humanitarian Impact of Small Arms and Light Weapons,” 2.

¹³ Henry Isoke, “The Dilemma of Porous Borders: Uganda’s Experience in Fighting Terrorism,” (master’s thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 2015), 4.

¹⁴ Lauren Ploch, *African Command: U.S. Strategic Interests and the Role of U.S. Military in Africa* CRS Report No. RL 34003 (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2008), 3–5, <http://www.fpc.state.gov/document/104287.Pdf>.

¹⁵ Ibid., 4.

with bases in the region and also protect social, political, and economic interests of the United States in the East African region and the rest of the Horn of Africa.”¹⁶

In Uganda, SALW are traded illegally and smuggled into Uganda through porous borders, ending up in the hands of terrorists who threaten the country and whole region. The geo-political position of Uganda makes it vulnerable to spillover effects from regional instabilities with its attendant challenges. For example, the absence of peace in South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Central African Republic, Burundi, and Somalia facilitates the proliferation of SALW to Uganda. The illegal guns that enter the country end up in the hands of terrorist organizations and can facilitate the recruitment and arming of terrorists. For example, Al-Qaeda and local indigenous terrorists pose a challenge to regional stability and will threaten the United States in form of direct attacks on American personnel or American facilities.¹⁷

C. LITERATURE REVIEW

This section seeks to examine the sources of SALW, the effects of SALW proliferation, and the connection to homegrown terrorism. It traces the problem of SALW from a global perspective to the national level.

There is debate among scholars about the relationship between SALW and insecurity; some writers argue that SALW directly lead to insecurity, while others consider SALW as mere triggers or catalyzing factors.¹⁸ Both sides of the argument conceptually recognize that the implications of SALW proliferation on national security are undesirable. Osimen Goddy Uwa et al., in their work, “Small Arms and Light Weapons Proliferation and Problems of National Security in Nigeria,” associates SALW proliferation with an increase in terrorist activities and local criminality among states.¹⁹

¹⁶ Isoke, “Dilemma of Porous Borders,” 4.

¹⁷ David H. Shinn, “Fighting Terrorism in East Africa and the Horn of Africa,” *Foreign Service Journal* 36 (September 2004), 42. <http://addisvoice.com/ia%20Meles/Terrorism%20in%20Horn%20Shinn.pdf>.

¹⁸ Ibid, 18.

¹⁹ Osimen, et al., “Small Arms and Weapons Proliferation and Problems of National Security in Nigeria,” *International Affairs and Global Strategy* 29 (2015):15–18.

Thus, he argues, the SALW phenomenon is both cause and consequence of the fragility of security situations in Africa.²⁰ In addition, Mogire contends:

The uncontrolled proliferation and stockpiling of SALW before, during and following violent conflicts has led to many regions being flooded with small arms with devastating consequences on individual (human), national and international security. SALW are the primary instrument of violence, have prolonged or aggravated conflicts, produced massive flows of refugees, undermined law and rules spawned a culture of violence and impunity.²¹

The views are similarly divided with regards to the relationship between SALW and homegrown terrorism and armed violence. The UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), in its study on “Violence, Crime, and Illegal Arms Trafficking in Colombia,” presents two arguments concerning the management of SALW.²² One school of thought, headed by scholars like Conwell, Miller, and Slovak, argues that small arms in private hands significantly increase homegrown terrorism and other related atrocities.²³

In contrast, Lott and Mustard argue that small arms in the hands of private citizens reduce the possibility of local criminality and homegrown terrorism.²⁴ Taking the United States as an example, they assert that armed violence casualties are higher in countries where arms are prohibited compared to states where they are accepted.²⁵ The security narrative of providing guns to private citizens as deterrence to local insecurity is far removed from the African reality where presence of guns in private hands translates into increased armed conflicts, consequently homegrown terrorism.²⁶ Zebulon Takwa, in “Small Arms proliferation poses challenge in West Africa,” agrees with Ogu and

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Mogire, “Impacts of Small Arms and Light Weapons,” 1.

²² Pablo Dupuy Casa, Calvani Sandro, and Stefen Liller. “Violence, Crime and Illegal Arms Trafficking in Colombia.” *United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime* (2006), 16.

²³ Ibid., 17.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Michael I. Ogu, “Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons in Africa: Cause or Effect,” International Political Science Association, 2014, 4, http://www.paperroom.ipsa.org/papers/paper_33138.pdf.

observes that the rising level of insecurity in Africa is partly linked to mismanagement of SALW.²⁷ Africa is faced with the challenge of weak institutions for monitoring and tracking undercover modus operandi of SALW traffickers and management of private arms.²⁸

The concept of small arms and light weapons proliferation is further understood within the context of nontraditional security threats.²⁹ Divya Srikanth, in his journal article, “Non-Traditional Security Threats in the 21st Century: A Review,” conceptualized SALW as a nontraditional threat that challenges global security.³⁰ He further asserts that the 21st century is more subject to nontraditional threats—terrorism, SALW, poverty, money laundering, and the effects of unequal distribution of resources—rather than conventional threats.³¹

Similarly, Don Caldwell and Robert E. Williams, in their work “Seeking Security in Insecure World,” both attest that “today’s security agenda includes the first and second generation of human rights, global warming, and oil shortages; transnational organized criminal groups, SALW proliferation, and global networks of terrorist.”³² In the same vein, Mogire captures the impact of SALW on human security imperatives.³³ He writes:

The death toll from small arms dwarfs all other weapons systems, and in most years greatly exceeds the toll of atomic bombs that devastated Hiroshima and Nagasaki in terms of the carnage they cause. Small arms proliferation indeed could well be described as weapons of mass destruction. Small arms proliferation is not merely a security issue; it is also an issue of human rights and of development. The proliferation of

²⁷ Zebulon Takwa, “Small Arms Proliferation Poses a Challenge in West Africa,” *Focus on Arms in Africa* 3, no. 1 (2004): 7, [https://www.issafrica.org/pubs/newsletters/focus/vol3 no 1 _04/takwa.pdf](https://www.issafrica.org/pubs/newsletters/focus/vol3%20no%201_04/takwa.pdf).

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Mogire, “The Humanitarian Impact of Small Arms and Light Weapons,” 4.

³⁰ Divya Srikanth. “Non-Traditional Security Threats in the 21st Century: A Review,” *International Journal of Development and Conflict* 4, no. 1 (June 2014), 61. <http://www.ijdc/uploads/1/7/5/7/17570463/2014junearticle4.pdf>.

³¹ Ibid., 60.

³² Don Caldwell and Robert E. Williams, *Seeking Security in an Insecure World* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006), 1.

³³ Mogire, “The Humanitarian Impact of Small Arms and Light Weapons,” 4.

small arms sustains and acerbates armed conflicts. It endangers peace keepers and humanitarian workers. It undermines respect for International humanitarian law. It threatens legitimate but weak governments and it benefits terrorists as well as the perpetrators of organized crime.³⁴

The proliferation of SALW fuels conflicts, frustrates development and humanitarian efforts, undermines international law, and subsequently erodes the legitimacy of governments, paving the way for homegrown terrorists and organized crime.³⁵ Rachel Stohl observes further that:

Armed groups often block transit routes, disrupt natural resource exploitation, and attack key national industries. Donor supported projects can be halted or cancelled due to security concerns about increased gun violence and crime. The destabilizing presence of small arms discourages foreign investment and tourism.³⁶

Ken Booth, in his article “A Security Regime in South Africa: Theoretical Considerations,” supplements the idea that human security is more concerned with such nontraditional threats as disease, hunger, and protection from man-made disasters. Therefore, reducing the human cost of SALW proliferation is a critical undertaking.³⁷

Furthermore, different bodies of literature link transnational organized crime to homegrown terrorism in the sense that both derived their strength from lawlessness and insecurity fueled by SALW.³⁸ Scholars like Tamara Makarenko argue that the decline of the state-sponsored terrorism created a gap, which transnational organized crime filled as significant player in homegrown terrorism.³⁹ For example in Latin America, narco-

³⁴ Ibid., 5.

³⁵ Rachel Stohl, “Targeting Children: Small Arms and Children in Conflict,” *The Brown Journal of World Affairs* 9, no. 1 (Spring 2002): 284–286, http://www.essex.ac.uk/armedcon/story_id/Targeting%20Children-%20Small%20Arms%20and%20Children%20in%20Conflict.pdf

³⁶ Ibid., 284.

³⁷ Ken Booth, “A Security Regime in South Africa: Theoretical Considerations,” *Southern Africa Perspectives* no.30, CSAS (1994), 4, <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/interpol/staff/academic/kob>.

³⁸ Tamara Makarenko, “The Crime-Terror Continuum: Tracing Interplay between Transnational Organized Crime and Terrorism,” *Global Crime* 6, no.1 (2004), <http://www.tand-online.com/DOI-10.1080/174405704200029725/abc>.

³⁹ Ibid., 6

terrorism provides a nexus between homegrown terrorism and transnational organized crime.⁴⁰ In the same vein, a U.S. National Security Council briefing paper on transnational organized crime⁴¹ underscores the increased connection between terrorism and crime. The report observed that terrorists are resorting to transnational organized crimes to finance their activities.⁴² The report further highlights the involvement of the Taliban in the drug trade, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), Hezbollah, Al-Qaida in Islamic Maghreb, and Al Shabaab engagement in piracy to generate funds for their terrorist operations.⁴³ Transnational organized crime also accounts for the transfer of SALW to terrorist groups to achieve their illicit goals; homegrown terrorists use the same arms to bolster their operational capabilities.⁴⁴

The UNODC assessment study⁴⁵ further assesses the connection between the organized crimes and homegrown terrorism. The study underpins the growing interconnections between transnational organized crime and terrorism.⁴⁶ It notes that, “the collusion between insurgents and criminal groups in Central Africa, the Sahel, and Central South East Asia fuels terrorism and plunders resources.”⁴⁷ In addition, the report further reveals that the Transnational Organized Criminals are often sources and conduits of SALW.⁴⁸ It cites the example of the United States, where “88 percent of fire arm murders in 2008 were committed with handguns; 87 percent of all violent crimes are

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ “Transnational Organized Crime: A Growing Threat to National and International Security,” U.S. National Security Council. 27 May 2016, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/admin/eop/nsc/transnational-crime-threat>.

⁴² Ibid., 26–30.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, “The Globalized Crime: The Transnational Threat Assessment” (2010), 129. Accessed 27 May 2016, <http://www.org.unodc/unodc/en/data-and-analyst-tocota-2010.html>.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 129–134.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

offenses related to fire arms that are often diverted from markets that exist in many countries.”⁴⁹

The head of UNODC further remarks:

Crime networks and illicit armed dealers play an important role in the black market, while terrorists and drug traffickers procure some of their weapons. It has been estimated that approximately 1.58 billion U.S. dollars in 2006 were under recorded by illicit transactions, making up another 100 million U.S. dollars or so, the most common cited estimate of the illicit market is 10–20% of illicit market. These illicit arms face the violence that undermines security development and justice worldwide. U.S. federal law enforcement agencies have intercepted large numbers of weapons and all related items being smuggled to China, Russia, Mexico, Philippines, Somalia, and Yemen.⁵⁰

The study conveys the compatibility of transnational organized crime and terrorism. Homegrown terrorism may be able to access the SALW from transnational organized cartels either through stealing, hiring, or purchasing.⁵¹ This scenario relates to the African situation in which transnational organized crime has become intertwined with homegrown terrorism and the proliferation of SALW by taking advantage of failing states, civil conflicts, and the presence of ungoverned spaces.⁵²

Abu Bakarr Bah, in his work, “State Decay: A conceptual Frame of Failing and Failed States in West Africa,” argues that failing states fuel political violence and an inability to provide security to its own citizen and protect its territorial sovereignty.⁵³ Africa’s experience with failing states and SALW bears out this assumption. The fall of Said Barre’s regime in 1992 left about 500,000 arms in the hands of competing

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid., 130.

⁵² Philip K. Chebbet, *A Security Problem in the Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa: Proliferation of SALW* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Army War College, 2002), 5.

⁵³ Abu Bakarr Bah, “State Decay: A Conceptual Frame of Failing and Failed States in West Africa.” *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society* 25, no. 1/3 (2012): 72, doi: 10.1007/s10767-012-9120-9.

warlords.⁵⁴ Similarly, the collapse of the Libyan state led to an increased militarization of opposition groups, radical movements, local terrorists groups, and insurgents ready to spread instability to the rest of the continent. The SALW proliferated from the Libyan conflict to percolate into Islamic militant groups in Sub-Saharan Africa that are affiliated to Al-Qaida like Al Shabaab in Somalia.⁵⁵ Boko-Haram also relied partly on arms from Libya that substantially increased their firepower to take on Nigerian government forces.⁵⁶ Similarly, Tuaregs expanded into SALW to boost their resistance against the government of Mali.⁵⁷ Al-Qaida in Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and the Mali National Liberation Army (MANLA) used arms proliferated from Libya to boost domestic terrorism in the Maghreb region and West Africa.⁵⁸

The ease of use of small arms coupled with the involvement numbers of armed conflict in Africa has resulted in the occurrence of a gun culture that is a significant driver of internal conflicts.⁵⁹ Isiaka Alan Badmus, in his study on “Arms Proliferation and Conflicts in Africa,” concurs that “the intractability of African conflicts is due to proliferation of small arms and light weapons.”⁶⁰ He adds that, “the growing uncontrolled trade in SALW has made the resolution of conflict in Africa a mammoth task.”⁶¹

Nekabari Johnson and Gbara Pabon assert that African conflicts are complicated and instigated by the uncontrolled trade in SALW, “often paid for by the illegal

⁵⁴ Michael Renner, *Small Arms, Big Impact: The Next Challenge of Disarmament* (Washington, DC: World Watch Institute, 1997), 36, <http://www.metabase.net/docs/fusades/18235.html>.

⁵⁵ Renner, “Small Arms, Big Impact: The next Challenge of Disarmament,” 36.

⁵⁶ Abe Greenwald, “Un-Secured Libyan Weapons Went to Boko Haram,” *Commentary Magazine* (May 2014), <https://www.commentarymagazine.com/foreign-policy/Africa/unsecured-Libyan-weapons>.

⁵⁷ Daniel Larison, “The Libyan Wars Effects on Mali,” *The American Conservative* (2012), accessed 2 August 2016, <http://www.theamericanconservative.com/.../the-libyan-wars-effects-on-mali>

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Shah Anup, “Conflicts in Africa- Introduction” Global Issues. Last updated May 12, 2010, <http://www.globalissues.org/issue/83/conflicts-in-africa>.

⁶⁰ Alan Badmus Isiaka, “Managing Arms in Peace Process: ECOWAS and the West African Civil Conflict” (2009), 18–21, http://www.africanos.eu/ceaup/aploads/wp_2009_01.pdf.

⁶¹ Ibid.

exploitation of resources.”⁶² Nekabari points out that the interests of transnational cooperation in diamonds prolonged conflicts in Angola.⁶³ Likewise, the conflicts in Sierra Leone and Liberia were fueled by the exchange of SALW and minerals.⁶⁴

Rigobert Minani Bihuzo contends that “conflicts in the Great Lakes region persist because of complex regional conflicts, financial incentives, ethnic polarization, and weak and illegitimate governments.”⁶⁵ He argues, as an example that the presence of foreign troops and proxy support for militias continue to frustrate conflict resolution efforts in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo.⁶⁶ A fragile and lawless situation erodes government legitimacy, thus creating a safe haven for homegrown terrorists. The conflicts in Africa are driven by competition for illicit exploitation of natural resources.⁶⁷ Porous borders and the entry of new actors facilitate the SALW trade, and the proceeds from such illicit exploitation funds homegrown terrorism.⁶⁸

The Angolan example demonstrates this assertion:

The Transnational Corporations are interested in the natural resources of countries in Africa. For example, National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) was able to finance its military campaign through the illegal sale of diamonds. UNITA controlled two-thirds of Angolan diamonds, especially the diamond-rich Luanda Norte province, and between 1992 and 1997, UNITA was estimated to have earned \$3.7 billion from the sale of diamonds. In return for the diamonds, UNITA received a steady flow of small arms and light weapons.⁶⁹

⁶² Johnson Nakibari, Nna, and Baribene Gbara Pabon, “Arms Proliferation and Conflicts in Africa: The Sudan Experience” *Editorial Board* 6, no. 1 (July 2012): 213 <http://www.african-journal-org/wp-content/uploads/arms-proliferation>.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 8.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 215.

⁶⁵ Rigobert Minani Bihuzo, “Unfinished Business: A Framework for Peace in the Great Lakes,” *Africa Security Brief*, no. 21 (July 2012): 2, https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/147787/AfricaBriefFinal_21.pdf.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 2–4.

⁶⁸ Nekabari, “Arms Proliferation and Conflicts in Africa,” 213.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 214.

Similarly, the war situation in eastern DRC provides a space for illicit exchange of small arms for natural resources between SALW cartels and local indigenous militias. Terrorist groups like the ADF have taken advantage of building to their capability to terrorize Uganda.⁷⁰

D. POTENTIAL EXPLANATION AND HYPOTHESIS

SALW proliferation at the global level threatens the sovereignty of states both at the macro and micro levels. Uncontrolled proliferation puts SALW in the hands of civilians, outside state control, which poses a serious threat of homegrown and international terrorism in Uganda and in the Great Lakes region. For close to four decades, Uganda has experienced a great increase of small arms expanded within the country and across the porous borders of southern Sudan and Kenya.⁷¹ SALW are widely used in the commission of crimes like terrorism, civil conflicts, violent activities, and cattle rustling, which threaten national security in many ways.

SALW proliferation has continued to promote homegrown terrorism because local terrorists can easily access the guns sold on illegal markets, and the prevailing political situation has created an environment that is insecure, thus undermining economic development of Uganda and its neighboring countries.⁷² Hypothetically stopping SALW proliferation must go hand-in-hand with economic development and enhancement of security.

E. RESEARCH DESIGN

This study analyzes such major causes of SALW proliferation as failed states, ungoverned spaces, insurgencies, conflicts, and political instability in the region—among

⁷⁰ Bihuzo, “Unfinished Business,” 4.

⁷¹ Nene Mburu, “The Proliferation of Guns and Rustling in Karamoja and Turkana Districts: The Case for Appropriate Disarmament Strategies,” (2001), <http://www.info.southsudanngoforum.org/dataset/the-proliferation-of-guns-and>.

⁷² National Focal Point, “Mapping the Small Arms Problem in Uganda: The Development of Uganda National Action Plan on Small Arms and Light Weapons,” *Safer World* (May 2007), <http://www.saferworld.org.uk/downloads/pubdocs/UgandaMapping.pdf>.

others—to understand how SALW promote homegrown terrorism in Uganda and the region. The proposed research focuses on policy and strategic issues that should be considered for future planning against the proliferation of SALW and domestic terrorism.

In addition, this research focuses on various strategies to stop proliferation of SALW, and suggests effective measures to combat homegrown terrorism that is threatening the region. To this end, this research examines secondary scholarship on SALW, and consults such terrorism-related studies as government reports, policy documents, and other strategic policy approaches that have been put in place to address the threat of terrorism.

F. THESIS OVERVIEW AND CHAPTER OUTLINE

This thesis comprises five chapters. Chapter I provides the introduction that covers the background of small arms and light weapons proliferation, and how it is related to homegrown terrorism in Uganda and the Great Lakes region. In addition, it provides the literature review and the research design. Chapter II looks at the causes of SALW proliferation and its effects in Uganda. Chapter III examines measures to stop SALW proliferation and evaluates counter-terrorism policies in relation to homegrown terrorism. Chapter IV analyzes findings from the study, and Chapter V draws conclusions and recommendations.

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II. CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS PROLIFERATION IN UGANDA

Like most African countries, Uganda has a political history that is checkered with turmoil and armed conflict. Uganda experienced numerous military coups d'état and a series of insurgencies after its independence in 1962. The vicious cycle of violence weakened the state and created a fragile security situation that favored the illicit circulation of SALW. As Michael I. Ogu observes, the proliferation of SALW is “principally a consequence of conflicts at whatever level and in whatever magnitude.”⁷³ Various belligerents competed for arms to protect themselves; likewise, criminal elements capitalized on security lapses and acquired arms for their own self-interests—usually illegal.⁷⁴ During the event in northern and eastern Uganda, the population took advantage of the violent changes of regimes to obtain guns illegally for either self-protection or economic gain. Such weapons often fell into the hands of homegrown terrorists.

This chapter examines the causes and effects of SALW proliferation in Uganda and the Great Lakes region of Africa. It considers the historical influences as well as domestic and regional political factors that explain the SALW situation there today. It also discusses the various ways that SALW proliferation affects all levels of state and society in Uganda.

A. CAUSES OF SALW IN UGANDA

The problem of SALW proliferation in Uganda has many causes—some historical, some governmental, and some geo-political; some not wholly of its own making. This section examines the leading factors or causes of SALW in Uganda and the Great Lakes region.

⁷³ Michael “Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons in Africa: Cause or Effect?” 3–6.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

1. Historical Factors

The phenomenon of small arms proliferation in Uganda started with the country's initial contacts with outsiders, especially Arab slave traders from the east African coast. The issue later became prominent with the advent of the colonial powers. The current patterns of SALW can partly be explained amid the influence of world wars and effect of the Cold War.

a. *Pre-Colonial Background and Ethno-Militarism*

The proliferation of SALW in Uganda can be traced from the pre-colonial background and ethno-militarism of pastoralist communities of East Africa and the Horn of Africa.⁷⁵ Nene Mburu remarks that earlier in the 19th century, before the coming of imperialist powers, herding communities in the Horn of Africa and East African regions came to stage—and repel—cross-ethnic raids using guns acquired from Ethiopian gun runners, Arabs, slave traders, poachers, and business merchants on the coast of East Africa.⁷⁶ Arms were mostly bought from gun markets in Maji, in southwestern Ethiopia.⁷⁷

The increased demand for guns in the region, due to civil conflicts, transformed the concept of gun ownership to an economic venture, thus creating an entry point for SALW proliferation to other parts of the Horn of Africa and east African regions. This phenomenon was particularly marked among the pastoralist communities of Karamoja and Turkana. Figure 1 depicts Karamoja and Turkana regions.

⁷⁵ Nene Mburu, "The Proliferation of Guns and Rustling in Karamoja and Turkana Districts: The Case for Appropriate Disarmament Strategies." *Peace, Conflict and Development: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, no. 2 (December 2002): 6–7, <http://www.bradford.ac.uk/social-sciences/.Guns.pdf>.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 6-7.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 8.

Figure 1. Map of Uganda highlighting Karamoja region as an epicenter of SALW in Uganda.⁷⁸



b. Colonial Legacy

The colonial policy of isolating the pastoral districts of Karamoja and Turkan from the central administration crystallized armed culture in the region. The British created the republics of Kenya and Uganda in 1926 and created a border that suddenly divided the two traditional communities that had lived together and shared such resources as land and water.⁷⁹ Colonial policy demanded the two tribes be confined in their new border—and that they lay down their guns if they were to get protection and services

⁷⁸ Adapted from “Uganda,” Google Maps, accessed 15 Nov 2016, www.lonely.com/maps/Africa/Uganda.

⁷⁹ Mburu, “The Proliferation of Guns and Rustling in Karamoja and Turkan Districts.” 9.

from the British colonial administration.⁸⁰ The communities refused to give up their guns peaceably, so the British embarked on a campaign of forceful disarmament, code-named Operation Tennis in 1920. The operation ultimately failed due to poor planning, and the tribes kept their arms.⁸¹

In reaction, the Karamoja and Turkana regions were ring-fenced and declared “closed districts.”⁸² Clan leaders used the policy to stoke ethnic nationalism, which in turn, justified the acquisition of more guns, both to protect livestock and to defend tribal territories from invaders. Nene Mburu elaborates:

Neglecting these two peoples has strengthened gun culture, which they see as a source of security, livelihood, and status. On the one hand, communities that have not benefitted from government-supplied arms feel the gun is a safeguard from domination and dispossession, not just by the immediate pastoral neighbour, but also by the predatory state.⁸³

Arms proliferation in Karamoja was also motivated by the low standard of living there, as the colonial administration and other entrepreneurs expropriated their land without providing an alternative to benefit the local people.⁸⁴ In the face of such marginalization, the gun became the most viable means of survival for the communities to compete for limited resources and safeguard their meager incomes. This dynamic intensified inter-ethnic rivalries and raids.⁸⁵

c. Influence of World War II

Some writers, like Mburu, subscribe to the view that the participation of Karamojongo and Turkana tribes in World War II amplified the circulation of small arms

⁸⁰ Mburu, “The Proliferation of Guns and Rustling in Karamoja and Turkana Districts.” 5.

⁸¹ Ibid., 5–10.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Mburu, “Contemporary Banditry in the Horn of Africa: Causes, History, and Political Implications” (1999), 89–91, <http://www.njas.helsinki.fi/pdf-files/vol8num2/mburu.pdf>.

⁸⁴ Mburu, “The Proliferation of Guns and Rustling in Karamoja and Turkana Districts: The Case for Appropriate Disarmament Strategies in Karamoja,” 6–7.

⁸⁵ Kennedy Agade Mkutu, “Guns and Governance in the Rift Valley: Pastoral Conflicts and Small Arms” (Oxford: James Curry, 2008), 17.

in the region.⁸⁶ Specifically, the tribes participated in the war between Ethiopia and Italy and during the attack of Abyssinia.⁸⁷ The Turkan fought for the British against the Italians; the 25th East African Brigade led the invasion of Abyssinia that was stationed in the Turkan District.⁸⁸ Correspondingly, the Karamojong, who served in the King African Rifles during military campaign in Africa and Asia, gained both skills and arms in the war that they relied on to rejuvenate their long-time traditional ambitions of inter-clan raids and territorial expansion.⁸⁹ The two pastoral communities built their paramilitary capabilities and increased their raids because of acquired SALW and skills gained from the colonial wars.⁹⁰

d. Cold War Proxy Conflicts

Throughout the Cold War, the rival super powers provided arms and ammunitions to assist their proxy interstate conflicts in Africa.⁹¹ For example, in an effort to counter the U.S. support for Somalia and influence in the Horn of Africa, the Soviet Union provided an assortment of arms and ammunitions to Somalia and made generous unconditional loans; similarly, the Soviet Union provided weapons and other military assistance to Ethiopia during the Ogaden War with Somalia in 1976.⁹²

Similarly, the power struggle after the Cold War destroyed the state apparatus in DRC and consequently the country fell into a spiral of conflict that eroded the state's legitimacy, encouraging the existence of tribal militias, terrorists, and other transnational organized crime. The dire wartime economic situation in eastern DRC further facilitated SALW proliferation in the Great Lakes region by creating a fragile security environment

⁸⁶ Mkutu, "Guns and Governance in the Rift Valley," 12.

⁸⁷ Mburu, "Contemporary Banditry in the Horn of Africa," 10.

⁸⁸ Mburu, "The Proliferation of Guns and Rustling in Karamoja and Turkan Districts," 9.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Mburu, "Contemporary Banditry in the Horn of Africa,"

⁹¹ Ibid., 11–14.

⁹² Gebru Tareke, "The Ethiopia-Somalia War of 1977 Revisited." *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 33, no. 3 (2000): 635–667. doi: 10.2307/3097438.

that saw the emergency of various private militia groups and tribal chiefs, each competing to acquire arms for both resource acquisition and self-defense.

Subsequent to the end of the Cold War, arms ended up in the wrong hands—illegal business dealers of SALW, militia armed groups based on ethnicity, private owned military companies, and local and international smugglers—thereby facilitating ongoing armed political conflicts in northern Uganda, eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, and Burundi.⁹³ The abrupt increase in interstate conflict generated an irresistible demand for the SALW; they became weapons of choice because of their portability and accessibility.

2. Regional Political Factors

Uganda's position in the region renders it vulnerable to SALW proliferation. Small arms dealers take advantage of poorly policed tri-border situations to infiltrate the country. Figure 2 shows how small arms move from neighboring countries into Uganda, and how they are moved further in the country.⁹⁴

⁹³“Peace, Security, and Governance in Great Lakes Region,” Office of the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary General for the Great Lakes Region. (2003), https://www.ipinst.org/wp-content/uploads/publications/peace_security-1.pdf.

⁹⁴ Uganda National Focal Point on Small Arms and light Weapons, “Uganda National Action for Arms Management and Disarmament,” (2012-2017), 10.

exchange of arms by increasing the demand for small arms, illegal trading of firearms, ownership, and mismanagement of SALW, and associated effects are more complex to control.⁹⁸ The current political crisis in Burundi, the security stalemate in South Sudan, and the myriad of conflicts in eastern DRC remain potential triggers and sources of small arms proliferation. Terrorists and illegal arms cartels take an advantage of lawlessness to proliferate arms to their targeted countries. Richard Nabudere observes:

Weapons have reached Uganda all the way from Somalia through Ethiopia and northern Kenya. Somalia has been stateless for over a decade and is now controlled by heavily armed warlords. Kenya's North and Rift provinces, as well as Uganda's northeastern Karamoja region, are all awash with tens of thousands of automatic weapons in easy reach of Aru.⁹⁹

Rachel Stohl supports this argument with an example of the civil wars in Ethiopia in 1979, Rwanda genocide in 1994, Somalia in 1994 and Uganda in 1979 and 1986 in addition to other conflicts in Africa that are accountable for the roaming of illicit small arms in the region.¹⁰⁰ The current armed violence in South Sudan is being escalated by infiltration of SALW from diverse sources on either side of the conflict and to some extent, non-state actors.

Uganda contends with an increased case of SALW trafficked from fragile neighboring countries. The research done by the Uganda Action Plan on Small Arms reveals a number of distinguished arms traffickers and trading routes for small arms flowing into Uganda, many other involved nations nearby have been affected by conflicts and instabilities.¹⁰¹ The study highlights the following major transit routes:

⁹⁸ Mutuku Nguli, "Small Arms and Light Weapons Proliferation in Parts of Kenya" (Nairobi: Peace and Development Network Trust 2008).

⁹⁹ Wairagala Wakabi, "The Arms Smugglers," *New Internationalist Magazine*, May 2004, <https://www.newint.org/features/2004/05/01/arms-smuggling>.

¹⁰⁰ Rachel Stohl and EJ Horgendoorn, *Stopping the Destructive Spread of Small Arms* (March 2010), https://www.american.org/wp-content/uploads/issues/2010/pdf.small_arms.pdf.

¹⁰¹ Uganda National Focal Point on Small Arms and Light Weapons: "Mapping the Small Arms in Uganda," saferworld.org.uk/downloads/pubdocs/Uganda_mapping.Pdf.

Officials reported well-established arms markets along the Sudan-Uganda border, as well as trading routes from Southern Sudan to the Kenya-Uganda border area. Arms from Southern Sudan were reported to be a major source of weapons fueling pastoralist conflicts on both sides of the border (particularly North Eastern and Mid-Eastern Uganda and North Western Kenya). In addition, officials reported that some small arms from Somalia and Ethiopia were being trafficked into North Eastern Uganda, via Kenya. Small arms were also reportedly transferred to the LRA in the North from the Government of Sudan. Law enforcement officials also reported that conflicts in the DRC were contributing to arms flows into Uganda, particularly in the North Western and Western regions.¹⁰²

Arms that state purchases legally end up in black market due to corruption and poor arms tracking systems, and continue to abet homegrown terrorism and transnational crimes.¹⁰³ Figure 3 shows vast porous borders with Kenya, South Sudan, DRC, Tanzania, and Rwanda, and displays how they are used to transfer illicit SALW.

¹⁰² Uganda National Focal Point on Small Arms and Light Weapons (NFP), “Marking the Small Arms in Uganda.” Dec 2006, <http://www.mia.go.ug/default/files/Departments/NFP%20Synopsis.pdf>.

¹⁰³ Chebbet, “Security Problem in the Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa,” 14–15.

Figure 3. Map of Uganda showing prominent porous borders with DRC, Kenya, and South Sudan.¹⁰⁴



3. Domestic Factors

Poor management of state arms stores and shoddy record keeping contributed to circulation of small arms to illegal users. Several bodies of research however, refer to the matheniko raid on Moroto barracks after the fall of the Amin regime in 1979, as a spring board of the proliferation of small arms in Karamoja.¹⁰⁵ In the wake of this event, an estimated 60,000 SALW entered illicit circulation.¹⁰⁶ Bevan J. Crisis “highlights the

¹⁰⁴ Adapted from Google Maps, Map of Uganda, accessed December 9, 2016, <https://www.google.com/maps/place/Uganda/@1.3671056,30.0586288,7z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m5!3m4!1s0x1771a69f6499f945:0x874155ce43014549!8m2!3d1.373333!4d32.290275>

¹⁰⁵ African Union, “Report on Peace Security and Governance in the Great Lakes Region,”

¹⁰⁶ Joe Powell, “Karamoja: A Literature Review.” (2010), 9–13.

same raid as marking a shift to state-of-the-art automatic weapons, leading to an upsurge in intra-tribal aggravated raiding.”¹⁰⁷

Bevan’s study cites South Sudan as the major starting point of illicit small arms and ammunition in Karamoja.¹⁰⁸ The study further observes that SALW are proliferated through Toposa clans and the South Sudan People’s Liberation Army (SPLA) to the Karamoja region from where they are sold to other areas.¹⁰⁹ Arguably, the inter-ethnic linkages leveraged by geographical proximity continue to facilitate easy proliferation of SALW in the tri border communities of Kenya, South Sudan, and Uganda.

The pro-Ugandan government militias and auxiliary forces in the eastern part of Uganda between 2006 and 2010 also played an active role in the proliferation of SALW. On the basis of the arms and ammunition data collected in 2006, Bevan reveals credible evidence linking the illicit transfer of an estimated 1000 rounds of loose ammunition and 400 small arms from Uganda’s military and auxiliary forces to the Karamojong—because the amount of arms and ammunition available in Karamoja nearly matched with those in the hands of national security forces.¹¹⁰ Bevan further notes that “the evidence that a certain type of poor-quality Ugandan-manufactured ammunition displayed—which had been criticized by some members of the security forces—appeared to be circulating among the Karamojong, suggesting that the state forces may have been ‘off-loading’ this ammunition on the illicit market.”¹¹¹

Philip K. Chebbet adds that some SALW are acquired from within the states by deserters, auxiliary forces, local defense armed forces, and demobilized soldiers.¹¹² The

¹⁰⁷ Bevan James, “Crisis in Karamoja: Armed Violence and the Failure of Disarmament in Uganda’s most deprived region. (2008), 29–31.<http://reliefweb.int/report/Uganda/crisis-karamoja-armed>.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 47.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 52.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 53.

¹¹² Philip k. Chibbet, “A Security Problem in the Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa: Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons” (Master’s thesis, U.S. War College, Carlisle Barracks, 2002), 5, <https://www.hsdl.org/?view&did=439549>.

assertions of Chebbet are empirically evident in Uganda where the government does not have established monitoring and control mechanisms for small arms. Security personnel illegally exchanged small arms with non-state actors for individual benefit. Poor procedures, inadequate facilities, and effective oversight mechanisms to control and monitor state arms, is another major source of illegal firearms that police officers and army officers rent out for economic gains.¹¹³ These hired weapons are used in criminal activities such as murder, kidnap for ransom, and robbery. In addition, desertion from the Ugandan police and army is another major contributing factor of illegal firearms that cause violence and other related problems.¹¹⁴

The majority of illicit SALW in circulation were left behind because of a vicious cycle of conflicts that bedeviled Uganda since independence.¹¹⁵ Significant amounts of SALW were acquired from the abandoned stockpiles during and after several armed conflict. The military coup of 1971, the collapse of Ida Amin regime in 1979, followed by military 1985 coup by military junta, and finally the removal of military junta by National Resistance Army through a protracted guerrilla war in 1986 left many guns in the hands of people. These violent armed conflicts left many illegal arms in the communities either by fleeing soldiers, or acquired by individuals for self-aggrandizement. Various writers on SALW in Uganda support the view that SALW abandoned during such conflicts. The arms kept recycling from one region to another, continuing its disastrous effects to the society.¹¹⁶ The Regional Police Commander (RPC) in the North Western region found out that, the major source of SALW in the region, were arms that remained in the possession of former soldiers during military coups and the fall of regimes in Uganda.¹¹⁷

¹¹³ Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, “OSCE Document on Small Arms and Light Weapons” (2000), http://www.osce.org/documents/fsc/2000/11/1873_en.pdf.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Abdulla Bujra, “African Conflicts: Their Causes and Their Political and Social Environment,” (2002), 20.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ National Focal Point, “Uganda National Action Plan on Small Arms” [http://mia.go.ug/sites/default/files/Departments/National focal point](http://mia.go.ug/sites/default/files/Departments/National%20focal%20point%20(2012).pdf) (2012), 7.

Quoting the Regional Police Commander in the National Action Plan thus:

In the mid-western region, it is reported that during the Amin era and the war to topple him, Ugandan soldiers fled from southern and western parts of the country passing through the mid-western region en route to the north. In the process, many SALW were deposited in the region.¹¹⁸

B. EFFECTS OF SALW IN UGANDA

SALW proliferation not only leads to underdevelopment, but is a consequence of it. Major challenges related with small arms proliferation and economic stagnation and underdevelopment in general, include ineffective institutions, limited educational opportunities, and unemployment, organized crime, and human rights abuses.¹¹⁹ Small arms proliferation is responsible for prolonged armed cattle rustling in Karamoja sub region and neighboring countries of Sudan and Kenya.¹²⁰ The proliferation and trafficking of illicit arms is a core security challenge for stability of all African states including Uganda.¹²¹ The effects of small arms and light weapons proliferation can be discussed in three main categories: national stability and development; social development, and governance.

1. Effects of SALW on National Stability and Development

The wide spread of small arms in Acholi subregion, Karamoja, and Ruwenzori region in western Uganda has perpetuated conflict and under-development. There is credible evidence that the relationship is causal, rather than just coincidence—that is, the surfeit of small arms impedes national development and exacerbates the conditions that

¹¹⁸ NFP, “Uganda National Action Plan on Small Arms” (2012), 7, <http://www.mia.go.ug/sites/default/files/department/nationalactionplan>.

¹¹⁹ Small Arms Survey, “Impact on Development,” accessed 10 July 2016, <http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/impact-on-development.html>.

¹²⁰ “Uganda National Focal Point on Small Arms and Light Weapons: Mapping the Small Arms in Uganda,” http://www.saferworld.org.uk/downloads/pubdocs/Uganda_mapping.Pdf.

¹²¹ Ibid.

perpetuate the poverty and instability. It is estimated that between 2004 and 2006, 1,000 people died in cattle rustling conflicts, and all perpetrators used small arms.¹²²

The prevalence of insecurity associated with cattle rustling and armed criminals on highways continue to frustrate national development programs and leads to loss and displacement of both people and livestock. The study on underdevelopment in Karamoja reveals that the majority of children and women on streets of major towns of Uganda—estimated at more than 20,000—are from the Karamoja region.¹²³ According to the World Bank report 2006, “82 percent of the Karamojong are living below poverty compared to a national average of 31 percent. Access to sanitation is only 9 percent compared to the national average of 62 percent, and the literacy rate is 11 percent compared to 67 percent at the national level.”¹²⁴

Northern Uganda also has suffered from the consequences of conflict triggered by SALW. It is estimated that 1.7 million people in the Acholi subregion and Lango subregion in northern Uganda live in camps because of insecurity caused by LRA. It is also estimated that by 2004, 333,000 people were living in camps because of the insecurity caused by several attacks by LRA and by Karamoja raids.¹²⁵

The use of SALW by Karamojong through cattle raids disrupted the development and family coping system in the neighbouring districts of the Teso subregion. In addition, SALW in the hands of Karamoja disrupted the economic development in the neighboring areas of eastern Uganda. A study on the impact of cattle raids on development in eastern Uganda reveals:

¹²² James Beven, “Crisis in Karamoja: Small Arms Survey Armed Violence and the Failure of Disarmament in Uganda Most Deprived Region” (2008), 19, [http://www.smallarmsurvey.org/fileadmin/docs/B-occasional papers/SAS-0p21/Karamoja](http://www.smallarmsurvey.org/fileadmin/docs/B-occasional%20papers/SAS-0p21/Karamoja).

¹²³ Chronic Poverty Research Center, “Understanding Chronic Poverty and Vulnerability Issues in Karamoja Region” (2008), 15, accessed 10 July 2016, [http://www.drt-ug.org/book_files/Understanding Chronic Poverty in karamoja](http://www.drt-ug.org/book_files/Understanding%20Chronic%20Poverty%20in%20Karamoja.pdf).

¹²⁴ Sandra Ayoo et al., “Karamoja Situational Analysis,” accessed on 20 May 2016, <http://www.careevaluations.org/Evaluations/pdf>.

¹²⁵ James Beven, “Crisis in Karamoja: Small Arms Survey Armed Violence and the Failure of Disarmament in Uganda Most Deprived Region” (2008), 19, [http://www.smallarmsurvey.org/fileadmin/docs/B-occasional papers/SAS-0p21/Karamoja](http://www.smallarmsurvey.org/fileadmin/docs/B-occasional%20papers/SAS-0p21/Karamoja).

Persistent insecurity—marked by the occurrence of violent incidents such as killing, rape, and ambushes—has restricted movement and kept people at home, unable to trade, move their animals, or cultivate their gardens. The theft of productive assets and sources of capital—including cattle, animals for traction, farming equipment, household goods, and crops—have undermined community members’ ability to be economically self-sufficient. Finally, families have lost loved ones who would otherwise be able to contribute to the household economy.¹²⁶

2. Effects of SALW on Social Stability

Widespread use of SLAW by non-state actors in Uganda significantly disrupts social development, especially in conflict-ridden areas. For instance, at the height of the LRA insurgency in northern Uganda, an estimated number of 2.4 million people were living in Internally Displaced Peoples’ Camps, while 20,000 children are believed to have been abducted and conscripted as child combatants and sex slaves.¹²⁷ The conflict destroyed family fabric and its entire coping system like weakening land tenure system consequently leading to food insecurity, poor health, and unemployment especially among the youth.

SALW in Uganda instigated cases of armed violence and insurgencies that directly impact on social economic development. For instance, regions like Teso subregion, West Nile, and Acholi, which are situated adjacent to the northern border with South Sudan, are susceptible to effects of SALW and have remained undeveloped. Similar circumstances prevail in the Ruwenzori region in southwestern Uganda, which grapples with roaming illegal weapons from tribal militias in eastern DRC. The recurrent inter-clan skirmishes between the two dominant tribes—Bakojo and Bamba—are catalyzed the prevalence of small guns in the region.¹²⁸

¹²⁶ Jenny Vaughan, “Cattle Raiding in Karamoja: A Conflict and Market Assessment,” Mercy Corps (2011), 15, http://www.mercycorps.org/.karamojaconflictmarketassessment_june_2011.pdf.

¹²⁷ Focus on Land in Africa, “Conflict, Displacement and Land Rights in Uganda,” (Dec 2010), 2, <http://www.focusonland-com/silo/files/conflict-displacement-and-land-rights-in-uganda.pdf>.

¹²⁸ “Uganda Violence, Reprisals in Western Region.” Human Rights Watch, accessed July 2014, <https://www.hrw.org/uganda-violence-reprisals>.

In addition, Mogire argues that small arms cause death of many civilians in any conflict and “violate human rights such as torture, rape, intimidation, and looting.”¹²⁹ Quoting Kofi Anan, Mogire further argues:

Small arms are widely used in conflicts in which the high proportion of casualties are civilians, and in which violence has been perpetrated in gross violation of international law. This has led to millions of deaths, injuries, displacement of population, and suffering and insecurity around the world. Although accumulations of weapons of such weapons by them do not cause conflicts in which they are used, their easy availability tends to exacerbate and increase the lethality of the conflicts and obstruct development and relief assistance efforts.¹³⁰

The effects of two decades of insurgency in northern Uganda bear out this assertion. Clearly, the LRA caused gross human rights violations in the Acholi region, Lango, Karamoja, and the Teso subregion.¹³¹ It is estimated that 1.6 million people were displaced and others killed in various conflicts in the Acholi region alone, and more than 200 camps were created.¹³² For example, the attack on Barlonyo internally displaced a peoples’ camp in the Lira District and left 250 killed.¹³³ The disruption of livelihood and loss of services and infrastructure because of such instabilities have created economic imbalance and a serious rift between the north and south.

SALW facilitated the growth and persistence of the northern conflict organized by the LRA. The LRA carried out abductions, and targeted the civilians and forced them to support his rebellion. More than 6,000 children have been abducted, women raped, and young abducted girls turned into sex slaves. It is estimated that 1.4 million people, about 90 percent of the northern Uganda population, were forced to stay in Internally Displaced

¹²⁹ Mogire, “The Humanitarian Impact of Small Arms,” 7.

¹³⁰ Ibid.8

¹³¹ Sarah Bayne, “Conflict, Security and Development in Horn of Africa: Aid and Conflict in Uganda” (March 2007), <http://www.gichd.org/fileadmin/GICHD-resources/rec-doc/Aid-and-conflict-in-uganda.pdf>.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Brian Smith, “Hundreds of Civilians Massacred by Lord’s Resistance Army (March 2004), 1, <https://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2004/03/ug-mo/.html>.

Camps by the government for easy protection.¹³⁴ Stohl asserts that most small arms used by the LRA were sourced from Sudan and later proliferated to Uganda.¹³⁵

2. Effects of SALW on Governance

Proliferation of illicit small arms by armed groups continues to threaten peace and security in Uganda, thus undermining effective governance. For example, the resources that are identified for development of infrastructures such as schools roads, and hospitals are diverted to handle civil conflicts and its related problems.

To stymie the effects of such groups, the Uganda government resorted to investing more in building military capacity to deal with armed groups and terrorists at the cost of national development in the name of national security. Uganda made the defense budget a priority in solving conflicts and fighting armed groups and terrorists. High spending affected other important social economic sectors such as education, health, agriculture, and road infrastructure.

The report of civil society organizations on economic cost in northern Uganda reveals that the country spent close to \$ 1.33 billion in two decades to mitigate the effects of the LRA insurgency.¹³⁶ The study further shows that due to over-spending on military, the government failed to improve on critical sectors that are necessary to attract foreign investment, especially the tourism sector.¹³⁷ The retardation of economic growth consequently creates high levels of unemployment and disgruntled groups that continue to be recruited into criminal acts and furthering ineffective national security.

¹³⁴ Alice Klein, “Northern Uganda’s displaced people are left to fend for themselves.” *the guardian*, Jan 24, 2012, <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development>.

¹³⁵ Rachel Stohl and E J Hogendoorn, “Center for American Progress: Stopping the Destructive Spread of Small Arms” (2010), 7, https://www.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/issues/2010/03/pdf/small_arms.pdf.

¹³⁶ CARE International in Uganda, “Economic Cost of the Conflict in Northern Uganda,” (2002) <http://reliefweb.int/report/Uganda/economic-cost-conflict-northern—Uganda>.

¹³⁷ Ibid.

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III. MEASURES TO STOP SALW PROLIFERATION AND HOMEGROWN TERRORISM IN UGANDA

Control of SALW proliferation is a complex phenomenon. It continues to challenge the security architecture of both national governments and international stakeholders. Uganda's efforts in combating SALW proliferation are multi-sector and integrated into regional strategies. This chapter recognizes the fusion between homegrown terrorism and the consequences of SALW proliferation. Though proliferation of SALW is not a primary cause of homegrown terrorism, it creates a lawless situation in which homegrown terrorism thrives. Therefore, because they are intertwined, it is prudent to address both problems simultaneously.

Uganda's measures to combat SALW proliferation comprise: legislative measures, military measures, civil society-based approaches, and regional and international cooperation.

A. LEGISLATIVE MEASURES

Different laws and regulations in Uganda contain provisions relevant to the control of SALW and terrorism. These laws include the Fire Arms Act of 1970 as amended in 2005, which lays down the punishments for illegal ownership of firearms, and other firearms-related offences.¹³⁸ The amendment actualizes the government strategy to control SALW proliferation. The act is operationalized through the National Action Plan, the National Action Plan on Arms Management and Disarmament, and National Focal Point.

a. The Fire Arms Act

Following the widespread illegal use of small arms in urban terrorism and crimes of opportunity between 2000 and 2008 in the capital city of Kampala, the Fire Arms Act was amended to make it match with the magnitude of the threat. The amendment

¹³⁸ ULII, The Uganda Firearms Act 1970 chapter 299. www.ulii.org/ug/legislation/consolidated-act/299.

provided the establishment of a joint task force consisting of the Uganda Police (UPF), Uganda Peoples Defense Forces (UPDF), the External Security Organization (ESO), and Internal Security Organization (ISO) to combat the vices of proliferation through joint operations and intelligence sharing.¹³⁹ In addition, the government launched an inter-agency security operation code named Operation Wembley, that significantly reduced the circulation of illegal guns from society by conducting cordon and search operations, snap check points, and operationalizing some provisions of amnesty law.¹⁴⁰ The operation was grounded on provisions of the Uganda Fire Arms Act and had the support of international partners.¹⁴¹ As Ugandan Ambassador to UN Francis Butugira attests:

In line with the UN program of Action, the Uganda government has amended and put in place regulations and laws with harsh punitive measures against illegal use and ownership of arms. Such laws include the Fire Arms Act 1970, the UPDF Act of 2005, and the Anti-terrorism statute of 2002 that reinforces the existing laws making it an act of terrorism, being in possession of arms and explosives with intention to advance terrorist cause. The statute provides for heavy penalties for offences of terrorism.¹⁴²

With the amendment of the Firearms Act of 1970 in 2005, illegal ownership of a gun has been criminalized and many people have been arrested and convicted, while others have taken advantage of the Uganda Amnesty Act, and others negotiated peace initiatives within the framework of Disarmament, Demobilization, Reintegration, and Rehabilitation (DDRR) to voluntarily surrender guns to the government authorities.

Corruption by government enforcement officers, however, still frustrate the recovery of small arms from the population as the police and some junior military officers connive with culprits to abet crime. For instance, the United Nations Human rights report revealed that junior UPDF and police officers were releasing suspects on

¹³⁹ The Firearms Act of 1970 provides for regulation of purchasing and possession of firearms and ammunitions, chapter 299 (Uganda), <http://www.ulii.org/ug/legislation/consolidated-act/299>.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² Francis K. Butagira, "A Paper Presented to the Meeting of States on United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons," 1–2, <http://www.poa-iss.org/CASACountryprofile/statementUNMeeting/28@Uganda.pdf>.

detention after extortion of about 15,000 Ugandan shillings (approximately 30 U.S. dollars).¹⁴³ Furthermore, absence of active participation of civil institutions like the judiciary, Uganda Police and Prisons service, undermine the effectiveness of justice, law, and order in the disarmament processes.¹⁴⁴

b. *The National Action Plan*

The National Action Plan (NAP) consists of the National Arms Management and the National Focal Point. The development of the National Policy on Arms Management in Uganda has assisted in the coordination of efforts to tackle the challenges of SALW proliferation. Such efforts include the National Action Plan on SALW and Focal Point on SALW, among others.¹⁴⁵ The overriding objectives of NAP include:

- 1) Tackling the enormous volume of weapons already in circulation; 2) Promoting responsible management of SALW; and 3) Promoting human security and political security and stability, which will include: support for peace building activities, conflict prevention, human rights and good governance, and social economic development.¹⁴⁶

At the international and regional levels, the National Action Plan coordinates and implements all protocols and programs pertaining to small arms; it acts as a liaison for all activities related to SALW in both national and international arenas to ensure smooth information sharing and coordination among stake holders.¹⁴⁷ However, it is faced with such institutional challenges as untrained personnel and lack of harmonized law within the Great Lakes region. The National Action Plan stipulates its major areas of effort as,

¹⁴³ United Nations, “Report of the United Nations High Commission for Human Rights in Uganda: Updated Report on the Situation of Human Rights in Karamoja.” (2007), www.refworld.org/pdfid/471707827.pdf.

¹⁴⁴ Karamoja Integrated Disarmament and Development Programme, “Creating Conditions for Promoting Human Security and Recovery in Karamoja” (2007, 2008, 2009–2010), 4.

¹⁴⁵ Small Arms Survey, “Protocol on Small Arms and Light Weapons” (2005), [http://www.smallarmsurvey.org/regulations-and-control/control measures/markings-record-keeping.tracing.html](http://www.smallarmsurvey.org/regulations-and-control/control%20measures/markings-record-keeping%20tracing.html).

¹⁴⁶ National Focal Point, “Uganda National Focal Point on Small Arms and Light Weapons: From Tools of Destruction to Assets for Construction” (December 2006), 5.

¹⁴⁷ AWEPA, The Small Arms Issue: A Parliamentarians Handbook on the Small Arms Issue (2006), <http://www.awepa.org/wp-content/uploads/2006/03/A-parliamentarians-Handbook-on-The-small-Arms-issue.pdf>

“control and management of existing stock of SALW, reduction of volume of SALW already in circulation and prevention of future proliferation in Uganda.”¹⁴⁸ The National Action Plan on arms management and disarmament is also obliged to “control management of existing stock whereby it focuses on the following items: small arms and law enforcement capacity building, SALW stockpile and surplus management, establishing a normative framework, regulating civilian ownership of SALW, and brokering and shipping agents.”¹⁴⁹

c. *Stockpile Management*

The Ugandan government prioritized stockpile management as one of the effective methods of reducing illegal SALW in the society. In 2009, by improving stockpile management through building human resource capacity and record management of arms, the Ugandan government was able to destroy 75,783 SALW, 6,300 landmines, and 738 tons of ammunition.¹⁵⁰ It also fostered strict adherence to procedures of stocktaking of arms that were captured, surrendered, or recovered to ensure that they were appropriately disposed; to this effect, 28,000 illicit SALW were recovered by UPDF in 2013.¹⁵¹ However, the challenge of having more guns proliferating from neighboring Kenya and South Sudan is still extant.

d. *Record Keeping and Gun Marking*

Effective proper record keeping and gun marking of government owned weapons significantly reduces the illegality of SALW ownership. With assistance of the International Tracing Instrument (ITI),¹⁵² government of Uganda gun marked 35,000 to

¹⁴⁸ RECSA, “Guidelines for Harmonization of Legislation” (September 2005).

¹⁴⁹ Government of Uganda, “Mapping the Small Arms in Uganda: The Development of Uganda’s National Action Plan on Small Arms and Light Weapons” (May 2007), 7.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁵² James Bevan and Benjamin King, “Reporting on Firearms Marking in the Regional Center of Small Arms in the Great Lakes Region” (April 2013), 17–20., <http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/fileadmin/docs/C-Special-reports/SAS-SR19-Mark-RECSA.pdf>.

reduce the prevalence of circulation of illicit arms in the society.¹⁵³ Gun marking has also helped in tracing state firearms that are being brought into illicit markets, and identifying guns being used to commit crimes. However, gun marking requires a lot of resources in terms of equipment, finance, and training.

e. Licensing Policy

To reduce levels of criminality exacerbated by an increased number of SALW in the country, the government of Uganda put in place a licensing policy that controls gun ownership. For an individual to be armed, they must first declare the intention to possess a firearm and undergo security background checks.¹⁵⁴ Licensing policy limits are aware of people who possess guns, and who manufacture and deal in arms trade.

f. Public Education and Awareness Program

The National Focal Point is mandated to create public awareness and support systems with the aim of minimizing both demand and supply of small arms from the society. The core priorities of the program include:

- 1) Reducing demand for small arms and establishing culture of peace;
- 2) Developing a simplified guide to Uganda's new firearms laws; and
- 3) Conducting outreach to the media to encourage attention to the small arms issue, and coverage of the progress in implementing the NAP.¹⁵⁵

The approach has not fully attained the objective of stopping proliferation of SALW in Uganda, but it has achieved some results in areas that are especially vulnerable like the Karamoja region. People in the region are voluntarily surrendering illegal guns to the authorities, and cattle raids have been reduced as the population concentrates on other economic activities like farming.

¹⁵³ Bevan and Benjamin, "Reporting on Firearms Marking in the Great Lakes region," 20.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵⁵ Government of Uganda, "Uganda National Focal Point on Small Arms and Light Weapons," 10.

B. MILITARY MEASURES

To reduce illicit arms in the hands of Karamojongo communities, the Ugandan government embarked on a disarmament program using the army within the Karamoja region. By 2013, the Army had recovered 7,200 illegal guns. Searching, identifying, and voluntary disarmament have been the main modes of operation. This exercise, though military in nature, was later modified to incorporate anti-poverty strategies for its sustainability.

The security forces joined with NGOs and local government administrative structures to provide social services and critical infrastructure that were necessary for economic development. These steps were aimed at providing alternative sources of livelihood to affected communities to assist in abandoning the gun trade culture.¹⁵⁶

C. CIVIL SOCIETY-BASED APPROACH

Civil society groups are active players in the control of small arms circulation in the communities through dialogue and education. Civil society actively participated in educating the communities about the threats and effects of illicit arms, and by virtue of their closeness to the population, they facilitated recovery of guns through the creation of confidence that citizens are free to give information or surrender guns voluntarily.¹⁵⁷ The Karamoja Integrated Disarmament and Development Program (KIDDP) emphasized programs that were aimed at eradicating poverty. The Karamoja Integrated Disarmament Development Plan contributed to the National Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP), and explained the Karamoja part of the National Peace Recovery and Development Plan (PRDP) for northern Uganda.¹⁵⁸ The program fostered implementation of professional disarmament and was aimed at sustainable development.

¹⁵⁶ J. Macalesher, Urquhart A., “Uganda and International Small Arms Transfer: Implementing UN Program of Action Commitments,” 5–12.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

¹⁵⁸ Republic of Uganda, *Karamoja Integrated Disarmament and Development Program*, “A revised Comprehensive Draft” (2011–2015), https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Uganda_Karamoja_2007.pdf.

D. REGIONAL COOPERATION AND COORDINATION

The Ugandan government has embraced regional and international cooperation to enhance information sharing, interaction, and analysis of intelligence concerning proliferation of small arms, and includes cross border task forces and carrying out joint operations. Regionalism has established a framework to combat cross-border small arms and light weapons proliferation. Specifically, Uganda is party to such measures as the Nairobi Protocol, the East African community, and the Tripartite plus Commission.

1. The Nairobi Protocol

The Nairobi Protocol is an instrumental regional framework on SALW that enhances regional interactions of stakeholders in SALW, information sharing, and fast trucking best practices for implementation.¹⁵⁹ The protocol necessitates its member states to incorporate the following aspects in their legal framework.¹⁶⁰

- 1) Ban on civilian ownership of automatic and semi-automatic rifles;
- 2) Registration of all arms; 3) Restriction of the number of guns a person can own; 4) Regulation of security companies; and 5) Standardized marking and identification of small arms.¹⁶¹

2. East African Community Initiative

East African Community member states continue to be in the forefront in supporting both national and regional efforts in the combat of SALW proliferation and working towards regional stability. The East African community comprises Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Burundi, and Rwanda, and recently South Sudan has joined to benefit from regional integration and strengthening its political and economic stability. The East African Community has a joint secretariat that facilitates multi-sector approaches to control SALW. The EAC further provides a platform of a regional coordinated approach

¹⁵⁹ Catherine Flew and Angus Urquhart, “Strengthening Small Arms Controls: An Audit of Small arms Control Legislation in the Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa” (2004), 30.

¹⁶⁰ Theoneste Mutsindashyaka, “Proliferation of Illicit Small Arms: Focus on the Regional Center on Small Arms” (November 2013), 9, <http://www.recsec.org/speeches/FECCLAH%20CHURCH%REGIONAL%20%WORKSHOP%20N%20SMALL%20>

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

to minimize SALW in Uganda and its neighbors. Under the Nairobi Protocol, the community has attempted to combat SALW proliferation and create peace in the East African region. However, the implementation process is faced with absence of uniform disarmament time table and strategy. Guns continue to shift from place to place, making the problem of SALW proliferation in East Africa more complex to fight.

Through regional cooperation, the East Africa police chiefs formed an organization that has promoted, strengthened, and perpetuated co-operation, and fostered combined approaches for effective control of all forms of borders and related crimes with regional implications. In addition, it has led to improved information sharing, the formation of regional counterterrorism center, and member countries in the region have come up to fight all terrorist groups in the region such as ADF and control of SALW in the region.

3. The Tripartite Plus Commission

In its continuous efforts to reduce small arms in circulation and its attendant problems, the government of Uganda joined the Tripartite plus Commission, a body that is responsible for the DDRR of ex-combatants and militias in Great Lakes region.¹⁶² The basic purpose of the commission is to maintain a coordinated mechanism for regional stability. The joint venture, however, has not yielded much because of proxy and civil wars in the region that act as a major source of small arms. In addition, the commission is constrained by both human and materiel to realize its goals. It relies on donor funding from the U.S. government that is inconsistent and inadequate. Because of such constraints, the commission has so far not achieved its intended mission.

E. MEASURES AGAINST HOMEGROWN TERRORISM

The Uganda's response to homegrown terrorism and SALW proliferation is shaped by the strategic environment. In an effort to combat homegrown terrorism, measures to control SALW proliferation were fused within counterterrorism measures

¹⁶² SaferWorld Report, "Uganda and International Small Arms Transfer: Implementing UN Program of Action Commitments" (July 2008), https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/90985/Uganda_USformat.pdf.

because the effects of illicit small arms could not appeal for international and regional support. The Ugandan government applies an entire government approach to respond to terrorism and proliferation of SALW, including military, intelligence coordination, political, legal, and engagement with both regional and international stakeholders Global War on Terror.

Uganda's counterterrorism measures are anchored in its strategic relationship with the population that recognizes the people as the first line of defense. In all efforts against terrorism, the government ensures that the people are mobilized to understand the threat and support the cause, and to identify and isolate terrorists while homegrown terrorism and SALW proliferation bear some differences; however, its effects on the society are similar. Thus, the government of Uganda applies cross-cutting measures to combat both crimes.

1. Military Approaches to Counterterrorism

Uganda applies military power when other instruments have failed to yield the desired strategic policy objectives, or when necessary to complement the effectiveness of the other instruments. It may also be used to achieve national or international objectives and may be applied in the form of deterrence, coercion, and confrontation.

a. Deterrence Measures

Deterrence involves demonstrating preparedness and willingness to use military power to discourage adversaries from taking hostile actions, since the risk of carrying out a specific course of action is not worth the potential consequences. The UPDF contributes to deterrence through partnership with the people, maintaining a flexible offensive and defensive posture, and building local and international alliances and partnerships. Uganda's participation in AMISOM is in consonance with the deterrence principle. This approach reduces illicit SALW inflow and combats homegrown terrorism. For example, the intervention of the African Union Task force fighting against the LRA, and support of U.S. government, has neutralized the terrorist capacity to attack, and reduced the proliferation of arms by LRA in the region. In addition, AMISOM efforts in pacifying

Somalia have reduced small arms inflow from conflicted areas to the whole region that supports the growth of homegrown terrorism.

b. Coercive Measures

Coercive refers to the use of threat and force to constrain or dissuade adversaries from taking hostile actions. The UPDF is employing coercive strategies and actions to respond to threats to Uganda's national interests such as small arms proliferation and homegrown terrorism.

c. Confrontation

Confrontation involves active application of military force to effectively defend and aggressively attack. Therefore, the UPDF maintains both offensive and defensive capabilities in readiness to respond to adversaries. Because of the overlap between these approaches, it is difficult to delineate the use of deterrence, coercion, or confrontation. It is therefore possible that a combination of two or all three will be required to achieve the desired end state.

The Uganda government applied military approach to deal with terrorist groups such as ADF and LRA because their conventional operations were immensely threatening national security. The military approach was aimed at neutralizing the threat, dealing with the infiltration of terrorists and illicit arms, along our porous borders as an effective measure to combat terrorism.¹⁶³ The military measure also integrates other security agencies to detect, deter, and defeat terrorists, especially homegrown. Multiagency cooperation plays a significant part in defeating homegrown terrorism and control of illicit SALW. Isoke attests that, "Joint military/police deployment enhance target hardening and visibility of the forces; it also acts as a strong deterrence measure against terrorism."¹⁶⁴

¹⁶³ Kristof Titeca and Koen Vlassenroot, "Rebels without Borders in the Rwenzori Borderline. A Bibliography of Allied Democratic Forces," *Journal of East African Studies* 6 no.1 (April 13, 2012): 159, doi:10.1080/17531055.2012.664708.

¹⁶⁴ Isoke, "The Dilemma of Porous Borders in Combating Terrorism," 46.

However, Tumushabe argues that military approaches that are preemptive cannot achieve the final defeat of the terrorist groups and small arms proliferation in Uganda because they deal with the symptoms rather than the cause.¹⁶⁵ For example, killing of senior military leaders in both LRA and ADF ranks by UPDF did not lead to a conclusive defeat of the groups.¹⁶⁶ Additionally, the asymmetric strategy of terrorist operations remains one of the challenges facing conventional military forces.

2. Intelligence Coordination

Credible intelligence is essential in unpacking terrorist cells, and the movement of illicit arms, motives, and intended targets. The Ugandan intelligence community is hinged on the trust, confidence of the population, and support from political leadership. It is also strengthened by a viable intelligence sharing mechanism like joint intelligence centers. The Uganda National Security Act of 2000 established various security agencies and mechanisms to collect and manage intelligence regarding national security.¹⁶⁷ The Security Organization Act of 1987 provided for the establishment and roles of Intelligence organs such as Military Intelligence, the Criminal Intelligence Department (CID), the ISO, and the ESO.¹⁶⁸ Under the Security Organization Act, the organizations are mandated to collect, gather, and analyze domestic and foreign intelligence into actionable intelligence to be consumed by top leadership to take appropriate action. Specifically, military intelligence is tasked with the execution of military challenges and tasks to look at general intelligence.¹⁶⁹ To enhance the effectiveness of intelligence, the government established the Joint Anti-terrorism Task Force (JATT) to enhance coordination and intelligence sharing among the agencies on matters of terrorism. The

¹⁶⁵ Tumushabe, "The Dilemma of combating Terrorism in Democratizing States."

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., 26.

¹⁶⁷ "National Security Act of 2000 (Uganda)," The Government of Uganda, <http://www.ulii.org/uganda/legislation/consolidated-act/301>.

¹⁶⁸ "The Security Organization Act, November 13, 1987 (Uganda)," The Government of Uganda, [http://www.opm.go.ug/assets/media/resources/338/SECURITY %20%20ORGANIZATIONS%20ACT.pdf](http://www.opm.go.ug/assets/media/resources/338/SECURITY%20%20ORGANIZATIONS%20ACT.pdf).

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

force comprises members from all security and intelligence bodies, including members from the immigration department and Directorate of Public Prosecution.

The formation of JATT and JIC has facilitated a significant role in bringing together intelligence services and combating terrorism. However, the operations of JATT have been highly criticized by human rights activists alleging human rights violations; therefore, it has become a dilemma to fight terrorism and balance the rights of terrorists. In summation, the performance of intelligence approaches in combating terrorism and other security threats will depend on availability of resources and revised laws that protect intelligence services in executing their mission.

3. Police Operations

The Uganda Police enforces the law and keeps law and order. During efforts of combating homegrown terrorism and illicit small arms, the police are the leading agency. Sister agencies that work hand-in-hand with the police include Military Intelligence (MI), the ISO, the ESO, and Crime Intelligence.¹⁷⁰ According to the Security Organization Act, the agencies are further responsible for collecting and processing of intelligence both domestic and foreign, and forward analyzed data for leadership actions.

Because of increased transnational and homegrown terrorist attacks, the Counterterrorism Directorate was established within the police force to deal with challenges of terrorism. Its departments include Aviation Authority Police Department, Crime Police, Canine Police, VIP Protection Police, and Bomb Disposal, with different skills and capabilities to handle the threats and challenges of terrorism.¹⁷¹ The police have been highly engaged in community policing and mobilization of communities in an effort to put the public on board in fighting terrorism through detection and quick reporting of any suspected terrorist activity or suspect.

¹⁷⁰ Isoke, "Dilemma of Porous Borders in Combating Terrorism," 49.

¹⁷¹ John Ndungutse, Interview with the Director Counterterrorism Uganda Police Force, New Vision, December 12, 2014, <http://www.bridgemedia.co.ug/interview-with-the-director-counter-terrorism-uganda-police-force-john-ndungutse/>.

Isoke observes that community policing and mass mobilization of citizens is the most effective way of fighting terrorism.¹⁷² Observation can also be effective in controlling SALW proliferation. In addition, heavy deployments of police, both uniformed and in plain clothes, have been deployed especially in areas that are likely terrorists' targets such as markets, bus terminals, disco clubs, bridges, airports, and other key government installations. The presence of police and other sister security agencies have contributed much towards intelligence collection, detecting, countering terrorism, and controlling illicit small arms, though with some challenges.

4. Political Approach

Uganda's membership in regional organizations like the East African Community (EAC), Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), and international organizations like the UN and the AU, are essential to its strategic environment. This membership opens opportunities to the benefits of the collective security environment and enables the projection of influence necessary to protect and safeguard Uganda's interests.

The Ugandan government is using diplomatic relations as a tool to build international networks and strengthening cooperation among states in the fight against terrorism and the control of proliferation of SALW. The concept of building diplomatic relations in fighting terrorism is supported by Cofer Black, who attests that through diplomatic relations among nations, terrorists are isolated and denied of any soft ground and resources to use for their persistence and survival.¹⁷³ Uganda has been engaged in bilateral negotiations and relations with different states to join hands in combating terrorism and small arms proliferation. For example, the Ugandan government developed bilateral relations within the Great Lakes region in fighting the Lord's Resistance Army.

¹⁷² Isoke, "The Dilemma of Porous Borders in Combating Terrorism."

¹⁷³ Cofer J. Black, "Diplomacy and the War against Terrorism: Testimony of Ambassador J. Cofer Black, Coordinator of Counterterrorism, Before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee," Washington, DC (May 5, 2003).

Similarly, the Ugandan government partnered with the United States to combat LRA, a homegrown terrorist group. The U.S. government has supported Uganda by deploying 100 commandos to help UPDF to conduct special operations against LRA in the jungles of DRC and CAR. In addition, the United States plays a significant role by helping the Ugandan government in training, providing logistics, and collecting of technical intelligence in neutralizing LRA and other terrorist groups.¹⁷⁴ Other countries in bilateral relations with Uganda are Britain, France, Canada, Kenya, and Ethiopia.¹⁷⁵ Through bilateral relations, Uganda has been able to control its borders and neutralize terrorism threats; however, its limitation has been a lack of effective counterterrorism strategy in fighting terrorism.

5. Legal Approach

Confronted with the challenges of securing national security from the ADF, the LRA, Al-Shabaab terrorists, and other groups owning guns illegally, the Ugandan government enacted a number of laws to help in combating terrorism and controlling proliferation of SALW, protecting the rule of law, and protecting human rights. The Constitution provides the primary legal framework that guides the development of specific instrument to address the challenges of terrorism and SALW proliferation. In addition, other legal provisions include the Anti-Terrorism Act (2002), the Anti-money Laundering Act (2013), the Communication Monitoring Act (2010), and the Ugandan Citizenship and Immigration Act (2009).

a. The Anti-Terrorism Act (2002)

The Anti-Terrorism Act clearly defines terrorism as “any act of violence or threat of violence carried out for the purpose of influencing government or intimidating the public and for any political, religious, social and economic aim, indiscriminately without due regard for the safety of others or property.”¹⁷⁶ The Act criminalizes every individual or

¹⁷⁴ Isoke, “The Dilemma of Porous Borders in Fighting Terrorism,” 68.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.,

¹⁷⁶ Uganda Anti-Terrorism Act, 2002 (Uganda).

terrorist group that promotes terrorism related activities.¹⁷⁷ Specifically, section 2(i) clause (c) states, “any act involving the use of fire arms or explosion.”¹⁷⁸

The Anti-terrorism Act has done a tremendous job and it proves to be most appropriate and effective measure in combating terrorism and control illegal ownership of arms because since its inception, many terrorist suspects have been prosecuted and convicted in courts of law. This act and its punitive measures has made the Public to understand the dangers of associating with terrorism and has further reduced cases of illegal possession of arms and activities relating to terrorism.

However, Tumushabe argues that the Anti-Terrorism Act does not bring out clearly a difference between general criminality and terrorism.¹⁷⁹ Tumushabe further observes that the Ant-terrorism act however, has been highly criticized by civil society organizations for example human right activists, and the opposing politicians have been propagating it as tool to weaken the opposition and undermine democratic principles in the country.¹⁸⁰

b. *The Anti-Money Laundering Act, 2013*

There is growing nexus between transnational organized crimes like money laundering and homegrown terrorism. The Anti-Money Laundering Act ensures that funding of terrorist activities is significantly limited and allows the development of programs against money laundering.¹⁸¹ Terrorists finance their activities through illegal transfers of money and illicit trade such as drugs and arms. The Ugandan government ratified the Anti-Money Laundering Act to re-enforce the Anti-Terrorism Act in combating terrorist activities and illegal procurement of arms. Among others, the Act provided for the establishment of the Financial Intelligence Authority Department in

¹⁷⁷ Ibid.

¹⁷⁸ “Uganda Anti-Terrorism Act,” section 2.

¹⁷⁹ Tumushabe, “The Dilemma of Combating Terrorism in Democratizing States,” 21.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

¹⁸¹ The Uganda Government, The Anti-Money Laundering Act, 2013, https://www.bou.org.ug/bou/bou-downloads/acts/supervision_acts_regulations/F1-Act/The-Ant-Money.

charge of fraud to collect intelligence reports relating to money laundering in banking.¹⁸² To be more effective, the act provides for life imprisonment, freezing of accounts, and closing of banking institutions.¹⁸³

The law has greatly minimized cases of money laundering in supporting terrorist activities, and it has lowered the criminality rate associated with money and ultimately reducing funding terrorist activities within Uganda. However, Henry Isoke observes that banking institutions face a problem of corruption and poor management of records for easy tracking, and these factors hinder intelligence services from closely monitoring all financial transactions taking place within banking systems. Currently, money is being transferred from one person to the other through mobile money services across the world, which becomes hard to monitor.¹⁸⁴ Growing technology has made fighting terrorism to its final defeat almost impossible in Uganda and in the Great Lakes region.

c. *The Interceptions of Communications Act (2010)*

The Interceptions of Communications Act was passed following various terrorist attacks that left the Citizens of Uganda in a state of fear. It was enacted purposely to allow Intelligence services to have access, to monitor, and intercept suspected terrorists-related communications.¹⁸⁵ Currently, the Act enables easy tracking of arms dealers, and eases investigations of criminal acts associated with arms. However, the Act is being criticized by human rights activists and politicians, who refer to it as gross violation of human rights and an intrusion into private life and civic freedom. For example, a citizen may be worried to communicate freely if the government is monitoring the telephones.

Despite all criticisms, the Act has achieved much in Uganda by preventing, curtailing, detecting, and investigating more terrorist attacks, though with some

¹⁸² Bureau of Counterterrorism, *Country Report on Terrorism 2013*(Washington, DC: U.S. Department of State, April 2014), <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/225886.pdf>.

¹⁸³ Isoke, “The Dilemma of Porous Border in Combating Terrorism,”36.

¹⁸⁴ Tumushabe, “The Dilemma of Combating Terrorism in Democratizing States,” 23.

¹⁸⁵ The Regulation of Interception of Communication Act, 2010(Uganda), <http://www.ulii.org/files/Regulations%20of%20Interception%20oCommunications%20Act,%202010.pdf>.

challenges. Tumushabe further observes that the Act gives a mandate to the National Security Agencies to protect rights and fundamental freedoms of all Ugandans and to protect strategic national interests.

d. *The Uganda Citizens and Migration Act (2009)*

The Uganda Citizens and Migration Act defines the citizens of Uganda and further emphasizes migration issues, and considers control measures against illegal immigrants and refugees from South Sudan, Somalia, Rwanda, and DRC who enter illegally with illicit arms that facilitate homegrown terrorism. Because of porous borders that make it easier for potentially disruptive groups to cross into the country, the Act makes it harder for illegal immigrants who use illegal borders.¹⁸⁶ In addition, the government has instituted robust border measures such as heavy deployment by police, military, and immigration officers to control illegal entries, and technical systems that identify individuals known as Personal Identification Secure Comparison System (PISCES), which can effectively track and identify transnational terrorists via their passports.¹⁸⁷

F. REGIONAL COUNTERTERRORISM MEASURES

To deal with transnational terrorism and SALW proliferation, the Ugandan government is engaging regional efforts to combat growing terrorism. Transnational terrorism can be thwarted through regional efforts and bilateral engagements and cooperation.¹⁸⁸ Regional bodies and African countries have adopted a regional strategy by enhancing cooperation to fight transnational terrorists in the region such as Al-Shabaab and Al-Qaeda. This regional strategy is articulate by and through African Union

¹⁸⁶ The Government of Uganda, *The Uganda Citizens and Migration Act (2009)*

¹⁸⁷ East African Community, *The First Meeting of the Regional e-Immigration Working Group: Report of the Meeting* (Moshi, Tanzania: East Africa Community, April 2010), 5.

¹⁸⁸ Patrick Kimunguni, "Terrorism and Counterterrorism in East Africa," *Researchgate*, May 29, 2015, 17, http://www.researchgate.net/publication/276265383Terrorism_and_counterterrorism_in_East_Africa.

Organization, of which Uganda is a member. This section discusses regional counterterrorism measures.

1. African Union

Uganda, as an active player in the continental security and peace initiatives, continues to nurture functional relationships with regional and international forces to produce and strengthen alliances and partnerships that will contribute to peace and security. Prominent African counterterrorism measures include the African Center for Study and Research of Terrorism, AMISOM, and African Union Strategic partners.

a. African Union Forces

Uganda is a leading country in the Regional Task Force (AU-RTF), responsible for ending a two-decade LRA insurgency. It is also a leading troop-contributing country in AMISOM, with close to 6,220 troops inside Somalia. The participation of Uganda in the regional peace-keeping mission significantly reduced the transnational capabilities of both LRA and A Shabaab. Somalia was the major source of both small arms and terrorists that destabilized Uganda and the Great lakes region as LRA destabilized northern Uganda. However, the lack of adequate force enablers and multipliers still limit the operational potential of African peace keeping missions. The support from the United States government of 100 Special Forces operators in addition to materiel has improved the situation, but more is still needed.

b. The African Center for Study and Research of Terrorism

In July 2004, under the legal frame work of African Union, the ACSRT was established to work under the African Union Commission. The center through national focal points was responsible for coordination of all stake holders and analysis of growing terrorist groups in combating terrorism such as the UN Counterterrorism Committee (CTC) and European Union (EU). Patrick Kimungunyi noted that, the center is further responsible for the following:

- a) Organizing functions aimed at improving counterterrorism capacities and cooperation among AU member states; b) providing capacity-building

assistance to enhance national and regional capabilities; c) creating a mechanism for all member states to access expert guidance; d) building a database to facilitate sharing of intelligence and other related terrorism information; e) harmonizing and standardizing domestic legal framework within AU member states and international counterterrorism frameworks; and f) disseminating counterterrorism research across the continent.¹⁸⁹

The ACSRT has not achieved much in fulfilling its tasks to effectively combat terrorism in Africa because it lacks financial support to run the activities of the center. Basically, the center depends on donations from allies such as the European Union.¹⁹⁰ This has limited the capacity building of the center to catch up with the challenges of terrorism on the continent since donations are not always available, and member states are financially too weak to support themselves.

2. African Strategic Partners

As mentioned earlier, partners that financially support the African Union include the United States, the European Union, and the UN. To be specific, the United States government has persistently continued to support the Ugandan government and is currently providing training, financial support, logistics, and technical advice in combating terrorism and SALW proliferation. Through regional strategic partnerships, a combined joint task force was established in the Horn of Africa and in East Africa to handle terrorism related threats. It is estimated that during the financial years 2010–2014, the United States has released \$8.72 million to fight the LRA terrorist group, which is a major contributor of illegal arms.¹⁹¹ Support by the U.S. government has made a tremendous positive difference in neutralizing the LRA terrorist group and diminishing the illicit small arms inflow.

Similarly, in view of such security threats, the European Union adopted a strategy aimed at solving conflicts caused by SALW in Africa by promoting good governance

¹⁸⁹ Kimungunyi, “Terrorism and Counterterrorism in East Africa,” 13.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid., 14.

¹⁹¹ U.S. Department of State, “U.S. Support to Regional Efforts to Counter the Lord’s Resistance Army,” March 24, 2014, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2014/03/223844.htm>.

focused on the social economic transformation in Somalia, and addressing issues of governance as a solution to counterterrorism. In implementing the strategy, the EU is further focus on preventing, protecting, pursuing, and responding to any terrorist threat.¹⁹² It is estimated that in the year 2014, it spent 721 million pounds on AMISOM training to combat terrorism.¹⁹³

¹⁹² “EU Fight against Terrorism-Consortium, “<http://www.consiliumeuropa.eu/en/policies/fight-against-terrorism/>.”

¹⁹³ Conrad Rein, “The EU and Peace Keeping in Africa: the case of AMISOM,”

IV. ANALYSIS OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SALW PROLIFERATION AND HOMEGROWN TERRORISM

The relationship between SALW and homegrown terrorism is more complex and intersects law enforcement and counterterrorism. SALW proliferation causes lawless situations that are exploited by homegrown terrorists to strike their targets of opportunity. The coercive potential of these illegal weapons continues to facilitate homegrown terrorists and criminal-minded groups to abuse human rights and perpetuate murders. The killing of Ugandan anti-terrorist prosecutor Joan Kagezi and anti ADF Muslim clerics in Uganda, between 2015–2016, bears this assertion.

A. NEXUS BETWEEN SALW PROLIFERATION AND HOMEGROWN TERRORISM

The 21st century has witnessed the growth in the symbiotic relationship between homegrown terrorists and transnational organized crime cartels manifesting in the form of SALW proliferation, illicit drug vending, money laundering, and cyber-related crimes.¹⁹⁴ In Africa's Great Lakes region, members of the ADF and Al Shabaab are involved in organized crime activities and illicit economies in eastern DRC and Somalia, respectively, using Uganda as a transit route.¹⁹⁵ Similarly, the mushrooming numbers of organized crime cartels are involved in acts of violence. Transnational organized crime has thus become a major partner of terrorist groups globally and in eastern Africa. Homegrown terrorism and SALW proliferation, though motivated by different factors, are no longer so divergent in terms of their consequences to society. SALW remains the literal weapon of choice for both transnational organized criminals and homegrown terrorists.

¹⁹⁴ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, "Report on Organized Crime and Trafficking in East Africa," 39–40, https://www.unodc.org/documents/easternafrika/regional-ministerial-meeting/organized_crime_and_trafficking_in_eastern_Africa_Discussion.

¹⁹⁵ William D. Hartung, "The New Business of War: Small Arms and Proliferation of Conflict," *Ethics & International Affairs* 15, no. 1 (May 2001): http://www.carnegiecouncil.org/publications/journal/15_1/articles/488.html

There is a clear nexus between SALW and homegrown terrorism in the sense that terrorists take advantage of the fragile political and security situation to radicalize, recruit, and target their victims. For instance, the ADF often manipulates clan ethnic and religious conflicts to build its terror capabilities and gain support from Salafist sections of the Muslim group.¹⁹⁶ Unemployed youth in Uganda are still victims or culprits of both small arms dealings and illegal activities, including homegrown terrorist planning and working with intelligence cells for small tokens to meet such basic needs as shelter, food, education, and medical care.¹⁹⁷

As the ADF case shows, the growth of homegrown terrorism and SALW proliferation in Uganda are facilitated by geographical and demographical factors. For example, the central and eastern Uganda has a strong Islamic domination with profound Islamic ideology and strong support that facilitate the growth of ADF homegrown terrorism.¹⁹⁸ The ADF resorts to use of small arms because they are easily accessible and facilitate the achievements of their objectives.¹⁹⁹ ADF still leverages the ungoverned space in eastern DRC and it derives its weaponry capabilities from its intimate relationship with former ex-combatants and anti-government militia.²⁰⁰

Similarly, since 1987, under the leadership of Joseph Kony, the LRA as a terrorist group meted several atrocities to civilians as it waged war to overthrow the Ugandan government, and restore the mythical government based on Ten Commandments.²⁰¹ The LRA persisted for so long because it capitalized on the conflicts in South Sudan where SALW were easy to access and other logistics were available to advance its interests.

¹⁹⁶ B Ali-Dinar, Ali, "Uganda: IRIN Special Report on ADF Rebellion19991208," University of Pennsylvania African Studies Center, <http://www.africa.upenn.edu/Hornet/irin-120899c.html>

¹⁹⁷ Godfrey Olukya, "Uganda Rebels in DRC Recruit Child Soldiers," Africa CEO Forum, 23 August 2013, <http://www.theAfricanrport.com/east-Africa/Uganda-rebels-in-drc>,

¹⁹⁸ B Ali-Dinar Ali, "Uganda: IRIN Special Report on the ADF Rebellion," (1999).

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰⁰ Ibid.

²⁰¹ Africano Abasa, "Ungoverned Spaces and the Survival of Terrorist Groups in Africa: A Case Study of the Lord's Resistance Army," (master's thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 2015), 22.

B. CONFLICT, CRIME, AND SALW PROLIFERATION

SALW are significant drivers of conflict in Uganda. Both intrastate and interstate have bedeviled conflicts in Uganda since independence has been driven by the easy accessibility and proliferation of SALW within Ugandan society. The extant inter-ethnic conflict in western Uganda among the Bakoko and Bamba tribes in the foothills of Ruwenzori Mountains, the skirmishes of north eastern Uganda between the Itesots and the Karamojong warriors, and 20-year insurgency in northern Uganda by LRA, showcases the significance of SALW in escalating conflict.

Similarly, in northwest Uganda where the Uganda National Liberation Front and West Nile Bank Front armed groups dominated since the fall of Ida Amin in 1979, West Nile region has been experiencing a series of armed rebellions, conflicts, and crimes because of illegal small arms in the community. Following the people's protracted war led by the National Resistance Army (NRA) that took over in 1986, the Uganda National Liberation Front a rebel group (UNLF) re-emerged in 1988. Hostilities with the government of Uganda continued and were further complicated by the emergence of a second insurgent group, the West Nile Bank Front. (WNBF); however, the rebel groups were decisively defeated by the NRA/UPDF. West Nile is now generally considered to be in the post-conflict phase, as it borders on all sides with areas that are also conflict prone. It continues to be affected by the spillover of other conflicts in the form of large-scale refugee populations from both DRC and Sudan.

There are many SALW circulating within communities in the region and more among the pastoral communities in the Great Lakes Region and in the Horn of Africa. The guns that acquired through inter-clan skirmishes and raids especially in the Karamoja region were later sold to criminals and more often ended up facilitating homegrown terrorism.²⁰² These conflicts associated with SALW occur in the border areas of North-Eastern Uganda and the Western parts of the Kenya border, which have left people dead,

²⁰² Benson Kiperer Ngeiywa, "Deterring Cross-border Conflicts in the Horn of Africa: Kenya-Uganda border," (master's thesis, Naval Postgraduate School (2008), 12, 38.

and others injured or displaced.²⁰³ My close analysis of disarmament measures reveals the following shortfalls: 1) failed to tackle the primary source of arms; 2) ad hoc implementation that did not provide holistic implementation strategies to integrate all countries and stakeholders, and did not address issues related to the demand side, but instead emphasized the supply side.

C. REGIONAL FACTORS

The absence of regional practical strategy to deal with the question of management of ex-combatants will continue to frustrate any policy intervention to stop SALW proliferation and homegrown terrorism. The two intertwined vices have grossly undermined the security of Uganda, despite the government approach of conducting and implementing Disarmament, Demobilization, Rehabilitation, and Reintegration.

Homegrown terrorists continue to camouflage in SALW proliferation by refugees, illegal migrants, and militias. The line between the homegrown terrorism activities and consequences of SALW to the society continues to be blurred. Terrorists, disguised as refugees, enter the country to activate their cells. For example, the culprits of the July 2010 Kampala attacks entered Uganda as Somali refugees, hence attracting less security surveillance.²⁰⁴ Similarly, the same mode was used to attack Garissa University in Kenya.²⁰⁵ The sustainable solution to SALW and homegrown terrorism in East Africa lies in the creation of a secure and peaceful strategic environment in the Somalia and entire horn of Africa. Somalia today remains as a major corridor for SALW in the Great Lakes Region. I believe there is credible evidence that Somali-terrorists, like the Al-Shabaab terrorists, have cells and grounds where they train and recruit, funded through drug and small arms trafficking.

Globalization has complicated immigration management terrain in Uganda. It now includes a large mobile population of political and economic refugees and casual

²⁰³Ibid.

²⁰⁴ *Al Jazeera*, "Al Shabaab Claims Uganda Bombings."

²⁰⁵ BBC NEWS, "Kenya attack: 147 dead in Garissa University assault." <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-32169080>

labor migrants. It also involves human trafficking, dumping illegal immigrants from neighboring countries, and calls for greater collaboration between states to improve national and regional security. The propensity for cross-border violence has been a common occurrence along Uganda's borders, especially to the South Western Region with persistent conflicts in Eastern DRC and in Burundi. Some of the refugees are ex-combatants fleeing from the frontlines, and often they attempt to sell or barter weapons in the refugee settlement camps, hence complicating the security situation. Refugee settlement camps like Nakivale in Western Uganda are losing civilian posture into centers of radicalization and negative ethnic mobilization, which is a recipe for increasing homegrown terrorism.²⁰⁶

Although border security is a critical aspect of promoting national security, it has generally been given less priority compared to other sectors. The decreased attention to border security has largely contributed to a prevalence of cross-border threats such as cross-border crimes, proliferation of illegal arms, drugs, terrorists, influx of refugees, and illegal immigrants.²⁰⁷ For example, the border between Kenya and Somalia limits the inflow of refugees escaping the volatile political situation in Somalia. Because of security lapses, terrorists cross freely without being noticed and go on to terrorize the East African region.

Like elsewhere in Uganda, the southwestern Ugandan borders with DRC, Rwanda, and Tanzania are characterized by a high level of porosity, unclear border demarcations, and poor border management mechanism, thus making it easy to experience cross-border instability spillovers. Securing the entire border from threats of terrorists, negative armed groups, illegal migrant require multidimensional efforts and resources. Uganda must strive to prevent instability from neighboring states spreading into the country as the most viable option of defending its borders. Emphasizing the post-

²⁰⁶ Jonn, Drury, and Williams Richards, "Children and Young People who are refugees, internally displaced persons or survivors or perpetrators of war, mass violence and terrorism." (2012), 10–16.[doi:10.1097/YCO.0b013e328353eea6](https://doi.org/10.1097/YCO.0b013e328353eea6)

²⁰⁷ Mareike, Schomerus, and Lotje Devrie. "Improving Border Security: A Situation of Security Pluralism along South Sudan's Borders with the Democratic Republic of Congo," (2014), http://www.Eprints.ise.ac.ok/56338/1/schomerus_improvising_border_security_2014.pdf.

entry management of all immigrants is not necessary, but is critical for sustainable border security. There is no internal enforcement system, and thus, it is simple for terrorists and SALW to infiltrate the country. The border police and meager migration control department are disjointed in the operations. Given the significance of borders, the government lacks the initiative measures that are robust enough to combat both terrorism and SALW proliferation including a border security agency and electronic surveillance systems.

The civil conflict in South Sudan and Burundi, and the presence of the LRA in the jungle of CAR, in addition to perennial presence of negative militias in eastern DRC, bears out this model, as well. Illicit SALW change hands easily due to the absence of strong state control in fragile spots. For instance, Thokozan Thusi argues that “the mistrust and suspicion between two countries created conflicts, and the conflicts have been reflected in each government accusing each other of providing bases, logistic support, and arms to the adversary.”²⁰⁸

Conflicts in each country have created insecurity and vicious cycles of violence and armament with grave regional implications and ultimately growth of homegrown terrorists. Similarly, in the DRC more than six countries participated in a war to fight the Kishasha government to overthrow President Mubutu. The effects of this conflict and arms proliferation manifested itself in gross increases in cases of human rights abuse. Conflicts have affected all countries in the Great Lakes Region, and have facilitated the growth of homegrown terrorists in Uganda. Nganga finds out credible linkages by pointing out assortment of weapons exchange in the conflict zones especially the Air Defense Systems that are widely used by homegrown terrorists and conflicts in the region.²⁰⁹ Conflict entrepreneurs continue to profit from illegal small arms trade taking advantage of conflict situations. The presence of factors that cause conflicts still frustrate

²⁰⁸ Thokozan Thusi, “Assessing Small Arms Control Initiative in East Africa.” 19.

²⁰⁹ C. K. Nganga, “Small Arms and Light Weapons: The Role of Small Arms and Light Weapons in Conflict and Insecurity in Sub-Sahara Africa,” (2007).

the measures and energies to reduce the scale of SALW proliferation and homegrown terrorism

D. EFFECTS OF WEAK GOVERNANCE IN THE GREAT LAKES REGION

In Uganda and the Great Lakes Region, poverty has become endemic with the persistence of corruption that attracts SALW proliferation and homegrown terrorists.²¹⁰ Dealers of illicit small arms and terrorists bribe the immigration officers and local security officials to advance their interests. East Africa being one of the countries in Africa with weak economies, the region is a bleeding ground of illicit SALW and homegrown terrorism. However, leaders in the region have not believed that poverty is linked to terrorism.²¹¹ At least in the region of East Africa and Uganda, poverty, poor governance, social injustices, and imbalances in economic development enhances the ability for religious extremists to radicalize and build local support that supports homegrown terrorism.²¹² In addition, inadequate salaries and wages for immigration staff and security personnel, and general poverty compromises their integrity and increases widespread corruption that in turn creates a climate favorable for SALW proliferation and homegrown terrorism.²¹³

Much of the SALW that threatens the Great Lakes Region and Uganda in particular originated from conflicts often involving regular forces such as insurgencies, criminal gangs, and Islamic militants. It is in such an environment that homegrown terrorism has flourished. It was the breakdown of the government apparatus in Somalia that ushered the Al-Shabaab terrorists into the region. Similarly, failing states of Eritrea, South Sudan, Eastern DRC, and Burundi continues to act as a supply source for SALW while opening up for potential homegrown terrorism. The Uganda security forces have a

²¹⁰David H. Shinn, "Fighting Counterterrorism in East Africa and the Horn of Africa," 14.

²¹¹*Ibid.*

²¹²David Shinn, "Fighting Counterterrorism in East Africa and the Horn of Africa,"

²¹³Inge Amundsen, *Political Corruption: An Introduction to the Issues* (Bergen, Norway: Chr. Michelsen Institute, 1999), <https://www.cmi.no/publications/file/1040-political-corruption.pdf>

weak oversight mechanism to monitor the illicit flow of guns, and they have been grappling with allegations of corruption and proliferating arms to unauthorized users especially in urban centers and operation areas.²¹⁴

On several occasions, the Uganda government has given out weapons for self-defense to certain communities that were threatened by armed groups. For example, when the LRA extended to the Lango and Teso Regions, the government could not provide security to the population. The government decided to arm communities and created home guards. These weapons distributed among ill-trained home guards were the same arms that were misused by some of the wrong characters to terrorize the country. Others escaped with the guns and joined armed rebellions and thus, the emergence of homegrown terrorists came about. The absence of proper mechanisms of transparency, accountability of government arms, coupled with diverting resources intended for combating SALW and homegrown terrorism, has a broad implication for security. To effectively combat such challenges requires effective governance, accountability, professional security forces, and cooperation of civilian oversight.

From the policy perspective, the reviewed policies and measures to combat both SALW proliferation and homegrown terrorism reveal mismatch between the government's policies and the situation on ground. For example, the military approach to disarm the Karamojong have not yielded the conclusive results, and has earned a lot of criticism from civil society because of human rights abuses that are associated with forced disarmament. Most of the policies, laws, and measures by the government and strategic partners are elitist based, and lack community norms and rituals. Owing to the fact that local communities are conduits, consumers and victims of SALW and its various interventions, and the efforts and views of local communities, and robust oversight mechanism by civil society are lacking and this laxity creates a ground of insecurity

²¹⁴ "2 UPDF Soldiers Dismissed For Sale of Gun-Red Paper Uganda." *Redpapper* <http://www.redpapper.co.ug/2-updf-soldiers-dismissed-4-sale-of-gun/>.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter concludes by pointing out the cause-and-effect relationship between SALW proliferation and homegrown terrorism. It also highlights the silent areas in the findings, and makes possible recommendations.

A. FINDINGS

One finding in this thesis is that the proliferation of SALW was not only a factor that facilitated homegrown terrorism, it continues to be a driving factor. The proliferation of SALW has been a major cause for the majority death in recent wars and figures in much of the crime and civil violence that ultimately led to the growth of homegrown terrorism in Uganda and in the Great Lakes Region. Porous borders, ethnic clashes, regional conflicts, ungoverned spaces, and proliferation of illicit weapons in the region are the factors that facilitate SALW proliferation and homegrown terrorism.

The continuous circulation of SALW into the hands of civilians and other unauthorized people is leveraged by a weak institutional and legal framework in Uganda and the Great Lakes Region. The illicit proliferation of SALW has had a negative impact on the peace and security of civilians in Uganda, especially those living in Northern, North East, and Western Uganda. In the western region, the Kasese district and Bundibugyo have continuously experienced constant ethnic conflicts. Proliferation of SALW is the major concern that has led to many deaths, disrupted their social fabrics, and hindered the social-economic development in most African countries where people are being terrorized on a daily basis, and Uganda has not been spared. To control SALW proliferation and the attendant effects in Uganda and the GLR, member countries in the region should strengthen cooperation and enforce information sharing on issues related to SALW and terrorism. The spirit of sharing information should be maintained at all levels such as strategic, operational, and tactical levels for effective monitoring.

SALW have altered the security dynamics in Uganda and the Great Lakes Region. The less attention given to the problem by the regional leaders and international community has allowed it to escalate and magnify its effects on the population. Illegal

SALW continues to drive the conflicts in Somalia, Burundi, and South Sudan. Homegrown terrorists on the other hand, take a flirting opportunity of state fragility to mobilize, acquire arms, and attack their targets of opportunity. The sustainable panacea lies within the fact that the regional government must adopt the whole of government approach to combat the twin vices of small arms proliferation and home grown terrorism.

While the security challenge emanating from SALW proliferation and homegrown terrorism is likely to remain a global concern, the consequences of homegrown terrorism and its related crimes on both states can be minimized through strengthening the cooperation between national, regional, and international stakeholders. In addition, cooperation among states in combating SALW proliferation and homegrown terrorism should be enforced, and non-compliant member states should be punished. The cooperation should further emphasize intelligence sharing and timely reporting, especially on any suspected immanent terrorist attacks. Reduction of illicit arms in the hands of the wrong people, requires an internationally and regionally agreed consensus on the restrictions of the sale of arms. Efforts by the United States, the European Union, and the United Nations to combat homegrown terrorism and SALW proliferation have been significant and have yielded positive results. The threat of SALW proliferation in the region however; remains extant and is likely to rejuvenate.

The war against homegrown terrorism and illegal manufacture, and transfer of SALW can attain its intended objectives. Michael Ogu claims that “when sincere and responsible leadership, coupled with realistic policies and strategies, create a rule of law that reflect the needs and aspirations of individual citizens and states on the continent.”²¹⁵ It will be difficult to reduce the illegal proliferation of SALW and terrorism in general in Uganda when neighboring countries in the Great Lakes Region and Africa as a continent still experience illicit proliferation of arms. However, such proliferation of SALW and terrorism can be tremendously curtailed if there is good governance, effective democracy, minimum welfare for the citizens, and when safety and needs of Africans are met.

²¹⁵ Micheal Ogu, “Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons in Africa: Cause OR Effect.” 11.

Whereas there are tangible attempts to stop SALW proliferation and homegrown terrorism, the success of these efforts will need effective approaches that are rooted within human rights principles. These strategies should have a human face and be people focused, including long-term economic development of the regions.

B. RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations target different stakeholders in the fight against SALW proliferation and homegrown terrorism at both the national and regional levels. This section also suggests ways to improve imperatives of state governance as a viable solution.

1. National Level

The Uganda government should put more emphasis on programs such as disarmament programs for both voluntary and forceful disarmament to reduce illegal arms in the communities. Such programs should have international and professional standards for their effectiveness. To implement such initiatives effectively, other countries in the region must adopt programs with international standards that address all security issues related to proliferation of SALW and homegrown terrorism. In addition, states in the region should ensure effective accountability of their SALW and monitoring capabilities of small arms inflow by improving border security through integrated computerized border management systems, deployment of enforcement officers, maintaining of military deployments to reinforce police, and migration officers along all porous borders.

There is a need for the government of Uganda to craft strategic communication plans aimed at creating public awareness of the consequences of SALW proliferation and its linkage with homegrown terrorists. The plan should target both local community audiences and international stakeholders.

The Ugandan government should strengthen oversight roles by civilian authorities over military operations to improve and enhance accountability and transparency on the information related to small arms transfers, procurement, and government expenditure

details on small arms.²¹⁶ The oversight institutions limit unnecessary procurement of arms that may end up in the wrong hands.²¹⁷ In addition, civil society should be allowed to check the government by accessing reports on small arms transfers on both national and international levels.²¹⁸

Uganda's government should acquire the standard software system and modern equipment to establish a database of all state weapons. The system should have the capacity to connect all districts and regional registries within armed forces such as the army UPDF, the Uganda police, the Uganda prisons, and the wildlife wardens to the central registry for easy monitoring and control of state arms that are now the major source of illicit SALW. In addition, to have an effective system, countries in the region should commit enough resources in a building capacity in training professionals, updating the systems, and regular maintenance to avoid abuse.

Uganda should review its legislations on possession and manufacture of SALW to be in line with the international instruments. Ugandan government laws and the regulation of SALW as documented in the Firearm Act of 1970, regulated the ownership and manufacturing of guns, and the illicit transfer of firearms and sale of ammunitions.²¹⁹ However, much as the laws on arms protect the business entrepreneurs, they do not apply to brokers, who remain the primary actors in transfer of arms like in Kenya. Legally recognized dealers in Kenya and other neighboring countries are involved in brokering arms; and the law protects them.

Uganda should strengthen its regional cooperation and international partnership with countries like the United States in fighting homegrown terrorism and SALW proliferation. The relationship should further be extended toward pacifying neighboring

²¹⁶International Committee of the Red Cross. "Arms Availability and the Situation of Civilians in Armed Conflict," (1999), 15–23, http://www.icrc.org/eng/assets/files/other/icrc_002_0734_arms_availability.pdf

²¹⁷ Ibid.

²¹⁸ Matt Schroecher and Guy Lamb, "The Illicit Arms Trade in Africa: A Global Enterprise" *African Analyst Quarterly*.1. (2006): 68–78, <https://fas.org/asm/library/articles/schroederlamp.pdf>.

²¹⁹ United Nations, "Implementing the UN Program of Action Commitments," 10–15, <http://www.ians.org/system/files/UNPoA-Eng.pdf>.

states like South Sudan and Somalia that are experiencing conflicts and that act as the major sources of small arms that have a spillover effect on Uganda.

2. Regional Level

There is a need to have a joint mechanism of implementing regional programs for combating SALW and homegrown terrorism that are integrated with national and regional member states. This would promote security among the states in the region and advance post conflict reconstruction and good governance. This approach would further eliminate the situation where disarmament of one country is undermined by the lack of disarmament of another country, and yet they interact with each other across uncontrolled borders.

Leaders in the Great Lakes region should embrace small arms nonproliferation policies such as the SALW Trade Treaty, and through regional cooperation, intelligence sharing, and joint operations against SALW proliferation and combating terrorism. To attain this, countries in the region should practice good governance that promotes regional cooperation where transparency, accountability, and democratic principles are respected, and the effective implementation of policies are able to handle security challenges.

The East African parliament and other regional initiatives and mechanisms should emphasize the implementation of laws and regulations that control the proliferation of small arms and boost efforts to combat homegrown terrorism. Individual countries should further promote laws in line with regional framework to control and combat the vices.²²⁰

The African Union should fast track harmonization of counterterrorism legislation in all member countries for mutual legal harmonization and extradition of terrorists. In addition, member states should implement existing recommendations on border control and management measures against terrorism and illicit inflow of small arms. There is a need to plan for and engage with the peace, security, and development nexus as a strategy for monitoring the sources of SALW, causes of homegrown terrorism, and transnational

²²⁰ Ibid., 15–16.

terrorism. The existence of trans-boundary terror cells requires that regional member states conduct joint trainings on the methods of tracking and monitoring of terrorists. Effective monitoring of terrorist activities along cross-borders will assist early detection and maximize the possibility of replication of methods of attack in the region.

Countries in the Great Lakes region should address social, political, and economic issues affecting the citizens, such as poverty, unemployment, and other governance issues that prompt some people to join terrorist groups and illegally sell arms. To nip the problems of SALW and homegrown terrorism in their bud, it is prudent to address the primary causes of conflicts such as unequal distribution of national resources, setting out viable land dispute management mechanisms, and addressing historical demographical distortions in regions perceived to be marginalized. The government of Uganda should develop a strategy to counteract the narratives of homegrown terrorism and gun culture.

The complexity of SALW proliferation and homegrown terrorism continue to threaten the security of Uganda and the Great Lakes region. Therefore, combating the two vices requires both national and regional approaches to attain social, political, and economic development in the region.

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