

# **ARMS EXPORTS AND TRANSFERS: FROM Sub-Saharan AFRICA TO Sub-Saharan AFRICA**

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## **ARMS EXPORTS AND TRANSFERS WITHIN AFRICA**

Although intra-continental weapons transfers are not well-documented there are some general trends that have developed over the years.

First of all, small arms and light weapons (SALW) are the most commonly used weapons in violent conflicts in all African regions East and Southern Africa, as well as in the West and Central regions. According to Wezeman, groups such as the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in Uganda, various Somali factions across the Horn of Africa, and the post-election violence in Kenya are further incited by the omnipresence of illegally-trafficked Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW).

Secondly, most of these weapons are second-hand and/or refurbished equipment.

Thirdly, these intra-continental transactions involving SALW are the primary way that internationally embargoed areas such as Somalia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Darfur are able to obtain weapons.

And lastly, some regions within the continent are developing their own weapons and ammunition manufacturing capacities.

A new characteristic is that some African governments are making payments for weapons or military services in kind, such as in mining concessions (in Angola, DR Congo, Sierra Leone, etc) or to obtain access to significant natural resources, (in Sudan, China gets access to oil in exchange for weapons) or other deals, such as the one that took place between South Africa and Uganda in 1997 where arms were exchanged for gold bars.

There have been numerous instances of some countries supplying weapons to both sides in the same war. For instance, South African APCs, mine-detection and mine-protected vehicles are to be seen with both the Khartoum government forces and the southern SPLA in the Sudan. The same occurred in Burundi with Pretoria supplying both the government and the rebels.

A number of brokers and companies in Africa play a decisive role in the illegal transfer of arms, transporting weapons between different countries.

A number of West African states make a "triangulation", they buy arms for their own use, but they forward it to a third state under embargo. Currently there is very little information on the arms transfers from African states to other African states. Though the transfers to and from these states is not very important in economic terms, these transfers can play an important role in the disruption of regional security and socio-economic development.

## **African countries with producing capacity**

There is very little information on the main producers and exporters of small arms in Africa. Only a few African countries have the capacity to manufacture arms and ammunition with South Africa topping the list, followed by Nigeria. But other states, like Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania and Zimbabwe are also producers. In Western Africa the production capacity is smaller and based on imported technology. Some factories of ammunition exist in Burkina Faso, Cameroun, Guinea and RD Congo. A small handcraft production takes place in some other states, like Ghana. Even the production capabilities of these countries are limited and are based on imported technology, machinery and basic components. There is little information on the final use of the small arms imported by these states. The difficulty to get this information is due to the fact that most of these states never reported their transfers and production to the UN Register, marking always NONE. In 2009 only Burundi and Seychelles send their report to the UN register.

Even though South Africa has an arms industry that produces a range of modern military products it remains dependent on imports for most of its military equipment. South Africa is the only country in the region that exports substantial volumes of arms—it was the 17th largest arms exporter globally in the period 2004–2008.

2 Transactions during this period include the supply of a great number of armoured vehicles for use in peace operations in Africa, and a variety of weapons to African armed forces.

### ***SOUTH AFRICA ARMS EXPORTS***

While South Africa is dependent upon imports for most of its military equipment, it also boasts a domestic arms industry that produces a range of modern military products. The small arms component of the South African industry comprises less than ten manufacturers and their output is insignificant in terms of the global small arms trade. South Africa is the only country in Sub-Saharan Africa that exports substantial volumes of arms, and it is the biggest exporter of conventional arms within the African continent. South Africa was the 17<sup>th</sup> largest arms exporter globally in the period from 2004 to 2008, particularly due to its sales contracts with African armed forces. For example, in 2006 South Africa exported 4 armored cars to Burkina Faso, 8 mine-protected and 47 armored vehicles to Senegal, and 4 mine-protected vehicles to Ghana. In 2007, South Africa sold anti-tank missiles to Algeria.

Table 1.1 shows the value of South African conventional weapons to other countries on the continent over the course of 2008 and 2009. Some key transactions to notice are the isolated yet relatively massive sales of arms to Sudan in 2008 and to Uganda, Kenya, and Senegal in 2009. South Africa is also a key supplier to the North African arms race, as exemplified by the large contracts given to Algeria (520.5 million Rand

over two years), Egypt (110.8 million Rand), and Tunisia (300 million Rand in 2008 alone).

Table 1.1: South African Exports of Conventional Arms  
1 Rand ~ 0.15 USD (October 2010)

<b>Recipient Country</b>	<b>2008 in millions of Rand</b>	<b>2008 in millions USD</b>	<b>2009 in millions of Rand</b>	<b>2009 in millions USD</b>
Algeria	138.3	20.12	382.2	55.59
Angola	4.9	0.71	0.5	0.07
Benin	-	-	0.75	0.11
Botswana	12.5	1.82	30	4.36
Burkina Faso			34.6	5.03
Burundi	15.1	2.20	22.4	3.26
Chad	15.2	2.21	2	0.29
D.R. Congo	-	-	3.4	0.49
Egypt	58.5	8.51	52.3	7.61
Gabon	5.2	0.76	0.7	0.10
Ghana	45	6.55	25	3.64
Kenya			55.7	8.10
Lesotho	4.2	0.61	4.5	0.65
Madagascar			2.3	0.33
Malawi	14.5	2.11	-	-
Mauritania			0.6	0.09
Mozambique	0.2	0.03		
Namibia	-	-	5.3	0.77
Niger	7.6	1.11	-	-
Nigeria	51	7.42	12.9	1.88
Rwanda	4.6	0.67	2.4	0.35
Sudan	64	9.31		
Senegal	-	-	85	12.36
Somalia			4.7	0.68
Swaziland			12.5	1.82

Recipient Country	2008 in millions of Rand	2008 in millions USD	2009 in millions of Rand	2009 in millions USD
Tanzania	11.2	1.63	9.4	1.37
Tunisia	300	43.64		
Uganda	2.1	0.31	169	24.58
Zambia	18.9	2.75	32.1	4.67

The main recipient of South African military equipment in 2009 is Uganda, at a moment when the Lord Resistance Army renewed its attacks.

In 2006 a South African subsidiary of the British company BAE Systems sold Mamba armoured personnel carriers to the Ugandan government ahead of the elections. At least 32 such vehicles were sold by the subsidiary, called Land Systems OMC, since 2002.

The lack of international controls means that an overseas subsidiary can secure sales in military equipment which a UK-based company would not be allowed to do.

There are allegations that some of the vehicles sold by South Africa to Uganda were used to quash demonstrations in Kampala in support of the opposition candidate and later on in view of the elections.

### ***Other African countries with weapons manufacturing capacity***

A new development is the emergence of African arms producers.

Table 1.5: Weapons Manufacturing Capacity in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA)

<b>Countries with Known Weapons Manufacturing Capacity</b>	
Central Africa	Unknown Manufacturer on 7.62mm NATO cartridge.
Ethiopia	Ethiopia currently has small military industries.
Kenya	With assistance from FN Herstal of Belgium (1996), Kenya has domestic capacity to produce small arms and ammunition. The bullet factory's capacity is 20,000-60,000 bullets per day, while local consumption is about two million bullets per year. Kenya refuses to open up its factories for independent verification of their facilities despite ratifying the UN Arms Trade Treaty. The factory produces three types of bullets, namely, 9mm ammunition for the FN35 Browning pistol and the Sterling, Uzi or H&K MP5 sub-machine guns used by the armed forces; 7.62x51mm for the FN-FAL and the G3, the main rifles used by the armed forces; and 5.56mm ammunition, used by the Kenya police. The factory does not have the capacity to manufacture ammunition for the AK-47,

	the most popular assault rifle in the region.
Nigeria	Nigeria has the domestic capacity to manufacture small arms which are similar to the AK-47 and the requisite ammunition.
Sudan	Built with assistance from the Chinese, Sudan has at least three weapons factories outside of Khartoum. There are news that the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), designated as a terrorist organizations, is operating a secret weapons factory in Sudan to funnel weapons to terrorist organizations in Africa and the Middle East.
Tanzania	Tanzania has small arms ammunition factories.
Uganda	Uganda also has small arms ammunition factories. It justifies it by the long-running war with rebels in the north and hostility with Sudan. Uganda refuses to open up its factories for independent verification of their facilities despite ratifying the UN Arms Trade Treaty. There are three weapons manufacturers in Uganda; the largest, Nakasongola Arms Factory, is owned by Chinese (government and private sector) interests.
Zimbabwe	Zimbabwe has small arms ammunition factories since the days of the Munitions Production Board of the Second World War.  In 1985 ZANU (PF) government established the Zimbabwe Defence Industry (ZDI) which erected two arms production factories with a dual status of being both a private company and a state enterprise. In 1986 NORINCO of China was awarded the contract to build a small arms ammunition factory in Zimbabwe for the ZDI. By 1990, only the Explosives Filling Plant, the Small Arms Ammunition project were built. In 1987 the French Government offered a financial package to the ZDI.

### **The illegal transfer of arms from Africa to Africa**

In Africa as elsewhere, the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons is opaque, amorphous and dynamic. It is also a global enterprise with illicit weapons across Africa coming from virtually every major arms producing country in the world.

There are quite a number of examples of “irresponsible” transfers from and to West African states. The Revolutionary United Front of Charles Taylor got its arms via Burkina Faso, Niger and Liberia. Though Ivory Coast has been under UN embargo since 2004, yet the conflict was fuelled by arms delivered from Liberia to rebel groups. RD Congo was under embargo since 2003, but Rwanda has often violated this embargo providing arms to rebel groups. Added to that a number of arms traffic networks operating from Tanzania, Burundi and DR Congo have been sending arms to the different rebel groups. La Somali has been under UN embargo since 2000, yet

the government of Djibouti has furnished arms and medicines to the Islamic Court Union, an opposition group.

Darfur has been for years under UN embargo but arms have been provided by the Chadian government.

Many countries buy arms mentioning they are for their own use, but later on they are directed to a third country under embargo. Chad, Burkina Faso and Guinea have done that in different occasions.

As of 1 October 2010, three francophone States of sub-Saharan Africa are under partial or total arms transfers sanctions imposed by regional or international organizations: Ivory Coast, DR Congo (UN) and Guinea (Economic Community African and Western European Union).

Arms traffickers on other continents fly or ship weapons illicitly into Africa. Most of the illicit small arms used in Africa originate from China, Israel, and more than 20 OSCE (Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe) members. The clandestine nature of this trade makes it impossible to know its real value, but it is obvious that in Africa the illicit trade in small arms is counter-developmental on many levels.

Governments and armed groups in neighbouring or further states are also significant sources of illicit small arms. These governments, e.g. the case of Morocco, Algeria and Libya that *bought arms that are likely aimed at* providing material support to one or more of the parties to the conflict, in neighbouring countries by transferring illicitly large numbers of small arms. Since 2000, UN investigators have documented weapons transfers by neighboring governments to armed groups in Somalia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Sudan, all of which were under UN arms embargoes at the time of the transfers.

Rebels and other armed groups are another major source of illicit small arms. Cross-border arms trafficking by members of armed groups is also common. Rebels often cross the poorly secured borders to smuggled weapons and trade them for food, vehicles and other consumer goods. According to UN investigators, Somali militias regularly buy arms from and sell arms to each other on the local black market.

There are other ways in which illegal arms enter the market. Small arms are seized or stolen from government forces, looted from state armouries, purchased from corrupt soldiers and stolen from private owners. Similarly, peacekeepers are occasionally relieved of (or voluntarily part with) their small arms, which often end up in rebel arsenals.

As national governments tightly monitor and regulate their African manufacturers, very limited numbers of African-manufactured arms and ammunition enter the illegal market.

The unauthorized craft production of firearms by local gunsmiths is a significant source of illicit small arms in some areas. Their profusion constitute a major problem in some countries. A recent study of craft production in Ghana by Emmanuel Kwesi Aning found that the country's unlicensed gunsmiths (more than 400, each capable

of making up to 80 guns per year) have the collective capacity to produce up to 200,000 firearms a year, some of which are reportedly “of a quality comparable with industrially produced guns”.

On a small scale, weapons are brought in to different countries by soldiers who have served in peacekeeping missions, for example in Liberia or Sierra Leone, and who often return home with their weapons to sell them on to combatants and gun dealers.

### ***Transfers from African countries to other African countries***

Table 1.2: Arms Exports and Transfers: Africa to Africa

<b>Intra-Continental Arms Exports and Transfers</b>	
Libya	<p>Libya is known to send arms to Sudan, to both the government through official sales and to various rebel groups in embargoed areas.</p> <p>In 2008, Libya sold one transport aircraft, ammunition for tanks, and an unspecified amount of rockets for combat helicopter use to Chad. Although these sales are legitimate, Chad and Libya both are known to divert officially imported arms to embargoed and conflict zones such as Darfur and Eastern Chad, respectively. (see Table 1.3 below)</p>
Sudan	Although there is not much information, there are reports that Sudan has exported weapons to Algeria.
Tanzania	Reportedly, Burundi receives shipments of light weapons from Tanzania.
South Africa	In 2008 the well-known case of the ship docked in Durban, South Africa ready to offload arms shipped from China to Zimbabwe at a time when political violence in the country had reached unprecedented levels. Human rights activists fearing the arms would be used against civilians seen as enemies of the State, worked tirelessly to ensure the arms would not find their way into Zimbabwe. A South African judge ruled that the cargo of rocket-propelled grenades, mortar rounds and ammunition could not be transported overland.
Zimbabwe	Since 1995, the ZDI has begun to play the role of an arms broker for regional purchasers and international arms dealers. The ZDI has sold surplus G3 guns and ammunition from the Zimbabwean Defence Forces to some United States collectors. Botswana has bought large quantities of ammunition and has ordered some military vehicles through the ZDI. There have been reports of various Chinese, Israeli and French weapons being sold to Angola, Uganda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the deals being brokered by the ZDI. The ZDI hopes that the role of arms broker could well be the answer to their

	hopes of breaking into the international arms market. A recent report suggests that the ZDI supplied arms, ammunition, uniforms and other military suppliers to Kabila's forces during and after their war to overthrow Mobutu. It is also alleged that the ZDI has acted as a broker for arms supplied by countries such as the United States of America and South Africa.
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### **Somalia**

A report by Amnesty International (AI) 2010 suggest that unregulated arms supplies to the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) in Somalia have found their way into the hands of the militant Islamist fighters Al Shabaab. The report accuses Uganda, Ethiopia and Yemen of supplying the TFG-outside of the UN regulatory regime which imposed an arms embargo on Somalia. The UN Monitoring Group on Somalia has reported that since 2006 TFG forces have received arms and ammunition from the three neighbouring states having applied for exemptions to the UN arms embargo. The problem is that arms supplied are not properly accounted for by the TFG which facilitates major diversions of arms or money for arms. TFG lacks the capacity to prevent the diversion of substantial quantities of its own weaponry and military equipment to other armed groups and to Somalia's domestic arms markets.

AI is calling for all countries to suspend arms transfers and financial assistance until adequate safeguards are in place to ensure the weapons will not be used by TFG forces to commit human right violations, or diverted to other armed groups and potentially used against civilians, African Union peacekeepers or TFG forces themselves.

### ***Arms Transfers to Non-State Actors***

Table 1.3: Arms Transfers to Non-State Actors

<b>Arms transfers to rebel groups and other non-state actors</b>		
Ogaden Liberation (Ethiopia)	National Front	ONLF rebels: get training and arms from Eritrea, Somalia, and Sudan(get weapons flows from arms left over from Sudanese civil war)
Sudanese Liberation (Sudan)	People's Liberation Army	With the rise of ethnic violence in the South and the specter of renewed civil war with the North, the SPLA is able to funnel weapons in from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Uganda, and Kenya.
Justice and Equality Movement; Sudanese Liberation Movement/Army (Sudan)		These Darfuri rebel receive SALW from Chad, Eritrea, and the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya group, all of whom are in breach of the UN arms embargo against the Darfur region of Sudan.

Lord's Resistance Army (Uganda)	The LRA only uses SALW in its protracted campaign against the Ugandan government. These weapons are obtained from Kenya and Sudan.
Kenyan non-government opposition	Illegal arms are brought into Kenya through its porous borders with its various Horn and Great Lakes neighbors: Uganda, (Southern) Sudan, (South) Ethiopia, and Somalia.
Somali rival factions	Somalia had a weapons embargo put in place by the international community in 1992, and although this embargo is still in effect, Somali rival factions consistently obtain weapons from Ethiopia, Libya, Sudan, Egypt, Djibouti, Uganda, and Eritrea.
Nigeria, the Niger Delta Region	<p>Nigeria has porous borders on both its land and sea edges, allowing gun smuggling from a variety of countries. Many of these weapons come from war-torn countries in Africa. Many of the arms smuggling rings operate out of Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea and Nigeria. The smugglers use speed-boats to connect to the high seas, and then ferry the arms back to shore.</p> <p>Most of the weapons—such as the Russian AK-47, the German G-3, the Belgian FN-FAL, Czech machine guns and Serbian rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs)—are supplied by illegal dealers and sellers, who are paid through the proceeds of bunkered (stolen) oil. In October 2006 Chris Ndudi Njoku, a Nigerian businessman, specialized in importing prohibited firearms into Nigeria, was arrested in possession of G-3s, AK-47s and Beretta automatic rifles. European dealers are also involved in the trade with their Nigerian counterparts.</p>

### ***Arms to Embargoed Territories***

Table 1.4: Arms to Embargoed Territories

<b>Countries that send arms to embargoed territories</b>	
Nigeria	In 2007, Nigeria sent 50 pistols and revolvers to Liberia. There is also evidence that arms have been illegally smuggled over the years from Nigeria into Benin, Ghana, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, and Niger.
Rwanda	Rwanda has been funnelling weapons in to the Democratic Republic of Congo, in flagrant violation to the existing embargo.
Liberia	Liberia has been known to transfer arms to Sierra Leone during its embargo period.

Countries that send arms to embargoed territories	
Chad	Chad is a well-known supporter of Darfuri rebel groups, such as JEM, sending arms and other equipment to the embargoed region.
Libya	Libya sends arms not only to various forces in Darfur (government and rebel), but also to Somalia.
Tanzania	Tanzania also exports light weapons to the embargoed Democratic Republic of Congo.
Uganda	Uganda reportedly sends an undisclosed amount of AK-47 rifles, rocket launchers, mortars, and landmines to militia groups in the Democratic Republic of Congo, in breach of the U.N. embargo.
Zimbabwe	In 2008, the UN reported that Zimbabwe sent 53 tons of ammunition to the Democratic Republic of Congo.

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