African Journal of Social and Behavioural Sciences (AJSBS)
Volume 16, Number 7 (2026) ISSN: 2141-209X
https://doi.org/10.68442/ajsbs/2026/v16i7.127

FROM PROLIFERATION TO VIOLENCE: EXAMINING THE ROLE OF SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS IN NIGERIA'S CONFLICT LANDSCAPE

Somkenechukwu M. G. Ojukwu[1]*, Chike P. Osegbue[1] & Ugochukwu M. Onwunyi[2]

[1]Department of Political Science, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Igbariam, Anambra State, Nigeria

[2]Department of Political Science, Dennis Osadebeji University, Asaba, Delta State, Nigeria

*ojukwusomkene@gmail.com

ABSTRACT: Illicit small arms and light weapons sustain much of the armed violence that Nigeria has experienced since the return to civilian rule. This study examines how the circulation of these weapons has shaped the country's conflict landscape, and asks whether the African Union Master Roadmap of Practical Steps to Silence the Guns in Africa has slowed that circulation. The study is a documentary analysis. Evidence was drawn from the Small Arms Survey, United Nations and African Union instruments, reports of the International Crisis Group and the Institute for Security Studies, peer-reviewed scholarship and national press records published between 2011 and 2021, and was examined thematically through the lens of transnationalism. Three findings emerge. First, the scale of civilian firearm holding in Nigeria is considerably smaller than the figure of 350 million weapons that circulates widely in national reporting: the Small Arms Survey places civilian holdings at approximately 6.2 million in 2017, and the national survey commissioned by the Presidential Committee on Small Arms and Light Weapons estimates 6.4 to 6.5 million. The scale is nonetheless substantial, and it is the distribution rather than the aggregate that drives violence. Second, the weapons in circulation sustain several distinct conflict systems simultaneously, including insurgency in the North East, armed banditry and mass abduction in the North West, farmer-herder violence in the North Central zone, and militancy and cult violence in the south. Third, the Master Roadmap has not reduced the flow, because its instruments address the supply of weapons while the conditions that sustain demand in Nigeria remain largely untouched. The study concludes that weak political will, the porosity of the land borders and the complicity of some officials account for the persistence of the trade, and recommends that regional instruments be matched by domestic measures addressing unemployment, impunity and the grievances from which armed groups recruit.

Keywords: Small Arms and Light Weapons, Conflict; Proliferation, Nigeria, African Union Master Roadmap, Transnationalism

INTRODUCTION

Conflicts fought with small arms and light weapons have cost Nigeria an enormous number of lives and have destroyed property worth billions of dollars. The weapons involved are held illegally by criminal groups, insurgents and armed bands operating both inside the country and across its

https://doi.org/10.68442/ajsbs/2026/v16i7.127

borders. Illegal possession among civilians has risen, and these weapons are used in ethnic violence, vigilantism, militancy and ordinary criminality (Okoro, 2011). The Nigerian state has not yet confronted the demand side of this trade, preferring to treat the symptoms rather than the causes. Demand is where the causes lie, because weapons that nobody wants to buy will not be supplied. Nigeria is at once a source, a transit country and a destination for these weapons, and the conditions that create demand include mass unemployment, poverty, corruption, excessive militarisation, the failure of political leadership and state violence itself. The militarisation of public life compounds the problem: almost every law enforcement agency in the country is now armed, and the few that are not have lobbied to be.

Successive African governments have tried to stem the movement of illicit weapons, with little to show for it. In 2016, the African Union adopted the Master Roadmap of Practical Steps to Silence the Guns in Africa by Year 2020, usually called the Lusaka Master Roadmap, as a framework for controlling, managing and preventing this proliferation (African Union, 2016). Conflict is a permanent feature of social life (Weber, 1978), and Nigeria has experienced it in many forms since independence in 1960, from ethno-religious clashes and a civil war to the communal and criminal violence of the present (Osaghae & Suberu, 2005). These conflicts have been accompanied by violations of human rights and humanitarian law, gender-based violence, weak governance, corruption, farmer-herder killings, banditry and attacks by armed groups whose identity is disputed. Illicit small arms, smuggled across the borders or manufactured locally, are the common instrument in all of them. They remain the principal weapon of non-state armed groups across the continent, and the Master Roadmap accordingly directs member states to renew their efforts against the import and circulation of illegal armaments.

Despite the volume of commentary on insecurity in Nigeria, two questions remain poorly answered. The first is empirical: how many illicit weapons are actually in circulation, and what does the evidence show rather than what is repeated in the press. The second is institutional: whether a continental framework such as the Master Roadmap can affect a trade whose drivers are largely domestic. This study addresses both.

Objectives of the Study

The study set out to:

i. examine the scale and pattern of illicit small arms and light weapons circulation in Nigeria;
ii. identify how these weapons have aggravated conflict across the country's geopolitical zones; and
iii. assess the extent to which the African Union Master Roadmap has addressed the proliferation of these weapons in Nigeria.

Research Questions

The study was guided by three questions:

i. What is the scale and pattern of illicit small arms and light weapons circulation in Nigeria?

ii. How have these weapons aggravated conflict across the country's geopolitical zones?
iii. To what extent has the African Union Master Roadmap addressed their proliferation in Nigeria?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Conflict and Small Arms and Light Weapons Explained

Conflicts are products of contradictions arising from differences in interests, ideas, ideologies, orientations, perceptions and tendencies (Nnoli, 1998). These contradictions exist at every level of society, from the individual to the nation, and in interpersonal, inter-group, inter-institutional and international relations. Weber defined conflict as action oriented intentionally towards carrying out the actor's own will against the resistance of the other party or parties (Weber, 1978). Coser described social conflict as a struggle over values and claims to status, power and scarce resources, in which the aim of the contending parties is not only to obtain the desired benefit but also to neutralise, injure or eliminate rivals (Coser, 1956).

Conflict therefore involves contest over objects to which individuals and groups attach value. Those objects may be material, such as money, employment and political position, or immaterial, such as culture, tradition, religion and language (Osaghae & Suberu, 2005). Conflict theorists hold that political, communal, ethnic and religious conflicts are driven more by difference than by similarity, and particularly by inequality. Marx and Engels argued in 1848 that the history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggle (Marx & Engels, 1848/2002), which implies that conflict is a constant of agrarian, feudal and capitalist societies alike. Conflict may thus be regarded as inherent in human relationships. That position has force, but it does not follow that every significant relationship must be expressed with the same intensity of hostility, nor that conflict cannot be moderated (Duverger, 1980). Conflict is also treated as both evidence and symptom of state collapse or state failure (Ghani & Lockhart, 2008), and a collapsed state breeds political instability, unrest and a conflictual environment (Iqbal & Starr, 2008). In Nigeria the frequency of violent incidents is without precedent, and over the past two decades the North West, North East and North Central zones have borne the heaviest losses (International Crisis Group, 2020).

Illicit small arms and light weapons are weapons held or transferred outside the law and used to cause or aggravate conflict. The United Nations defines small arms as weapons designed for individual use and light weapons as those designed for use by several persons serving as a crew (United Nations, 1997). Small arms include revolvers and self-loading pistols, rifles and carbines, sub-machine guns, assault rifles and light machine guns, together with their parts and ammunition. Light weapons include heavy machine guns, hand-held and mounted grenade launchers, portable anti-aircraft and anti-tank guns, recoilless rifles, portable launchers of anti-tank missile and rocket systems, and mortars of a calibre below 100 millimetres. Although the sale and purchase of certain firearms is permitted under licence, individuals and criminal groups, including ethnic militias, have developed many channels through which such weapons change hands.

These weapons circulate easily because they are cheap, durable, simple to operate, portable and readily concealed. Their proliferation prolongs conflict, drives population displacement,

https://doi.org/10.68442/ajsbs/2026/v16i7.127

undermines the rule of law, intensifies gender-based violence and entrenches a culture of impunity. It follows that prevention and resolution is not a matter of regulating weapons in general but of controlling the particular categories that fuel civil war and banditry (Chesterman et al., 2005). The restructuring of the arms trade in eastern and central Europe after the Cold War also produced small manufacturers whose search for new markets in the developing world weakened existing export controls, and Africa itself contains both established arms manufacturers and a growing number of craft producers (Vines, 2005).

Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons in Nigeria

The empirical literature on Nigeria is consistent on the direction of the relationship, if not on its magnitude. Nte (2011) found a direct link between the spread of small arms and light weapons and the growth of violent conflict, and later work on the North East reached the same conclusion (Adejumo et al., 2021). Okeke and Oji (2014) traced the supply of weapons in northern Nigeria to a combination of cross-border smuggling, leakage from official armouries and local craft production, while Sule et al. (2020) set out the sources and manifestations of the trade across the northern zones and its consequences for community security. Nigeria has become a destination country for weapons used in armed robbery, insurgency, communal and religious conflict, electoral violence, kidnapping and cross-border smuggling. Many of the weapons now in the country are residues of earlier conflicts in Mozambique, Angola, Somalia, Liberia, Sudan, Sierra Leone and, most recently, Libya, together with licensed weapons subsequently lost or stolen.

What the literature has not settled is scale, and the disagreement is not minor. A figure of 350 million illicit weapons in Nigeria, said to represent 70 per cent of 500 million circulating in West Africa, has been repeated in the Nigerian press since at least 2016 and has entered the academic literature by citation. The figure does not withstand examination. Nigeria's population at the time was approximately 190 million, so the claim implies almost two illicit firearms for every inhabitant, and the Small Arms Survey placed the total number of civilian-held firearms in the entire world at about 857 million at the end of 2017 (Karp, 2018). The present study therefore sets that figure aside and works from the survey evidence presented in the next section.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study adopts the theory of transnationalism. The term was introduced by Randolph Bourne in 1916 to describe a national community whose members retain attachments beyond its borders (Bourne, 1916), and was developed into its present social-scientific form by scholars of migration who showed that migrants sustain social, economic and political relations that link their societies of origin to their societies of settlement (Basch et al., 1994; Rosemberg et al., 2016). The central claim is that increased functional integration across borders, accelerated by globalisation, produces durable fields of activity that no single state controls, and that interaction within these fields can alter the capacity of states to govern their own territory (Soehl & Waldinger, 2012).

Two features of the theory make it suitable for the study of illicit weapons, and they should be stated plainly because the theory was not devised for this purpose. The first is its account of cross-border social fields. The networks that move weapons into Nigeria are not anonymous markets but

https://doi.org/10.68442/ajsbs/2026/v16i7.127

durable relationships of kinship, ethnicity, trade and religious affiliation that straddle the frontiers with Niger, Chad, Cameroon and Benin. Communities divided by colonial boundaries continue to function as single social units, and the same ties that carry remittances, marriages and trade also carry weapons. The second is its account of displaced effects. Transnationalism holds that activity conducted in one state may produce its consequences in another, which describes precisely the movement of weapons from the collapse of the Libyan state in 2011 into the Sahel and then into northern Nigeria. On this reading the Nigerian state confronts not a smuggling problem at its border posts but a social field that extends well beyond them, which is why enforcement concentrated at the boundary has achieved so little.

The framework also explains why a continental instrument was thought necessary. If the field is transnational, no single state can police it, and collective action becomes the obvious remedy. The limitation of the theory, which the findings bear out, is that it directs attention outward. It accounts well for how weapons arrive and poorly for why they are wanted, and the demand conditions inside Nigeria are not transnational at all.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a qualitative documentary design. The design is appropriate because the research question concerns the scale, pattern and institutional management of an illicit trade rather than relationships between measured variables, and because the relevant evidence already exists in published form. No primary data were collected and no human participants were involved, so the study did not require ethical clearance.

The documentary corpus was assembled in four categories. The first comprised survey and statistical sources on weapons holdings, principally the Small Arms Survey's global estimates and the National Small Arms and Light Weapons Survey commissioned by Nigeria's Presidential Committee on Small Arms and Light Weapons. The second comprised international and regional instruments, including the United Nations Programme of Action, the Arms Trade Treaty, the Economic Community of West African States Convention and the African Union Master Roadmap. The third comprised policy analyses by research institutions, among them the International Crisis Group and the Institute for Security Studies. The fourth comprised peer-reviewed scholarship on small arms, border governance and conflict in Nigeria, together with national press reports used only for dated incidents and never for statistical claims.

Sources were restricted to the period 2011 to 2021. The window opens with the collapse of the Libyan state, which released large quantities of weapons into the Sahel, and closes with the publication of the national survey. Material was included where it addressed Nigeria directly or addressed West African flows into Nigeria, and where authorship and date could be established. Material was excluded where the source could not be traced to an identifiable author or institution, which led to the exclusion of several widely circulated figures discussed in the findings.

The corpus was examined thematically. Documents were coded against four categories derived from the research questions: the measured scale of circulation; the routes and mechanisms of supply; the conflict systems in which the weapons are used; and the institutional response. Where

https://doi.org/10.68442/ajsbs/2026/v16i7.127

sources disagreed, preference was given to primary survey data over secondary reporting, and discrepancies large enough to affect the argument are reported rather than reconciled silently. The principal limitation of the design is that it depends on what has been published: illicit holdings are by definition unregistered, every estimate rests on inference, and the study can therefore establish orders of magnitude and directions of change but not precise counts.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The Scale of Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons in Nigeria

The first question concerns scale, and it must be settled before anything else can be said, because the figure most often quoted in Nigeria is not supportable. Table 1 sets out the estimates that can be traced to an identifiable source.

Table 1: Estimates of Firearm Holdings in Nigeria, 2011-2021

Source	Year referred to	Estimate	Basis of estimate
Press reports attributed to UN sources	2016	350 million, said to be 70 per cent of 500 million circulating in West Africa	Not traceable to any United Nations document; see discussion
Karp (2018), Small Arms Survey	2017	6,200,000 civilian-held firearms	Global comparative estimation
Small Arms Survey (2021) for PRESCOM	2016-2021	6,400,000 to 6,500,000 firearms in civilian hands	National household survey, adjusted for population growth
Karp (2018), world total, for comparison	2017	857,000,000 civilian-held firearms worldwide	Global comparative estimation

Source: Compiled by the authors from Karp (2018), Small Arms Survey (2021) and the press reports cited.

Two things follow from Table 1. The first is that the survey estimates agree with one another. Karp's global study placed civilian holdings in Nigeria at approximately 6.2 million in 2017, and the national survey commissioned by the Presidential Committee on Small Arms and Light Weapons arrived independently at 6.4 to 6.5 million, working from household data and adjusting for population growth (Small Arms Survey, 2021). Two different methods converging on the same order of magnitude is the strongest evidence available on this question.

The second is that the figure of 350 million cannot be reconciled with either. It exceeds the national survey estimate by a factor of more than fifty, and it exceeds the Small Arms Survey's estimate for the entire world, which was approximately 857 million at the end of 2017 (Karp, 2018). A claim

https://doi.org/10.68442/ajsbs/2026/v16i7.127

that one country holds two-fifths of the world's firearms, with no manufacturing base to match, does not survive contact with the comparative data. The figure appears to have entered circulation through press reporting and to have been propagated by citation rather than by verification. Its persistence is itself a finding, because policy framed on a misstatement of scale will misallocate the resources meant to address it.

Setting the inflated figure aside does not diminish the problem. Roughly six and a half million firearms in civilian hands, in a country whose licensing regime accounts for only a small fraction of them, is a substantial stock. What matters for conflict is not the aggregate but the distribution, and the national survey found holdings concentrated in the zones where organised violence is heaviest (Small Arms Survey, 2021). The relationship between the stock of weapons and the incidence of violence is therefore regional rather than national, which has direct implications for where control measures should be directed.

The Impact of Illicit Weapons on Conflict in Nigeria

Nigeria has experienced the direct and indirect consequences of this circulation across several conflict systems at once. The weapons sustain the insurgency in the North East, armed banditry and mass abduction in the North West, farmer-herder violence in the North Central zone, and militancy and cult-related violence in the South. Table 2 presents the distribution of recorded fatalities by principal perpetrator.

Table 2: Recorded Fatalities in Nigeria by Principal Perpetrator Category, May 2011 to December 2020

Principal perpetrator	Recorded fatalities	Share of total (%)
Boko Haram	18,623	40.6
State actors	14,620	31.9
Sectarian actors (political, religious and communal)	12,580	27.5
Total	**45,823**	**100.0**

Source: Authors' compilation. The underlying extract and its date of retrieval should be supplied by the authors before publication.

The pattern in Table 2 is as instructive as the total. Boko Haram accounts for the largest single share, but together the state and sectarian categories account for roughly three-fifths of recorded deaths, which indicates that the problem cannot be reduced to insurgency alone. Deaths attributed to state actors are particularly significant for this argument, since they involve weapons that entered the country legally and point to the difficulty of separating licit from illicit circulation once weapons are in the field.

https://doi.org/10.68442/ajsbs/2026/v16i7.127

The intensity of this violence is best conveyed at close range. Table 3 records the attacks reported in a single week in April 2021.

Table 3: Reported Armed Attacks in Nigeria, 2 to 8 April 2021

Date (2021)	State and locality	Reported perpetrator	Killed	Abducted
2 April	Plateau (Bassa)	Alleged herdsmen	12	-
2 April	Kano (Tundun Wada)	Police action against kidnappers	3	-
2 April	Kaduna (Tafa)	Suspected bandits, improvised explosive device	3	-
3 April	Kaduna (Kagarko)	Kidnappers	-	22
3 April	Anambra (Aguata)	Armed men	3	-
3 April	Ogun (Abeokuta South)	Abductors	-	3
3 April	Zamfara (Tsafe)	Bandits	4	5 (est.)
4 April	Kaduna (Birnin Gwari)	Bandits	20	-
4 April	Anambra (Aguata)	Armed men	2	-
5 April	Taraba (Bali)	Bandits	3	5 (est.)
5 April	Katsina (Kankara)	Bandits	1	5 (est.)
5 April	Plateau (Bassa)	Suspected herdsmen	3	-
6 April	Plateau (Barkin Ladi)	Armed men	2	-
6 April	Borno (Abadam)	Boko Haram, against ISWA militants	10	-
6 April	Taraba (Gassol)	Bandits	1	7
7 April	Niger (Shiroro)	Bandits	3	20
7 April	Anambra (Aguata)	Armed men	2	-
7 April	Edo (Ovia North-East)	Alleged herdsmen	5	-
8 April	Kaduna (Kajuru)	Bandits	2	-
8 April	Niger (Munya)	Gunmen	3	-
8 April	Katsina (Dutsinma)	Police action against bandits	1	-
8 April	Katsina (Musawa)	Bandits	-	10 (est.)
8 April	Borno (Marte)	Military action against ISWA militants	20	-
Total	**23 incidents, 11 states**		**103**	**77**

Source: Compiled by the authors from national press reports. Individual reports should be cited in full before publication, and the basis of the estimates shown in parentheses should be stated.

https://doi.org/10.68442/ajsbs/2026/v16i7.127

Twenty-three attacks in seven days left at least 103 people dead and 77 abducted, across eleven states and all six geopolitical zones, and involved herdsmen, bandits, kidnappers, insurgents and the security forces. The violence is therefore not confined to one actor, one region or one grievance. What the incidents share is the instrument. According to official security reporting, 1,192 people were killed in Kaduna State alone by armed bands during 2021, and the Centre for Democracy and Development has estimated that violent crime across the North West has claimed more than 12,000 lives and displaced over a million people.

Border Zones and the Influx of Small Arms

Nigeria's land borders run to roughly 4,000 kilometres and are crossed by a small number of official posts and a very large number of unofficial routes. Weapons enter principally from the north and north east, along the corridors that connect the Sahel to the Lake Chad basin, and from the west through the frontier with Benin. The Niger Delta, long classified as a high-intensity conflict zone, remains supplied through the maritime approaches (Vines, 2005).

Onuoha (2013) argues that the high level of insecurity on African borders owes less to how the boundaries were drawn by colonial administrations than to how they are now administered and managed, and that porosity has been compounded by the failure of successive governments to police them (Onuoha, 2013). Addo (2006) makes the related point that states with weak national security frameworks suffer from poor collaboration between agencies and from under-resourced law enforcement (Addo, 2006). Both observations apply to Nigeria, where customs, immigration, police and military operate at the frontier under separate commands and with limited shared intelligence.

Civilian access to weapons in Nigeria has a longer history than the current insecurity suggests, dating to the aftermath of the civil war, when arms and ammunition remained in private hands and importation continued. Between 2011 and 2020 the cumulative toll of trans-border crime, Niger Delta militancy, the Boko Haram conflict, farmer-herder clashes and kidnapping for ransom has been estimated at around 70,000 deaths (Adeyeye, 2020).

The African Union Master Roadmap and its Limits

African Union member states met in Addis Ababa in 2013 and committed themselves to ending all wars on the continent by 2020, a commitment given operational form in the Lusaka Master Roadmap of 2016 (African Union, 2016). The target year has passed and conflict has not receded. Violence has intensified in Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ethiopia and Mozambique, the Sahel crisis has deepened, and the Boko Haram insurgency that began in north-eastern Nigeria has extended into Chad, Niger and Cameroon.

The Master Roadmap identifies measures that would make a difference if implemented: ratification of existing instruments, investigation and public identification of those supplying illicit weapons, and capacity building for states in stockpile management, record keeping, tracing and the destruction of recovered firearms (African Union, 2016, pp. 6-7). Alongside the Arms Trade Treaty, the United Nations Programme of Action and the sub-regional conventions, the commitments on paper are substantial.

https://doi.org/10.68442/ajsbs/2026/v16i7.127

Why, then, has so little changed? The evidence assembled here points to three reasons. The first is that the Roadmap is an instrument of supply control applied to a problem driven by demand. Stockpile management and tracing address how weapons move; they do not address why Nigerian communities want them, and as long as the state cannot guarantee physical security, households and groups will arm themselves regardless of what is agreed in Addis Ababa or Lusaka. The second is implementation capacity. The Roadmap assumes national agencies able to maintain records, trace weapons and destroy recovered stock, and the national survey found these capacities unevenly developed. The third is political will. Several analyses of the trade identify the complicity of officials at the points where weapons cross or where recovered weapons are stored, and no continental framework can compensate for enforcement that is selectively applied.

Armed conflict is now the principal driver of forced displacement in Africa, and the problem is worsening (Abebe & Maunganidze, 2021). The Master Roadmap's collective political commitment remains an asset, but on the evidence of the past decade it has not reduced the flow of weapons into Nigeria, and it will not do so while the conditions that create demand are left in place.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the role of illicit small arms and light weapons in Nigeria's conflict landscape and assessed the African Union Master Roadmap as a response to it. Three conclusions follow.

First, the scale of the problem has been misstated in the Nigerian debate. The figure of 350 million weapons that circulates in national reporting exceeds the best survey estimates by a factor of more than fifty and exceeds the estimated global stock of civilian firearms. The defensible figure is of the order of six and a half million, which remains a serious quantity but implies a different policy problem from the one usually described.

Second, the weapons sustain several distinct conflict systems simultaneously, and recorded fatalities are divided between insurgent, state and sectarian actors rather than concentrated in any one of them. Policy framed around insurgency alone will therefore address only part of the violence.

Third, the Master Roadmap has not slowed the flow. Its instruments address supply, while the conditions that generate demand in Nigeria, namely insecurity, unemployment, impunity and unresolved grievance, remain untouched. The transnational framework adopted here explains how the weapons arrive and why no single state can intercept them, but it also shows the limits of a purely external account, since the reasons Nigerians acquire weapons are domestic.

The study is limited by its reliance on published sources. Illicit holdings are unregistered by definition, every estimate rests on inference, and the fatality data depend on reporting that is less complete in remote areas than in urban ones. Further research combining survey work with weapons-tracing data at the state level would allow the regional pattern identified here to be specified more precisely.

RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of these findings, the following are recommended.

1. The African Union and its organs should strengthen the Continental Early Warning System and the Panel of the Wise with instruments for early action, so that warning is matched by response.
2. Nigeria and its neighbours should move from static border control towards joint patrols, shared intelligence and harmonised marking and record-keeping, since weapons move through social networks that straddle the frontier rather than through official crossings alone.
3. The Federal Government should publish a verified national estimate of weapons in circulation and update it periodically, so that policy and public debate rest on measured evidence rather than on repeated assertion.
4. Stockpile management, armoury security and the auditing of recovered weapons should be treated as priorities, given the share of recorded fatalities associated with weapons that entered the country through legal channels.
5. Measures against supply should be matched by domestic programmes addressing the conditions that generate demand, including unemployment among young people, impunity for violent crime and unresolved communal grievance.
6. Officials found to have facilitated the movement or diversion of weapons should be prosecuted, since selective enforcement undermines every other measure.

REFERENCES

Abebe, T. T., & Maunganidze, O. A. (2021). *Silencing the guns can reduce forced displacement* (Policy Brief No. 152). Institute for Security Studies. https://issafrica.org/research/policy-brief/silencing-the-guns-can-reduce-forced-displacement

Addo, P. (2006). *Cross-border criminal activities in West Africa: Options for effective responses* (KAIPTC Paper No. 12). Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre.

Adejumo, T. O., Owa, O. E., & Peter, O. A. (2021). Migrants and the proliferation of small arms and light weapons in third world countries: A study of north-eastern Nigeria since 1999. *Journal of Liberty and International Affairs,* *7*(3), 196-211. https://doi.org/10.47305/jlia2137196a

Adeyeye, P. (2020, September 30). At 60: The changing face of insecurity in Nigeria. *Dataphyte.*

African Union. (2016). *African Union master roadmap of practical steps to silence the guns in Africa by year 2020* (Lusaka Master Roadmap). African Union Commission. https://au.int/en/documents/20200204/african-union-master-roadmap-practical-steps-silence-guns-africa-year-2020-lusaka

Basch, L., Glick Schiller, N., & Szanton Blanc, C. (1994). *Nations unbound: Transnational projects, postcolonial predicaments, and deterritorialized nation-states*. Gordon and Breach.

Bourne, R. S. (1916, July). Trans-national America. *The Atlantic Monthly, 118*(1), 86-97.

Chesterman, S., Ignatieff, M., & Thakur, R. (Eds.). (2005). *Making states work: State failure and the crisis of governance*. United Nations University Press.

Coser, L. A. (1956). *The functions of social conflict*. Free Press.

Duverger, M. (1980). *The study of politics*. Thomas Y. Crowell.

Ghani, A., & Lockhart, C. (2008). *Fixing failed states: A framework for rebuilding a fractured world*. Oxford University Press.

International Crisis Group. (2020). *Violence in Nigeria's North West: Rolling back the mayhem* (Africa Report No. 288). https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/nigeria/288-violence-nigerias-north-west-rolling-back-mayhem

Iqbal, Z., & Starr, H. (2008). Bad neighbors: Failed states and their consequences. *Conflict Management and Peace Science, 25*(4), 315-331. https://doi.org/10.1080/07388940802397400

Karp, A. (2018). *Estimating global civilian-held firearms numbers* (Briefing Paper). Small Arms Survey. https://www.smallarmssurvey.org/resource/estimating-global-civilian-held-firearms-numbers

Marx, K., & Engels, F. (2002). *The communist manifesto* (G. S. Jones, Ed.). Penguin Classics. (Original work published 1848)

Nnoli, O. (Ed.). (1998). *Ethnic conflicts in Africa*. CODESRIA.

Nte, N. D. (2011). The changing patterns of small and light weapons (SALW) proliferation and the challenges of national security in Nigeria. *Global Journal of Human Social Science, 11*(7), 5-15.

Okeke, V. O. S., & Oji, R. O. (2014). The Nigerian state and the proliferation of small arms and light weapons in the northern part of Nigeria. *Journal of Educational and Social Research, 4*(1), 415-428. https://doi.org/10.5901/jesr.2014.v4n1p415

Okoro, C. (2011). Proliferation of small arms and light weapons in Nigeria: Legal implications. In *Law and security in Nigeria*.

Onuoha, F. C. (2013, September 8). *Porous borders and Boko Haram's arms smuggling operations in Nigeria*. Al Jazeera Centre for Studies. https://studies.aljazeera.net/en/reports/2013/09/201398104245877469.html

Osaghae, E. E., & Suberu, R. T. (2005). *A history of identities, violence and stability in Nigeria* (CRISE Working Paper No. 6). Centre for Research on Inequality, Human Security and Ethnicity, University of Oxford.

Rosemberg, M.-A. S., Boutain, D. M., & Mohammed, S. A. (2016). Transnationalism: A framework for advancing nursing research. *Advances in Nursing Science, 39*(1), E19-E28. https://doi.org/10.1097/ANS.0000000000000108

Small Arms Survey. (2021). *Nigeria national small arms and light weapons survey report*. Small Arms Survey, Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, for the Presidential Committee on Small Arms and Light Weapons. https://www.smallarmssurvey.org/sites/default/files/resources/SAS-Report-Nigeria-NSALWS.pdf

Soehl, T., & Waldinger, R. (2012). Inheriting the homeland? Intergenerational transmission of cross-border ties in migrant families. *American Journal of Sociology, 118*(3), 778-813. https://doi.org/10.1086/667720

Sule, B., Mikail, I. K., & Yahaya, M. A. (2020). An overview of the genesis, sources, manifestations and impact of small arms and light weapons (SALW) in northern Nigeria. *Journal of International Studies, 16*, 199-220. https://doi.org/10.32890/jis2020.16.12

United Nations. (1997). *Report of the Panel of Governmental Experts on Small Arms* (A/52/298). United Nations General Assembly. https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/243954

Vines, A. (2005). Combating light weapons proliferation in West Africa. *International Affairs, 81*(2), 341-360. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2346.2005.00454.x

Weber, M. (1978). *Economy and society: An outline of interpretive sociology* (G. Roth & C. Wittich, Eds.; Vol. 1). University of California Press. (Original work published 1922)