

harder it is to expose the crime and stop it. But fortunately, law-abiding persons are more than criminals and this does not make it possible for crime to become universal.

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ILLICIT TRADE IN SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS

The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons occurs in all parts of the globe but is concentrated in areas afflicted by armed conflict, violence, and organized crime, where the demand for illicit weapons is often highest. Arms trafficking fuels civil wars and regional conflicts; stocks the arsenals of terrorists, drug cartels, and other armed groups; and contributes to violent crime and the proliferation of sensitive technology.

Black market trafficking usually takes place on a regional or local level; publicly available data suggests that the multi-ton, inter-continental shipments organized by the ‘merchants of death’ account for only a small fraction of illicit transfers. Among the most important forms of illicit trafficking is the ‘ant trade’—numerous shipments of small numbers of weapons that, over time, result in the accumulation of large numbers of illicit weapons by unauthorized end users. Analyzed data indicates that thousands of firearms seized in Mexico are traced to the United States annually. These weapons are often purchased from gun shops in small numbers and then smuggled over the border. While individual transactions occur on a small scale, the sum total of the weapons trafficked into Mexico is large.

While most arms trafficking appears to be conducted by private entities, certain governments also contribute to the illicit trade by deliberately arming proxy groups involved in insurgencies against rival governments, terrorists with similar ideological agendas, or other non-state

armed groups. These types of transfers, which are prevalent in Africa and other regions where armed conflict is common, are often conducted in contravention of UN arms embargoes and have the potential to destabilize neighbouring countries. In recent years, governments have covertly delivered tens of thousands of small arms and light weapons to various armed groups in Somalia despite a long-standing UN arms embargo. These weapons range from Kalashnikov-pattern assault rifles to third-generation SA-18 MANPADS, one of which was used to shoot down a Belarusian cargo aircraft delivering supplies intended for peacekeepers in March 2007.

The prices of illicit firearms and their relation to security dynamics have attracted interest among journalists and researchers for some time. It is found a clear link between illicit market prices in Lebanon and reported fatalities during the first 19 months of the conflict in Syria. The particularly strong correlation between ammunition prices in Lebanon and fatalities in Syria underlines the value of monitoring ammunition prices. Yet available reporting from conflict zones has tended to neglect this important piece of the puzzle, focusing on prices for the most common weapons instead.

It is revealed that newly produced ammunition is circulating in conflict-affected countries in Africa and the Middle East. Tracing investigations presented in this edition conclude that Sudan government stockpiles are the primary source of weapons for non-state armed groups of all allegiances in Sudan and South Sudan—both through deliberate arming and battlefield capture. Such arms monitoring is, however, increasingly hampered by the production of unmarked ammunition and the deliberate removal of weapons' markings.

Recent terrorist attacks in Europe have spurred initiatives to crack down on the illegal trade in firearms, a relatively small market under the control of organised criminal groups. Organised criminal groups often rely on the availability of weapons to carry out their activities. However, the market for firearms in the EU remains modest in size. Trafficking occurs on a small scale, and the weapons trafficked are intended for either personal use or to meet specific orders. Weapons trafficking is almost exclusively a supplementary rather than a primary source of income for the small number of organised criminal groups involved. Most groups enter the weapons-trafficking business through other criminal activity, which may offer contacts, knowledge of existing routes and infrastructure related to the smuggling of weapons. The weapons and organised criminal groups involved in weapons trafficking primarily originate from the Western Balkans (the weapons will typically have been held illegally after recent conflicts in the area) and the former Soviet Union. Outlaw motorcycle

gangs are also involved in the trafficking of weapons, and have opened chapters in the Western Balkans. Organised criminal groups use existing criminal routes to traffic weapons.

The main sources of illegal weapons are:

- the reactivation of neutralised weapons;
- burglaries and thefts;
- the embezzlement of legal arms;
- the selling of legal arms on the illegal market, including the

Darknet;

- the reactivation of decommissioned army or police firearms;
- the conversion of gas pistols.

In 2014, Europol estimated that there were almost half a million lost or stolen firearms in the EU. The relatively high risks associated with weapons trafficking act as a disincentive for organised criminal groups. However, where demand exists, criminals will exploit vulnerabilities in legitimate supply chains to obtain weapons and ammunition.

Europol plays a key role in supporting Member States fight criminal networks involved in illegal weapons and explosives trafficking. As part of a wider strategy to identify the criminal networks supplying terrorist groups with firearms and ammunition, Europol experts work closely with counter terrorism experts on international investigations. Moreover, Europol specialists and analysts combine efforts to assist Member States in developing their own resources to monitor and tackle the Darknet phenomenon. The agency's Analysis Project (AP) Weapons and Explosives deals with criminal organisations and individuals involved in the illegal manufacturing, possession and trafficking of small arms, light weapons, ammunition, parts and components explosives (military, commercial, pyrotechnics and improvised/homemade), explosives precursors, improvised explosive devices (parts and components), military ordnance (parts and components), chemical biological radiological and nuclear (CBRN) materials and other dangerous substances that could be used as weapons. Europol's European Counter-Terrorism Centre (ECTC) supports Member States in information-sharing and operational cooperation with regard to monitoring traffic in illegal firearms in the context of anti-terrorism.

In addition, Europol's European Migrant Smuggling Centre (EMSC) is seeking to identify and analyse links between the facilitation of illegal migration and other crime areas, including firearms trafficking.

In April 2017, over 578 firearms and 776 pieces of ammunitions were seized as part as a joint operation targeting the illegal movement of firearms, explosives, chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear material

through the Ukraine–Moldova border. Five pieces of explosives and one package of radioactive material were also seized at the border as part of this operation. Co-ordinated by the European Union Border Assistance Mission to Moldova and Ukraine (EUBAM), this operation involved Europol, Frontex, the Southeast European Law Enforcement Centre (SELEC) and law enforcement agencies in Ukraine, Moldova, Greece, Romania and Spain.

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FORMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Human trafficking is a multi-billion-dollar form of international organized crime, constituting modern-day slavery. It, believed to be the third-largest criminal activity in the world, is a form of human slavery which must be addressed at the interagency level. Human trafficking includes forced labour, domestic servitude, and commercial sex trafficking. It involves both U.S. citizens and foreigners alike, and has no demographic restrictions. There are many forms of trafficking, but one consistent aspect is the abuse of the inherent vulnerability of the victims.

Forms human trafficking

- Trafficking for forced labour
- Trafficking for forced criminal activities
- Trafficking in women for sexual exploitation
- Trafficking for the removal of organs
- People smuggling

Trafficking for forced labour Victims of this widespread form of trafficking come primarily from developing countries. They are recruited and trafficked using deception and coercion and find themselves held in conditions of slavery in a variety of jobs. They can be engaged in agricultural, mining, fisheries or construction work, along with domestic servitude and other jobs.