

Weapon Collection Initiatives and the Threat of Small Arms and Light Weapons Proliferation in Volatile Areas of North-Eastern Nigeria as a Way Forward for National Security and Development

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Abstract : The proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALW) and its illicit trafficking in West Africa and Nigeria in particular, pose a major threat to peace, security and development in the Sub-region. The high circulation of these weapons in the region is a product of the interplay of several factors, which derives principally from the internal socio-economic and political dynamics compounded by globalization. The process of globalization has congealed both time and space making it easier for ideas, goods, persons, services, information, products and money to move across borders with fewer restrictions. And this has a negative effect in the entire region making it easier for arms, ammunition, insurgents, criminal and drugs to flow within national boundaries. The failure of public security in most parts of Nigeria has lead communities to indulge in different forms of 'self-help' security measures, ranging from vigilante groups to community-owned arms stockpiling. Having lost confidence in the Nigerian state, parties to some of these conflicts have become entangled in a security dilemma. The quest to procure more arms to guarantee personal and community protection from perceived and real enemies is fuelling the 'domestic arms race'. Therefore, as small arms remain-and proliferate - development is impeded. The impact of SALW on economic well being and national development in Nigeria is of vast significant. Therefore the need to collect these arms in circulation in Nigeria particularly the volatile area of North-east is of very important. This will hopefully contribute to government effort in building a free, secured and peaceful society.

Keywords : arms, development, proliferation, security

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