

Arms Light Weapons And Rebel Insurgency Across Africa: Impact On Neighboring States

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Abstract

Rebel movement across Africa with proliferation of small arms and light weapons has created threats to peace, security, stability and development in the continent. The wide availability, accumulation and illicit flow of such weapons have helped in fuelling conflicts, causing series of havoc, undermined various peace agreements, intensified violence that had led to the death of many, increased refugees and Internally Displaced Persons, these weapons have left perpetual scars on many people. Thereby hindering the development of social stability, democracy and good governance in many African states. The work provide brief clarification of the key concept and overview of the activities of rebel movements and flow of Small Arms and light weapon into neighboring states in Africa. This work discusses the implications and also recommends that, there should be strong synergy among various government institutions within and outside the Africa continent to minimize the activities of rebel movements and the flow of small arms and light weapons into neighboring states in Africa.

1 .Introduction

It has been estimated that over 100 million small arms and light weapons are circulating in Africa (Salopek, 2001). This proliferation has been facilitated by among other factors, the lengthy, porous and very often poorly policed borders, inefficient border controls, corruption, that make illicit trafficking in small arms difficult to control. The sheer volume of the estimated quantity of over 550 million small arms in circulation in the world (SAS 2001) and the economic interests involved, complicate the issues, and the complexity of the range of measures that could be adopted to effectively stem the flow, and of what Oxfam (1998a) has described as its horrific consequences. Not surprisingly, as SIPRI (1998) notes, Africa has more major armed conflicts than any other continent.

In 1998, there were 11 major armed conflicts in Africa, ranging from the Sudan and its Rebel SPLA/M, Janjawee, to DRC Congo M23 Rebel, Central Africa Republic Selenke Rebels, Somalia Alshaba, Liberia and many others, making it the worst conflict zone in the world for the first time since 1989. Africa averaged high intensity conflicts annually from 1990 to 2000. Nowhere else in the world has there been such a high concentration of intensive conflict over such a long period since the end of the Second World War (SIPRI, 1998). It has been established that the proliferation of small arms and light weapons on the continent is one of the major factors that are directly responsible for the frequency and intensity of the conflicts Africa and its high number of insurgent in the world which has been experiencing over the last two decades (Laurance, 1998).

At this point It's imperative to understand the actions of the Rebels movement and their violence, we must firstly understand not only the elites, and the intra-elite conflicts that produce leaders of these movements and that are also fuelled by the resurgence of ethnicity and religion, growing movement of people across boundaries, the porous nature of many African states which has lead to free flow of ideas and technologies, and saturation of arms market. "It is a protracted political-military conflict aimed at undermining government legitimacy and increasing insurgent control. Political power is the central issue in Rebels movement which can also be translated through the actions and responses of the wider population, the Tuareg Rebel in Mali easily come to mind or the Boko Haram in Nigeria.

More specifically, it's important to note, on the one hand, the nature of the rebel movements the thinking, composition, actions and capacities of the leaders of the insurgent movements. On the other hand, the social structures of the African countryside in which they often operate must be taken into consideration.

It's also imperative to argue that the social terrain of rural Africa is highly suitable for classical guerrilla warfare and that, combined with the urban origins of rebel movements; this generates self-defeating behavior of armed

groups and terrible suffering of rural populations. However incoherent their objectives, and however brutal their methods, rebellions reflect a serious urban malaise that needs to be addressed.

In a related development Brussels' (2000), in an article strongly critical of the Belgian government's mercenary role in pumping arms into an already unstable continent stated:

Several vanquished military groups are at large in these vast areas
(of Central Africa) over which their governments have very little
control (Brussels' 2000).

He also argue that this posed a threat to several regimes and an even greater one to the local people who are sometimes taken hostage, or obliged to provide rebel groups with supplies, or forced to follow them and participate in their operations.

In a related development Dwight (1956) former United State President submits that;

Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired
signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are
not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed. The world in arms
is not spending money alone. It is spending the sweat of its laborers,
the genius of its scientists, the hopes of its children... This is not a
way of life at all, in any true sense. Under the cloud of threatening
war, it is humanity hanging from a cross of iron (Dwight 1956).

The major objective of this research work is to analyzed and examined the nefarious act in Rebel across Africa through the use of Small and light weapon, between 1990- 2012, precisely because of increase in many cases of crime against humanity committed by the Rebel.

2.Scope

This study limits its scope to the period “between” 1990-date. This period is significance in the history of Africa because; the period witnessed many cases of crime against humanity especially through Rebel movements and with the aid of Small arms and light weapons

2.1 Conceptual clarification

Rebels' movement can be defined as “an organized, armed political struggle whose goal may be the seizure of power through revolutionary takeover and replacement of the existing government destabilizing the existing structure of the state through guerrilla warfare. In some case, however, rebel goals may be more limited. “For example, the Rebels may intend to break away from government control and establish an autonomous State within traditional, ethnic, or religious territorial bounds. The Rebels may also intend to extract limited political concessions unattainable through less violent means.”

It can also be defined as “an armed rebellion by a section of the population against the legally constituted government, with the support or sympathy of the local population, obtained voluntarily or by coercion” (Abisogun 1999).

In a related development Beckett (1988) defined Rebels as a section of the population that are against the legally constituted government, with the support or sympathy of the local population, obtained voluntarily or by coercion (Beckett, 1988).

Rebel can also be explained as “a strategy adjusted by groups which cannot attain their political objectives through conventional means or by quick seizure of power. It is a tool used by those too weak to do otherwise.”

Rebellion is viewed as a strategy adopted by the weaker of the two actors involved, as this actor cannot achieve its objectives through conventional means. It is usually a protracted, asymmetric, multidimensional and demanding movement. Its failure and success depends upon a strict regimentation, determination, motivation and blind loyalty from its followers and advocates.

The Rebels achieve their objectives by applying techniques such as guerrilla war, psychological war, and political mobilization, etc.

They use both violent and passive means, including demonstrations, blockades, rallies, meetings, bombing and suicide bombing of important installations, shootings of important persons, propaganda warfare and guerrilla warfare tactics and kidnapping. That is because they do not possess the capabilities to fight the regular armed forces of the State. All such kinds of efforts are made to discredit the government. Insurgents may have diverse objectives, e.g., seizure of power, acquiring autonomy, winning the right to self-determination or a greater political role and economic share.

Small Arms; The term "Small Arms" often is used to describe three major subdivisions of weaponry: small arms, light weapons, and ammunition and explosives. A recent United Nations report provided the following definitions: Small Arms includes revolvers and self-loading pistols, rifles and carbines, sub-machine guns, assault rifles and light machine guns; light weapons includes heavy machine guns, hand-held under-barrel and mounted grenade launchers, portable anti-aircraft guns, portable anti-tank guns, recoilless rifles (sometimes mounted), portable launchers of anti-aircraft missile systems (sometimes mounted), and mortars of calibers less than 100 mm; ammunition and explosives includes cartridges (rounds) for Small Arms, shells and missiles for light weapons, mobile containers with missiles or shells for single-action anti-aircraft and anti-tank systems, anti-personnel and anti-tank hand grenades, landmines and explosives. According to Boutwell and Klare, Small Arms and light Weapons have certain characteristics that make them the weapon of choice for countries and groups involved in armed conflict. Small Arms are attractive because of their instant availability at reduced cost, lethality, sturdiness minimalism, Convenience of the weapon, and military, police, and civilian uses (United Nations "Report of Government Experts on Small Arms 2000).

Light weapons can be defined as various set of weapon which include the following; heavy machine guns, hand-held under-barrel and mounted grenade launchers, portable anti-aircraft guns, portable anti-tank guns, recoilless rifles, portable launchers of anti-aircraft missile systems and mortars of calibres less than 100 mm (United Nations "Report of Government Experts on Small Arms 2000).

Armed groups are those that use military force to achieve their objectives and are not under state control. They usually seek political power and/or autonomy from the state; though their political objectives may often be mixed with criminal activity. This category does not include paramilitary bodies controlled by the state, unless these forces have some real autonomy (Atanga, 2003).

Paramilitaries are forces generally raised from among the civil population, which supplement the regular army in case of emergency. They are generally armed by the state (Ibid).

Civil defence units are armed by the state and can be distinguished from other armed groups by their attachment to a geographic community (Adedeji; 2003).

Mercenaries are individuals who fight for financial gain in foreign wars; they are primarily used by armed groups in the case of Biafra war against Nigeria and occasionally by governments (Atanga Opcit).

Private Military Companies (PMCs) are corporate entities providing offensive services designed to have a military impact in a given situation. They are generally contracted by governments. Examples include Sand-line International, Black Water, and the dissolved Executive Outcomes (Brussels Opcit).

Private Security Companies (PSCs) are corporate entities providing defensive services to protect individuals and property. They are frequently used by multinational companies in the extractive sector, humanitarian agencies, and individuals in various situations of violence or instability (Government of South Africa, 2000).

Revolution can be defined as an uprising directed toward a radical modification of the existing political or social order throughout the whole territory of a State (Oladunjoye 2008).

Guerrilla warfare is a form of irregular warfare and refers to conflicts in which a small group of combatants including, but not limited to, armed civilians (or "irregulars") use military tactics, such as ambushes, sabotage, raids, the element of surprise, and extraordinary mobility to harass a larger and less-mobile traditional army, or strike a vulnerable target, and withdraw almost immediately

Small Arms and light weapons are perhaps the most deadly of all weapons because they are so insidious. With them a small group can easily turn a peaceful country or region into a major zone of conflict and man-made humanitarian disaster. Small arms rend the fabric of civil society like no other weapon in the world

What kinds of weapons are we talking about when we say "Small Arms and light weapons"? Small Arms and light weapons include any weapon that can be carried by one or two people, mounted on a vehicle, or carried by a pack animal. Easily available, lightweight, and relatively inexpensive, Small Arms can be obtained for a few dollars or even in exchange for a chicken. These tools of death and violence include not only traditional military style weapons, but also machetes, axes, swords, arrow and bows.

2.2 Causes of Rebel movement in Africa

- Tussle for power through election manipulation as the case in Ivory Coast, Nigeria and some other country
- Military coup and counter military coup
- Economic disintegration
- Disenfranchise
- Social disorder

2.3 Rebel movements in Africa

- (1) From the deadly Tuareg group that spread from Northern Mali, into Niger and some part of Algeria, southern part of Libya and into Mauritania. The deadly activities of the Tuareg group in those countries, have not only destabilised the states in question, but also query the security legitimacy of these state. The Tuareg rebel for instance has created a lot of havoc within and outside the state of Mali leading to the death of thousands of people, while in the early days of the Libyan crisis the Tuareg Rebel fought on the side of the Libyan leader Mumar Gadaffi killing hundreds of innocents soils using series of automatic weapon in the likes of AK 47 and others. The activity of the Tuareg group in this area has not only contributed to the proliferations of series of small arms and light weapons but helped to heighten tension.
- (2) The Janjaweed rebel group is another deadly armed rebel group that is mostly known in and around the Darfur region of Sudan, Western Sudan, and now Eastern Chad., The Janjaweed group are deadly in their mode of operation within the area, they have committed large number of crime against humanity and in some cases genocide. In the struggle for the soul of Darfur, the Janjaweed has committed what is today known as one of the worst genocide in the history of humanity in the region of Darfur. The Janjaweed as it were also made use of series of sophisticated weapons to execute their nefarious crime against humanity.
- (3) The Lord's Resistance Army (also Lord's Resistance Movement or Lakwena Part Two) is another deadly Rebel group with a syncretic Christian and Traditional African religious ideology. The activities of the group have not only cause death of many innocent souls, but rendered many homeless. The group also contributed to several instability of the region and has always mounted pressure on the various security agents to be on their toes. The LRA group operates in Northern Uganda, South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Central Africa Republic.
- (4) The Al-shabaab group in Somalia; The Harakat Shabaab al-Mujahidin (al-Shabaab)—also known as al-Shabaab, Shabaab, the Youth, Mujahidin al-Shabaab Movement, Mujahideen Youth Movement, Mujahidin Youth Movement, and other names and variations—was the militant wing of the Somali Council of Islamic Courts that took over most of southern Somalia in the second half of 2006. Although the Somali government and Ethiopian forces routed the group in a two-week war between December 2006 and January 2007, al-Shabaab—a clan-based insurgent and terrorist group continued its violent insurgency in southern and central Somalia. The group has exerted temporary and, at times, sustained control over strategic locations in southern and central Somalia by recruiting, at times forcibly, regional sub-clans and their militias, using guerrilla asymmetrical warfare and terrorist tactics against the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) of Somalia and its allies, African Union peacekeepers, and nongovernmental aid organizations. Al-Shabaab is not centralized or monolithic in its agenda or goals. Its rank-and-file members come from disparate clans, and the group is susceptible to clan politics, internal divisions, and shifting alliances. While most of its fighters are predominantly interested in the nationalistic battle against the TFG and not supportive of global jihad, al-Shabaab's senior leadership is affiliated with al-Qa'ida, and certain extremists aligned with al-Shabaab are believed to have trained and fought in Afghanistan. Al-Shabaab have issued statements praising Usama Bin Ladin and linking Somalia to al-Qa'ida's global operations. The group has claimed responsibility for many bombings—including various types of suicide attacks—in Mogadishu and in central and northern Somalia, typically targeting Somali government officials and perceived allies of the TFG. Al-Shabaab was likely responsible for a wave of five coordinated suicide car bombings in October 2008 that simultaneously hit targets in two cities in northern Somalia, killing at least 26 people, including five bombers, and injuring 29 others. Al-Shabaab has been accused by Ugandan officials of conducting the twin suicide bombings in Kampala, Uganda, on 11 July 2010 that killed more than 70 people. Al-Shabaab's leaders also have ordered their fighters to attack African Union peace-keeping troops based in Mogadishu. Al-Shabaab is

responsible for the assassination of Somali peace activists, international aid workers, numerous civil society figures, and journalists (NCC 2001).

3.Implications of Rebel movement in Africa

The implication of Rebels movement in Africa cannot be over emphasized, from the Liberia civil war to Sierra Leone civil, to post election crisis in Cote'd Ivory, the post election crisis in Nigeria, the Tuareg Rebel in Mali, that are having incursion into Niger, Chad, and are also operating in Libya the Janjaweed in Sudan, Lord's Resistance Army in DRC, CAR, and Northern Uganda, Alshabal in Somalia and many others have caused not only havoc in the continent but also have put the continent in the bad light among the comity of nations.

Solution; adopting the five Es

- Economic empowerment/ integration of all
- Equal distribution of political power among the various class
- Eradication of military coup
- Encouragement of democracy
- Educating the masses

However, it is imperative to recognise that present actions to tackle these problems in Africa remain inadequately developed and often ineffective. Awareness of the severity of the problem still needs to be increased in many quarters. The problem requires a co-ordinated approach. However the regional policy and an action programme that covers the needs of the continent has yet to be developed.

An integrated and comprehensive response is needed to meet the complex challenges of weapons proliferation and illicit trafficking through Rebel movement, yet existing responses remain fragmented and inadequately resourced. A set of co-ordinated programmes does not exist to tackle illicit arms trafficking and Rebel movement. Programmes to develop effective controls on legal arms possession and transfers, among civilians and state security forces, remain inadequate. So, too, are programmes to disarm ex-combatants in the case of Libya, remove unlicensed arms from civilians, and destroy or safely dispose of 'surplus' stocks of arms or confiscated illicit weapons. Transparency, information exchange and consultation among countries on these issues remain weak.

3.1 The Small Arms and Light Weapons

The sheer quantity of Small Arms in the world is estimated to range between 5 million to 13 million especially those in wrong hands. Unlike other weapons systems, small arms remain outside all current international control and transparency regimes that focus on arms trading.

Small Arms, often included under the rubric of conventional weapons, are not usually included in the reporting of conventional arm sales. Further, because a large portion of the trade in small arms is done via commercial transactions by private industry and not government sales, Small Arms deals do not undergo the same level of scrutiny as other weapon systems that require government approval or oversight. Therefore, the transfer and recycling of small arms and light weapons from conflict to conflict can easily become part of a complex combination of legal and illicit transfers.

The Small Arms and light weapon trade is much larger than many imagine. According to the United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA), the Small Arms trade is estimated at 13% of all arms transfers. ACDA also believes that the monetary value of small arms exports are about one-fourth the total value of global arms transfers. It is believe that the total trade in small arms could be as high as \$10 billion. In fact, small arms are one aspect of the global arms trade that has actually increased since the end of the Cold War (Brand, 2003).

At this point, a brief synopsis of the methods by which small arms and light weapons make their way into the hands of those engaged in conflict is as follow.

(a) Officially authorized Trade

The lawful trade in small arms takes shape as a government-to-government transfer, an industry-to-government transfer, or a government or industry-to-sanctioned arms dealer or to legitimate militias and paramilitary organizations.

In his analysis Richard details these kinds of transfers as follows:

- Grants or gifts by governments to allied governments;
- Sales by governments to client governments;
- Commercial sales by private firms to governments and private dealers in other countries;
- Technology transfers associated with domestic arms production in the developing nations;
- Covert transfers by governments to friendly insurgent and separatist groups in other countries;

- Gifts by governments to armed militias and paramilitary organizations linked to the ruling party or the dominant ethnic group.

Complicating matters in the legitimate small arms trade is that the number of small arms manufacturers has increased dramatically in the past 10 years; some estimates are as high as 300 manufacturers in 50 countries, a 25 % increase in 10 years (Richard 1993). The following depicts the numbers of the most common assault rifles in circulation around the world.

- 5-9 million Belgian FAL assault rifles in 15 countries;
- 35-60 million Soviet/Russian AK assault rifles manufactured by Soviet/Russian factories and licensees;
- 7 million German Heckler and Koch G3 assault rifles made in 18 countries;
- 10 million US M-16 rifles produced in 7 countries;
- 8 million Chinese-made AK-type assault rifles.

(b) Unlawful Trade

- Specialized analysts believe that up to one-third of the small arms trade takes place through illicit channels. If the global trade in small arms is approximately \$10 billion, this total is not a trivial amount. Like other items on the black market, small arms follow typical patterns of smuggling and source. Small Arms can be stolen from stocks, diverted to unintended third parties, or sold through illicit channels. There are three major types of the illicit route in Small Arms and light weapons trade they include the following;
 - (c) **The sales of illicit weapon through black-market channels;** the supply of Arms in defiance of international embargoes and other legal sanctions, and the theft of arms from government stocks or private citizens. In recent years, there has been a striking growth in the operations of black-market dealers to satisfy the needs of non-state actors in ethnic and internal conflicts. Because such actors are normally barred from purchases on the legal munitions market, they must acquire their weaponry from illicit sources. The growing number of arms embargoes has also produced an increased demand for black-market arms. The sales in black-market to governments of "pariah" countries and to insurgent, rebel and separatist forces.
 - (d) Theft of government and privately owned arms by insurgent, rebels, criminal, and separatist forces;
 - (e) Exchanges between Rebel, insurgent and criminal organizations, whether for profit or in pursuit of common political objectives.
 - (f) Government officials in other states have also been accused of smuggling arms to allied groups in other countries, whether for profit or to advance particular political or religious objectives. Officials in Zaire, for instance, reportedly bought large quantities of weapons on the international market and sold them to UNITA forces in Angola for profits running into the hundreds of millions of dollars—most of which is believed to have wound up in the overseas bank accounts of former President Mobutu Seso Seko and his associates.
 - (g) Another form of illicit Arms trade entails the delivery of weapons from government stockpiles to political entities and ethnic militias associated with the ruling clan or party. In a related development prior to the Arab spring especially in Libya the major player in the polity distributed small arms and light weapon that was use in the ouster of Mummur Gaddafi .Also prior to the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, for example, the Hutu-dominated government distributed small arms and machetes to government-linked militias. Once the killing began, the Rwandan military sought to crush any organized Tutsi resistance while the militias slaughtered unarmed Tutsis and moderate Hutus. A similar pattern was evident in Haiti in the early 1990s, when the ruling military junta organized and armed the Front for the Advancement and Progress of Haiti (FRAPH) to suppress popular support for ousted President Jean-Bertrand Aristide. Small arms were also freely distributed in Ivory Coast to overthrow the former President Laurent Gbagbo.

3.3 Why small arms and light weapons strives

The various set of conflicts that occur recently all over the world has shown that, more people have been killed by Small Arms and light weapons than by major weapons systems. The distinguishing features of these weapons that make them so suitable to contemporary intra-state conflicts are as follow:

- (a) **Instant availability at reduced cost.** As a result of the fact that production of Small Arms and light weapons requires little in the way of sophisticated technology, and because these weapons are manufactured for military, police and civilian use, there are many suppliers around the world. In addition, the existence of many tens of millions of such weapons whether newly produced, given away

by downsizing militaries or recycled from conflict to conflict has leads to bargain-basement prices in many countries around the world.

- (b) **Lethality.** The increasing sophistication and lethality of rapid-fire assault rifles, automatic pistols and submachine guns and their diffusion to non-state actors has given such groups a firepower that often matches or exceeds that of national police or constabulary forces. With such weapons capable of firing up to 300 rounds a minute, a single individual can pose a tremendous threat to the society. The incorporation of new technology into shoulder-fired rockets, mortars and light anti-tank weapons has only increased the firepower that warring factions bring to bear in civil conflicts.
- (c) **Sturdiness and minimalism.** Small Arms are easy to use and maintain, require little maintenance or logistical support and remain operational for many years. Such weapons require little training to use effectively, which greatly increases their use in conflicts involving untrained combatants and children.
- (d) **Convenience of the weapon.** Small Arms and light weapons can be easily carried by an individual soldier or light vehicle, are easily transported or smuggled to areas of conflict, and can be concealed in shipments of legitimate cargo.
- (e) **Military, Police and Civilian Uses.** Unlike major conventional weapons, which are most often procured solely by national military forces, small arms and light weapons cross the dividing line separating military and police forces from the civilian population. Depending on the gun control laws of a particular country, citizens are permitted to own anything from pistols and sporting guns to fully automatic rifles. In many countries, moreover, there has been a dramatic increase in the number and size of private militias and security firms which, in many cases, are equipped with military-type weapons.

The trade in major conventional weapons around the world has been well documented. By comparison, the universal trade in illicit weapon such as small arms and light weapons has proved much more difficult to track. Not many countries governments publish the statistics on the sale or transfer of small and light weapons or release information about the sales activities of private companies. Moreover, much of the trade perhaps 25 percent—is carried on through illicit and black-market channels of one sort or another (Frederick 1995).

3.3 Disadvantages of small arms and light weapon

- (1) Small Arms and light weapons are being used increasingly in intra-state conflicts because their cost, portability and easy availability make them particularly suitable for both governments and non-state actors fighting low-intensity conflicts.
- (2) Another insidious characteristic of Small Arms is their persistence – they often remain “at large” when organized conflict ends. They then become instruments for other forms of violence such as criminal behavior, disruption of development assistance, and interference with efforts to deliver food, medicine, and supplies to people in dire need of relief. Refugees are often afraid to return to their homes because of the large number of weapons still in the hands of fighters who have not been demobilized or who have secret weapons caches throughout a former area of conflict. There is no doubt that small arms leave a devastating legacy long after a conflict has officially ended.
- (3) The unregulated flow of weapons can affect not only the country in crisis, but also neighboring countries, and even some not in the region. The ample supply of weapons that often pour across borders can so quickly and severely destabilize a fragile state or region that there arises a virtual culture of violence that traps whole societies in an endless cycle of war.
- (4) Although the international community’s is only now beginning to realize the insidious nature of Small Arms, and are attempting to address the proliferation of these weapons around the world, the use of small arms and light weapons is not a new phenomenon. The United Nations (UN) believes that Small Arms and light weapons are responsible for 90% of all war casualties since World War II. All but three of the 49 conflicts since 1990 relied on small arms and light weapons as the only instruments of war, and only one, the 1991 Gulf War, was dominated by heavy weapons. In effect, the proliferation of small arms and light weapons often determines the ability of a country or group to successfully wage war.

4.The impact of Small Arms and light weapons on Rebels movement in Africa

The implication of Small Arms and light weapon on rebel movement cannot be over emphasis; few of the many reasons why weapons held by insurgents are so destructive are as follow;

- Small Arms and light weapons in the hand of rebels is a major tool in championing internal wars and civilians are often a primary target, where many of them are killed, many maimed and raped with perpetual scares.
- Damaging military operations; one of the main goals of Rebel is to destroy as many as possible several military installations and this can only be done through acquiring Small Arms and light weapons.

- Terrorism and fear another major attribute of rebel movements is by inculcating terror and fear into the lives of the people and this can also be carry out through the use of explosive and small arms and light weapons.
- The unclear international legal responsibilities of rebel groups make it difficult to hold them accountable for violations of human rights and humanitarian law. There are also difficulties to engage them into a dialogue on this issue.

4.1 Averting the distribution of Small Arms and Light Weapons into neighboring states in Africa

Ability to thwart the diversion of small arms and light weapons (SALW) and their trafficking across neighboring state must be undertaken within a comprehensive framework which recognizes: the breadth and complexity of SALW proliferation and misuse; the wide range of measures that need to be combined to achieve effective controls; and the need to involve and secure the support of all stakeholders, including those affected by SALW-related violence. The most effective approaches are those undertaken co-operatively among neighboring states, such as the following

- There should be intensive and adequate co-operation and co-ordination between neighboring countries and facilitating commensurate national control systems, and helps to establish conducive atmosphere for effective controls in the borderlands on each side of a border.
- National governments have responsibility for: the institution of a comprehensive and informed risk assessment within the context of the SALW transfer licensing process.
- There should adequate provisions for regulating agencies in both import, export, brokering, transit and trans-shipment of SALW including effective end-use and re-export controls; measures to ensure that all state-authorized SALW holdings are secure; and more active use of the International Tracing Instrument.
- Relevant agencies such as customs and immigration are central to efforts to tackle SALW diversion. Developing and implementing effective border management/ control requires a comprehensive, integrated approach, involving a combination of state ministries and agencies.
- Links with security sector reform and conflict-sensitive development processes are important. Security sector reform in this context includes reforms to improve the effectiveness and accountability of border control agencies and is also likely to relate to wider reform agendas, such as the need to develop:
- Co-ordination between international border management agencies to ensure their co-operation within a wider integrated national strategy which balances facilitation of legitimate trade and population movements, tax-collection, and prevention and combating of trafficking.
- Intelligence gathering and analysis capacities, and ensure links with policy-making and border control enforcement activities.
- Active anti-corruption programmes within all relevant agencies.
- Arrangements for co-operation between neighboring states on border controls, including information exchange, co-operation in policy-making, and day-to-day co-operation between relevant agencies.
- Reforms and capacity-building to address the security, law-enforcement justice and dispute-resolution and prevention agency such as IPCR needs and concerns of citizens and communities, particularly of those communities whose co-operation is important for effective border management.

5. Conclusion And Recommendations

It is germane to understand thoroughly that the Sahel sub-region in Africa is becoming a breeding ground for Islamic militancy and safe haven for terrorists reportedly fleeing the war in Afghanistan and the crackdown in Pakistan and piercing into the vast ungoverned Sahara desert through Libya, Sudan, Somalia, Mauritania, Chad, Niger, Mali, consolidating into al Qaeda and similar networks with serious implication for security and governance. It's also imperative to note that Rebel movement in Africa inflicts hunger, death, poverty, permanent scare etc upon the people and therefore need to be countered holistically. Deterrence through militarized approach alone has never proved successful anywhere in the world; the French did not get it right in Algeria, neither Israeli getting it right with neutralization approach. In many cases, the Rebel movements are considered as bandits or pirates. In fact, this very consideration closes the door to any negotiation. A government unable to eradicate this type of threat would hardly convince its people or any foreign investors of its capability to guarantee security in its country.

For nearly four decades now Senegal has failed to defeat the Casamance rebel; the Touareg question still confronts the Nigerien and Malian government; onslaught in the Nigerian north east region with the Boko Haram

sect has continue with series of bombing from the sect including the police force headquarters and recently the United Nation house both in the country capital Abuja. In counterinsurgency, the aim of the government should not be to eliminate the rebels, but to transform the physical and human environment to a point that the Rebel will no longer be able to survive. By properly addressing the grievances of the population, the cause of the Rebel movement will fade progressively and will ultimately no longer be relevant.

Tackling Rebels movement in Africa is as serious as fighting a war its self, it is imperative to note that many countries may not be able to cope individually with the rising number of Rebels groups in Africa. Counterinsurgencies in Africa need to be re-strategized. It is in this context that the likes of sub-regional organization such as ECOWAS/SADC/AU/CAECD/MAGREB most take into configuring these insurgencies with seriousness. In order words, these regional organizations and the AU can now intervene in these conflicts and to that extent we have seen ECOWAS first step in the Jos conflict (Nigeria) in 2010 providing direct humanitarian assistance. Moving forward, we can use our wisdom to adopt a holistic strategy combining Diplomacy, Information, Military and Economy (DIME) to effectively and sustainably manage counter insurgencies in the region. The Diplomacy shall emphasize preventive action & cooperation and preventive diplomacy, employing state and civil society actors; Information must be generated from sound intelligence, early warning signals; Military will mean to use lethal force when required, but must be proportional; and Economy to improve conditions of life that will ultimately geared to win the mind and heart of the populations.

5.1 Recommendations

Strategies need to be based on up-to-date assessments of the risks, drivers and processes of SALW diversion and trafficking, and should engage with the interests and concerns of the wider population – particularly in borderlands –as well as of state security. They also need to develop confidence-building, co-operation, and co-ordination with neighboring countries. States and other stakeholders should:

- Seek to develop a better understanding of the relationship between effective border controls mechanisms and the reduction of SALW diversion and trafficking risks and fighting rebel movement in all its ramifications.
- Adopt coherent, integrated borderland management programmes
- Maximize lesson-learning and seek to elaborate assistance training modules, taking into account analysis of problem border areas, relations with neighbors, and pre-existing border control capacities a case of Kenya and the Somalia government in tackling Alshabal group.
- Identify the specific nature of needs and available international assistance in order to maximize the matching of needs and resources.

International programmes to support the development of border controls in regions of tension and insecurity should:

- Support the development of a multifaceted approach to border management, from policy development to institutional reform to capacity building
- Encourage states to address a range of different types of trafficking – including SALW – as part of their border management and security strategy
- Foster improved relations between border personnel in neighboring countries.

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The UN Small Arms Panel Report (September 1997: 15) pointed out that "accumulations of small arms and light weapons by themselves do not cause conflicts in which they are used.... These conflicts have underlying causes which arise from a number of accumulated and complex political, commercial, socio-economic, ethnic, cultural and ideological factors. Such conflicts will not be finally resolved without addressing the root causes.

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