

# The Global Spread of the Real Weapons of Mass Destruction: Linking State Collapse and Small Arms Proliferation

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## **Abstract**

This thesis aims to connect the phenomena of state collapse to resulting small arms and light weapons (SALW) proliferation. The category of weapons designated as SALW result in more casualties and fatalities in conflicts worldwide annually than any other category of weapons, including the much-feared Weapons of Mass Destruction. International supplies of SALW tend to increase massively when a state with large stockpiles of SALW undergoes the process of state collapse. This is because as the state institutions weaken during state collapse, SALW stockpiles shift from a centralized oversight to control by new or local leaders. These local leaders do not share the same incentives to prevent proliferation as the state did prior to collapse, ultimately leading to SALW proliferation. Military expenditures and arms transfer statistics, when available, provide quantitative data illustrating how states and non-state actors buy, sell, and transport SALW from supplier states to recipient groups. In addition to statistical data, investigative reports by anti-proliferation research organizations or UN fact-finding missions provide insight on how SALW spread out of and within collapsed states. By connecting state collapse to SALW proliferation, this thesis provides one succinct theoretical framework through which future research and policy initiatives can examine this connection, particularly in efforts to prevent harmful SALW proliferation.

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## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

On January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2012, about 3,000 Tuaregs, nomads who travel throughout the Sahara Desert, declared open rebellion against the state of Mali. Initially, this was not terribly surprising to Malian leaders or the international community. Tuaregs, often unhappy with state restrictions since they often migrate between multiple states, had rebelled in the early 1960s, early 1990s, and in 2006. However, this time the Tuareg rebels, organized into the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad, known by its French abbreviation as MNLA, and the Islamist Ansar Dine movement, were heavily armed with exceptionally sophisticated modern weaponry. They succeeded in driving the Malian military out of the north of the country, after which the MNLA declared independence for the region of Azawad. Having lost a large portion of its territory and suffering after a military coup, Mali was forced to request foreign intervention from France, the African Union, and the United Nations to ultimately retake control of its territory in mid-2013.

An immediate question concerning this uprising was how the Tuareg rebellions were able to acquire so many high-end weapons and use them against the Malian military. Following the collapse of Colonel Muammar Gaddafi's reign in Libya, a state where Tuaregs typically travel through, the rebellious Tuaregs were able to steal weapons from Gaddafi's leftover stockpiles. During his reign, Gaddafi had imported large amounts of sophisticated arms from manufacturers across the globe. Without anyone to oversee the stockpiles, however, the Tuaregs, among other groups, were able to help themselves to the modern arms. Whereas during the previous Tuareg uprisings, the rebels were ill equipped with out-of-date weapons, now they had the capacity and large quantity of arms to engage directly with the Malian military and win. The rebellion led to a military coup in the government of Mali, destruction of important cultural and religious sites in northern Mali, and a large-scale foreign intervention and peacekeeping operation. It was only

internal disagreements and fighting, along with international intervention, which brought down the Tuareg rebels in northern Mali after their nearly successful rebellion.

Clearly, the role of new small arms and light weapons (SALW) greatly benefitted the MNLA and Ansar Dine rebels in their attempt to win independence. First, it is important to clarify what small arms and light weapons actually are and what they mean for use in conflict and for proliferation. All SALW are important because they are inexpensive, easy to produce, require minimal training and maintenance, and can be highly effective in combat. According to the UN, small arms are defined as typically hand-held, small-caliber firearms. This includes pistols, shotguns, rifles, assault rifles, and small-caliber machine guns. Small arms are typically for use by an individual combatant. Light weapons are typically medium-caliber firearms, such as crew-served medium and heavy machine guns. They also include hand grenades, rifle grenades, rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs), small-caliber, meaning less than 100mm., mortars, small-caliber rockets, and Man-Portable Air-Defense Systems (MANPADs). These arms are typically for use by a small crew numbering two to three combatants, although they may be operated individually. MANPADs present a new, technologically advanced threat because these weapons are small and difficult to track, but can target and destroy military and civilian aircraft while in flight.

Particularly since the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991, SALW proliferation has increased significantly worldwide. As a result of this increased arms flow, conflicts have also increased. In any given region, without the ready supply and availability of SALW, the nature of supply and demand dictates that such weapons and ammunition would be economically expensive to purchase in the large quantities required for a violent struggle. However, as soon as the supply of SALW in an area increases, it becomes much less expensive to purchase weapons, and

individuals are more likely to participate in conflict. SALW furthermore have the advantage of being durable, requiring little maintenance and minimal training to implement effectively in combat. This durability and ease of proliferation led to an estimated 8 million small arms in West Africa alone, a hotbed for armed conflicts (United Nations). Finally, SALW can be extremely deadly in combat. The International Action Network on Small Arms and the United Nations estimate that about 500,000 people die as a result of SALW every year, and that 90% of civilian casualties during conflict are a result of SALW. These weapons are also prevalent with non-state actors, ranging from criminal groups to rebel organizations like the Revolutionary United Front in Sierra Leone. Clearly, the issue of SALW proliferation throughout the world is important when studying and preventing conflicts particularly in less developed areas of the world.

The key question to consider when studying SALW proliferation is essentially why they spread so easily around the world. Despite some measures to control proliferation, such as the 1999-2004 UN Programme for Coordination and Assistance for Security and Development (PCASED), aimed at reducing arms in West Africa, international efforts have been extremely limited and ineffective at reducing proliferation. Additionally, states' propensity to proliferate small arms can make UN arms embargoes ineffective. For example, following the UN embargo on Sierra Leone in 1997, many neighboring West African states were violating it widely without reproach both in support of and against rebel Charles Taylor (Vines 2005). On one hand, the incentives for supplier states to give or sell weapons to recipient groups are usually high for various reasons, primarily political or economic. On the other, the penalties for proliferating arms illegally are usually low, but still high enough to prevent most suppliers from openly supplying any party who wants SALW. Therefore, in the world today, there are generally some

instances of illegal SALW transfers between groups, but not as prominent as conditions could allow for.

However, historically we see instances when SALW proliferation increases dramatically, such as after the collapse of the Soviet Union. When a supplier state, or state with the capacity to supply SALW, collapses, the incentives to contain proliferation for the failed state's leader or the new government leaders are rather low. Therefore, these leaders are more likely to permit proliferation. It is much more difficult for other states or international organizations to restrict proliferators if they are not recognized leaders or if they are proliferating arms in a volatile situation. Such volatile situations, such as civil war or multiple leaders holding power in various areas of a state, are often linked directly to state collapse. Furthermore, after a state collapses, borders may become more porous as state regulation and border patrolling decreases. There is a clear link between state collapse and SALW proliferation.

Understanding the mechanisms of how state collapse can lead to SALW proliferation can aid in studying and understanding conflicts worldwide. One example of the importance of this question is how you can expect arms to spread to areas with a high demand and potentially result in a new conflict or worsening an already existing conflict. The high supply of arms has made it much easier for dissatisfied persons to take up violent struggle against their government or against other groups. In part, this is why there has been an increase in armed conflict over the last couple of decades. The nature of SALW also highlights how deadly they can be particularly against civilians.

The insights presented in this paper will highlight why it is important to examine SALW proliferation as a by-product of state collapse. For the international community, it should help shape responses to state collapse throughout the world in an attempt to prevent SALW

proliferation. As seen in the Mali example, state collapse can affect conflicts not just within the collapsed state, but throughout an entire region, leading to costly civilian casualties, refugees, and halting development of economically less-developed states (United Nations 2014). It can also then require a lengthy and expensive international intervention. If SALW proliferation can be prevented early on following state collapse, it may help prevent the spread of conflicts and ensuing problems.

To examine SALW proliferation and its connection to state collapse, there is a breadth of evidence, but much is unclear or unattainable. Clearly, data concerning arms deals or transfers between states and different groups would show how arms proliferate. Many states do report their legal arms sales, so it is possible to track some statistics in terms of who is supplying arms to whom, what types of arms, how much, etc. The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) has a database that includes all accessible trade registers of arms transfers since 1950, searchable by the individual registers that detail exactly what was bought and delivered and by general dollar amount of transfers.

Despite the scope of the database, a lot of arms sales and transfers information is not known. In attempts to sell arms to rebel groups or states under arms embargoes, or to secretly promote a political agenda abroad by propping up a group or government with weapons, some states choose not to report their sales. In many cases, these transfers may be illegal based on the current international arms transfer laws. Therefore, supplier states would rather ship them illegally or through a different state. For example, a supplier state could ship arms legally to another state, and that state could then re-route the arms to a different rebel group or state based on their own incentives or at the behest of the original supplier state. Additionally, it is impossible to compile statistical evidence on illegal terrorist or rebel groups and how they

proliferate arms other than through anecdotal evidence. These discrepancies and illegal arms transfers make tracking realistic SALW flow very difficult.

In addition to the statistical information from SIPRI, there is also some first-hand anecdotal information. For example, in 2009, a Ukrainian cargo ship, the MV Faina, delivered 33 T-72 Main Battle Tanks, anti-aircraft guns, rocket-propelled grenades, and ammunition to Kenya following a lengthy hijacking and hostage situation with Somali pirates. Due to the hijacking, the arms offloaded in Kenya were closely monitored. Despite the Ukrainian government's repeated claims that the arms were delivered as specified, there was significant visual evidence that the arms were re-routed to South Sudan (Holtom 2011). Reports such as these can help add to the picture of SALW proliferation throughout the world.

A final point of evidence could be specific reports or other studies of SALW proliferation and state collapse. Since SALW proliferation is such a global issue, many international organizations, such as SIPRI, the Economic Community Of West Africa States (ECOWAS), or the UN, conduct research and publish reports on proliferation. One example is the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Panel of Experts letter concerning SALW proliferation from a collapsed Libya. These assigned experts were sent to Libya and surrounding countries to monitor how SALW were proliferating throughout Libya and the region. Their insights and reporting can shed light on actual on-the-ground facts in terms of how SALW are proliferating.

Therefore, I will examine what statistical, anecdotal, and second-hand report evidence is available. Ideally, any study would focus primarily on statistical data to examine patterns of state collapse and weapons proliferation, hopefully seeing an increase in SALW proliferation following instances of state collapse. However, since this data is limited in the first place and especially so when a state collapses and there is minimal official reporting, anecdotal and report

evidence help to fill in the gaps missing from the official data. An example of how this might work is in the UNSC report on SALW proliferation from Libya following 2012. In one portion of the report, the Panel of Experts traced small-caliber rockets that the MNLA used in Mali to a stockpile in Libya. Based on the serial number and other identifying features, the experts concluded that Col. Gaddafi had purchased the arms originally in the 1970s. This investigation can aid in demonstrating how arms originally in Libya ended up proliferating to Mali following Libya's collapse in 2012.

Using a combination of these three types of evidence, in this paper I will create a theoretical framework for connecting state collapse and SALW proliferation. In past studies, scholars typically tend to examine each of these important issues independent of each other, rather than examining a cause and effect relationship. However, multiple historical examples prove how when states collapse, there is an extremely high possibility for large amounts of SALW to proliferate from that state. Newly independent states, rebel groups, or competing leaders within a collapsed state, now free from the restrictions of the old state and without regard for possible international sanctions.

As this paper will demonstrate, the role of incentives plays a key part in why states or groups chose whether or not to proliferate arms. Throughout state collapse, the political and economic incentives of proliferating SALW remain constant. The largest variable change that occurs before and after state collapse is the incentive not to proliferate, focusing on the supply side of SALW proliferation. When a state collapses, the resulting organizations do not have the same centralized oversight of SALW, are less susceptible to effective international sanctions, and are therefore more inclined to proliferate SALW because they have less to fear as a reaction. This process will be covered extensively in the following chapter.

As the issues of state collapse and SALW proliferation can be very specific and at times technical, it is important to precisely define each term and concept discussed in this paper. When studying SALW proliferation, there are four primary actors worth defining. These actors are supplier states, recipient groups, transit groups, and anti-proliferation organizations.

First, supplier states are states that possess the technological know-how and resources to create SALW and ammunition. In order to be considered a supplier state, they must actively possess the means and incentives to sell or give SALW to the recipient groups. Supplier states tend to be developed states, such as the United States, the Soviet Union and resulting states after its collapse, and Belgium. Supplier states could also be states that have stored up large stockpiles of arms imported from states that produce arms. Examples would be a state like Egypt, which imports large amounts of arms from other states. These supplier states are important because they are the ones poised to proliferate SALW should state collapse occur. Therefore, the majority of this study will focus on supplier states as they undergo the transition from state to collapse and the resultant environment with change in incentives.

Second, recipient groups are groups that want to possess SALW for one purpose or another (see incentives). These can be other states' military or police forces, local militias, terrorist organizations, criminals, or rebel groups, among others. There is clearly a wide range of types of groups that fall into this category. Recipient groups are significant because they are the ones demanding the SALW from the supplier states. These groups generate the incentive to sell or distribute SALW for political reasons, which is why SALW proliferate in the first place.

Third, transit groups are groups that are willing and able to transport SALW from the supplier state to the recipient group. They can help supplier states and recipient groups get around the legal issues and blocks preventing a supplier from transferring arms directly to the

recipient. Transit groups can be states, criminal organizations, professional arms dealers, or non-state actors, like rebel groups. These groups can help supplier states circumvent the negative incentive of sanctions or international outcry concerning illegal arms transfers.

Fourth, anti-proliferation organizations, such as the UN or ECOWAS, have undertaken efforts to prevent illegal or unnecessary SALW proliferation. These organizations and their efforts effectively create the negative incentive that typically prevent supplier states from proliferating SALW outside of approved UN or regional restrictions. Through sanctions and embargoes, anti-proliferation organizations forcibly prevent supplier states, as they would fear that the benefit of selling or providing SALW would not outweigh the negative repercussions. When this negative incentive is reduced or removed, such as in the environment of a collapsed state, supplier states are more likely to supply SALW.

In addition to the actors involved in this framework, state collapse is also a very particular term requiring definition. It is important to clarify precisely what the classification of state collapse means and its implications. State collapse is when the government of a state can no longer effectively govern its territory. This can include a failure to provide interior and external security, basic goods and services to the population, and an inability to conduct foreign policy. State collapse oftentimes is a result of or leads to some form of civil conflict.

Additionally, the issue of porous borders is important when studying SALW proliferation and especially so for the borders of a collapsed state. Porous borders are borders between states that are not secured with regards to ease of flows of peoples and goods, including SALW. Borders may be porous because a state cannot effectively control the border due to political reasons, a rebel group holding the area, or the nature of the border, such as crossing through a desert or dividing a local ethnic group.

Finally, the role of incentives is very important for considering why states choose to proliferate. An incentive is a reason why a state or group chooses to, or to not, proliferate SALW. What these incentives are and how they affect proliferation will be explained in the ensuing chapter.

In the following chapter, I will present fully the theory linking state collapse and SALW proliferation. Building on existing literature, I argue that state collapse leads to weakened institutions, making oversight of SALW more difficult both for internal authorities and anti-proliferation organizations. With a lack of centralized oversight, the incentive to not proliferate decreases, resulting in an increase in proliferation. This chapter will also examine how effective attempts to prevent proliferation are and how incentives for all parties come into play.

Within the context of the overarching theory, the paper will then look at three separate case studies as examples of state collapse and SALW proliferation. First, the 1991 collapse of the Soviet Union led to a huge wave of SALW proliferation throughout the world. Without the centralized control of the Communist Party, the resulting states born out of the Soviet Union, as well as the newly free Eastern Bloc states, were able to proliferate SALW using their large surplus stocks and because they possessed large weapons manufacturing capabilities.

Secondly, Libya represents a modern example of state collapse and SALW proliferation. During the 1970s, under the regime of Colonel Muammar Gaddafi, Libya imported and stored up huge stores of SALW. After the Libyan Civil War, groups on both sides of the conflict seized these weapons and have used them for internal strife as well as proliferating them outside of Libya. Groups as far as Boko Haram in Nigeria or Syrian rebels in that state's civil war have used weapons formerly in the possession of Libya.

Finally, Egypt represents a modern example that demonstrates how state collapse must be complete in order to allow for SALW proliferation. Under the regime of Hosni Mubarak, the Egyptian military and security forces consistently imported large stores of SALW. After Mubarak's capitulation to popular protests and the ensuing collapse of the elected Mohamed Morsi, two examples of a government falling, you may have expected SALW proliferation linked to state collapse. However, since the state of Egypt did not fully collapse as per the definition listed above, we do not see the SALW proliferation evident in the prior two cases.

This paper will provide a significant contribution to the issues of both SALW proliferation and state collapse, providing for the first time a succinct connection of these issues. By providing one theoretical framework bridging these two political phenomena, future scholars will be better able to examine how state collapse affects conflict in and around the collapsed state. Scholars will also be able to better examine the effects SALW proliferation has on society and in politics worldwide. The established link should also highlight to policymakers and military personnel the importance of a thorough strategy to combat the high possibility of SALW proliferation following state collapse. For example, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), after assisting in the war against Libya's Col. Gaddafi, should have expected flows of SALW throughout Libya and to neighboring countries. If they had, NATO and the UN should have realized the impact of weak institutions to oversee SALW in Libya following the civil war and the possibility of SALW flows leading to conflict in Mali. This connection between state collapse and SALW proliferation speaks to the need to create international strategies to combat SALW proliferation as soon as a state collapses, if not before.

## **Chapter 2: Linking State Collapse and SALW Proliferation**

Small arms and light weapons proliferation is not a heavily studied area of international relations or comparative politics. Oftentimes, an article or book about proliferation will instead focus on the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction, to include chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear weapons. Scholars, national security experts, and politicians see a huge danger in WMD proliferation as a small number of these weapons can cause massive damage to infrastructure or a population. In particular, with the huge buildup of nuclear arms during the Cold War, scholars also fear nuclear weapons spreading to states that did not have them previously or non-state actors who may be more willing to deploy these weapons. Despite the large focus on WMD proliferation, there is some research on SALW proliferation.

Scholars write primarily on two components of SALW proliferation that harken back to the basic economic principles of Adam Smith. These are supply and demand. In order for SALW to proliferate, there must be a supply of SALW that states are willing to give or sell to recipient groups. Additionally, there must be a demand from these recipient groups, as they want to use SALW for security, a violent uprising, or to resell to other groups, among the number of reasons. SALW proliferation needs to be studied with the structures and dynamics at all levels, from the original source of the weapons, to the actual transportation of weapons, to the final destination. In most conflicts today, SALW producers or shippers are not the parties using the weapons. Instead, SALW are produced and traded to groups who do not possess the capability to manufacture their own weapons, so they rely on outside suppliers. This creates the need to look at why and how actors produce, transport, and purchase SALW. Many popular writings, as well as scholarly insights, have relied on the image of a nefarious black market agent shipping arms from supplier states to rebel groups or embargoed governments, where in fact the issues are

much more complex particularly when combined with the complexities of state collapse (Bourne 2007). Although black markets certainly play a role in SALW proliferation, the complexities arise from asking the questions of why SALW proliferation occurs in the first place, particularly when there are international and domestic efforts to prevent it.

### **I. The Demand for SALW**

SALW demand comes from a variety of sources, leading to a number of different types of recipient groups. These include other states, non-state actors to include rebel or terrorist groups, international organizations, and criminal organizations. Regardless of the type of organization, all share one characteristic when they are demanding SALW: to increase their military capability. For state military and police forces, this tends to be to bolster their military effectiveness to combat internal and external security threats. For non-state actors, SALW provides an opportunity to arm with deadly force and take up a violent struggle.

With the wide variety of arms available in the present international situation, the question of why recipient groups prefer SALW as opposed to other weapons types arises. Mike Bourne's *Arming Conflict: The Proliferation of Small Arms* addresses the demand side of SALW proliferation and why groups use these weapons specifically. There are many characteristics of SALW that make them inherently popular amongst state and non-state actors alike. First, SALW are inexpensive, as they are not technologically advanced when compared to weapons such as armored tanks or large caliber rockets. Second, they are a small size, allowing for easy transportation to the recipient groups. Their small size also makes them easy to smuggle, if necessary, and can provide significant combat power to generally one person per weapon. Third, because of their lower sophistication level, they are easy to learn to operate as well as to maintain. The ease of training allows almost any person to participate in conflict, even children.

SALW's ease of maintenance results in these weapons remaining functional for long periods with minimal upkeep (Bourne 2007).

The most common and difficult to track method of regional SALW proliferation facilitation is covert-aid transshipment. Covert-aid transshipment occurs when one state seeks to supply another state or non-state actor illegally in an attempt to provide military aid while avoiding detection from the international community and other actors in the region. Although covert-aid transshipment has decreased since the end of the Cold War, there still have been some examples, such as Iran supplying Bosnian Muslims in the 1990s via Croatia (Bourne 2007).

As a result of the nature of SALW and how they are employed in combat, there is a consistently high demand for them throughout the world. There are always different states, rebel groups, terrorist, and criminal organizations looking to increase their access to SALW. Therefore, in the comparison of the supply and demand sides of SALW proliferation, we can assume that demand remains largely constant. Of course, there will always be some alterations in demand with the emergence of new groups or repression of opposition in certain areas of the world. However, in general, the demand for SALW remains the same.

Conversely, the supply side of SALW proliferation does not remain constant. Although at any given moment, the physical number of SALW worldwide may be generally the same, the issue at hand is the access that recipient groups have to these stockpiles or production capabilities. Supplier states are the actors that determine the extent of access those recipient groups will have in acquiring SALW. It is the decision of the supplier states whether or not to sell SALW or distribute them for political objectives. Incentives to proliferate or not proliferate heavily influence the supplier states' decision-making process regarding SALW proliferation. There are clear political and economic incentives to proliferating SALW, but also negative

incentives usually imposed by the central government responsible for SALW oversight. These negative incentives are reinforced by possible actions from non-proliferation groups, such as sanctions or embargoes from the UN. Therefore, SALW proliferation tends to occur more often when there are changing restrictions on the supply side of existing SALW stockpiles and production. Therefore, the root of large-scale increases in SALW proliferation rests on the supply side, which this paper will focus on. The roles of changing institutions, oversight of SALW, and incentives to prevent proliferation inherent to state collapse have an inherent effect on supply SALW proliferation.

## **II. Focus on Supply**

Looking at the supply side of SALW proliferation raises a number of different factors within supply that lead to SALW proliferation. First, the states must have a method of possessing arms. Oftentimes, this is simply that a supplier state has the technological and economic means to produce SALW in large quantities, usually more than they need to resource their own security strategy. However, it may also occur when a state imports arms greater than they need for their own security strategy, leading to a surplus or expectation to proliferate SALW.

Regardless of how supplier states obtain weapons, whether through their own production or acquisition, these states then must have a reason for proliferating these arms. Most of the time, states proliferate arms due to political and/or economic incentives. If a supplier state wants to influence the politics of another state, or perhaps a rebel group within that state, supplying arms could enhance the state or rebel group's military capabilities, making them more effective against their respective adversaries. An example of political proliferation was Operation Cyclone, during which the United States supplied anti-Soviet forces in Afghanistan with weapons, including technologically advanced Stinger anti-aircraft missile launchers. Secondly,

states may look to selling SALW as an economically lucrative option. An example of a state that exports SALW primarily for economic purposes is Belgium. Being a small state with an advanced SALW production industry, Belgium has exported weapons totaling a value of nearly \$1.5 billion USD just during 1994 through 2013 (SIPRI 2015).

Linking the supply side of SALW from the manufacturing state, through the export process, and to the recipient groups is extremely difficult to track and study. Typically, international intervention with respect to SALW proliferation tends to focus on the demand side. The most common response is an arms embargo as an attempt to prevent the recipient group from receiving arms from suppliers. However, these responses do not target the large supply available. If there is an attempt to remove arms from an area, international responses are historically focused on arms buyback programs or surplus destruction, but only after conflicts have occurred. Due to the lack of international action on the supply side of SALW proliferation, this paper will focus primarily on supply while still respecting the relevant factors of demand that shape the system of SALW proliferation.

With regards to both supply and demand, it is essential to examine the history of SALW proliferation as other scholars have studied it. Alex Vines' "Combating Light Arms Proliferation in West Africa" covers efforts to curtail proliferation specifically in West Africa, a region disrupted by coups d'état and civil wars that led to a massive amount of SALW in the region through the 1990s. There are currently eight million SALW in Sub-Saharan West Africa, according to the United Nations Development Programme. This wide proliferation leads to and further complicates a number of conflicts within the region, often breaking out into armed conflict between various rebel groups and government forces. After a variety of conflicts through the 1990s and early 2000s, a number of international organizations began to pass resolutions to

combat SALW proliferation, hoping to stem the tide of violence. This includes the UN Firearms Protocol but more importantly the Bamako Declaration of 2000, to include the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Moratorium on the Importation, Exportation and Manufacture of Small Arms and Light Weapons in West Africa.

Despite these initiatives, there have been significant challenges to preventing SALW proliferation. One issue is the violation of end-user certificates. These certificates are intended to limit the sale of arms from one exporter to one importer so that they cannot then reroute them to another government or rebel group. However, Vines provides multiple examples of end-user certificate violations, both of rerouting arms imports as well as creation of false documents to ship arms. These examples clearly portray how end-user certificates need to be better enforced and regulated.

Finally, Vines discusses the poor coordination and efforts of the United Nations. The 1999-2004 UN Programme for Coordination and Assistance for Security and Development (PCASED) aimed to assist West African governments in limiting SALW proliferation, as well as help arms destruction efforts. However, due to its poor organization and constantly being switched around between different departments within the UN, PCASED eventually ended in 2004 and was replaced. Regarding UN arms embargoes, Vines argues that they can be effective in slowing SALW proliferation, but have been plagued in the past as well. The first UN arms embargo in West Africa was in 1992 against Sierra Leone, just one year after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. However, the UN only truly instituted it in 1997 and by 2002, neighboring West African states were violating it widely without reproach both in support of and against rebel Charles Taylor.

### **III. Weak Institutions and State Collapse**

William Reno's *Warlord Politics and African States* effectively bridges the gap between the issues of SALW proliferation and state collapse. The key mechanism that begins the process of linking state collapse to SALW proliferation is the role of weak institutions, an issue that Reno discusses heavily. In his book, "warlord" refers to a local leader who has significant autonomy within a greater state. These warlords may earn their power by delegation from the federal government or from respect amongst a particular ethnic group, for example. Warlords are likely to want SALW to combat other groups or the state in a competition for power. The absence of bureaucratic state institutions results in outside political entities, such as warlords, taking on greater roles within the state (Reno 1998: 1). However, there is an inherent difference between leaders of a weak African state and a warlord. Both are susceptible to "elite accommodation," or providing specific benefits to elites in society, rather than the general populous. However, Reno examines how this accommodation changed with the end of the Cold War. With an end to the Cold War, rulers found it unbeneficial to attempt to build up strong bureaucratic states for the collective good, as there was less involvement from outside entities (i.e. the US and USSR). Instead, rulers were more likely to turn into warlords, as it was more beneficial for fulfilling elite accommodation.

Additionally, weak states were less likely to defeat armed strongmen within their territories without the backing of external parties. They also face an internal legitimacy crisis when a local leader openly opposes them and the central government lacks the support of the US or Soviet Union. The Cold War allowed the governments of weak states to withstand internal tension because of a high level of support and recognition from the competing powers. Without

this same support, internal warlords are more likely to demand SALW for an armed struggle to vie for power.

Reno's argument focuses on how the Cold War propped up African regimes with a system of weak states providing accommodation to elites to maintain internal pacification. With the end of the Cold War, these states transitioned more so into warlord states, as it provided the local leaders a great opportunity to enhance their own power over those who might challenge them (Reno 1998). This process has its roots in independence from colonial rule. Weak states needed to exert control throughout their territory, so they empowered regional leaders as middlemen. However, these middlemen realized that, in a weak state, they could easily exert a large amount of control in their region. Therefore, the weak state leader looked to legitimacy from outside forces to help prevent any insurrections from these regional middlemen. Due to the competition of the Cold War, the Soviet Union and US were willing to assist newly independent African states in their attempts to prevent the other bloc from exerting political influence. With the end to this competition with the end of the Cold War, the middlemen were able to exert their influence as armed strongmen, competing for power and influence within the state (Reno 1998).

A clear theme in Reno's argument is the role of weak state institutions. Institutions can be considered weak as opposed to strong based on their ability to perform their assigned action throughout the entirety of their assigned region, whether it is the entire state or an administrative district. Strong institutions can effectively complete their objectives throughout the entirety of their region, whereas weak institutions are either only effective in certain parts of their region or ineffective throughout. Traditionally, the state is the first and primary enforcer to prevent SALW proliferation. Without strong state institutions, SALW are more likely to proliferate, as there is less oversight of production, storage, shipment, sales, and smuggling out of and into other states.

Weak institutions are the factor that links SALW proliferation to state collapse. Prior to a state collapse, state institutions usually prevent or significantly restrict SALW proliferation for a variety of political motivations. If a state were to proliferate excessively, they could face retribution from neighboring states and international organizations, such as the UN. After a state collapses, however, these institutions and political motivations dissipate, allowing for the potential for a larger flow of SALW proliferation. In order to better grasp this process, an in-depth understanding of state collapse is necessary.

In “State Collapse and Social Reconstruction in Africa,” Stephen Riley lists three characteristics that personify state collapse in Africa. First, the state loses its ability to rule throughout its land. This essentially means that the citizens in large areas of the state do not recognize the current government. Second is an economic decline of the state. Third, the state either slowly or rapidly falls into conflict, such as civil war or “anarchy”. Specifically for Africa, these conflicts tend to be costly, violent, and primarily use SALW, as they are cheap and do not require significant training to operate. Furthermore, this fall into conflict makes reconstruction especially difficult (Riley 1997).

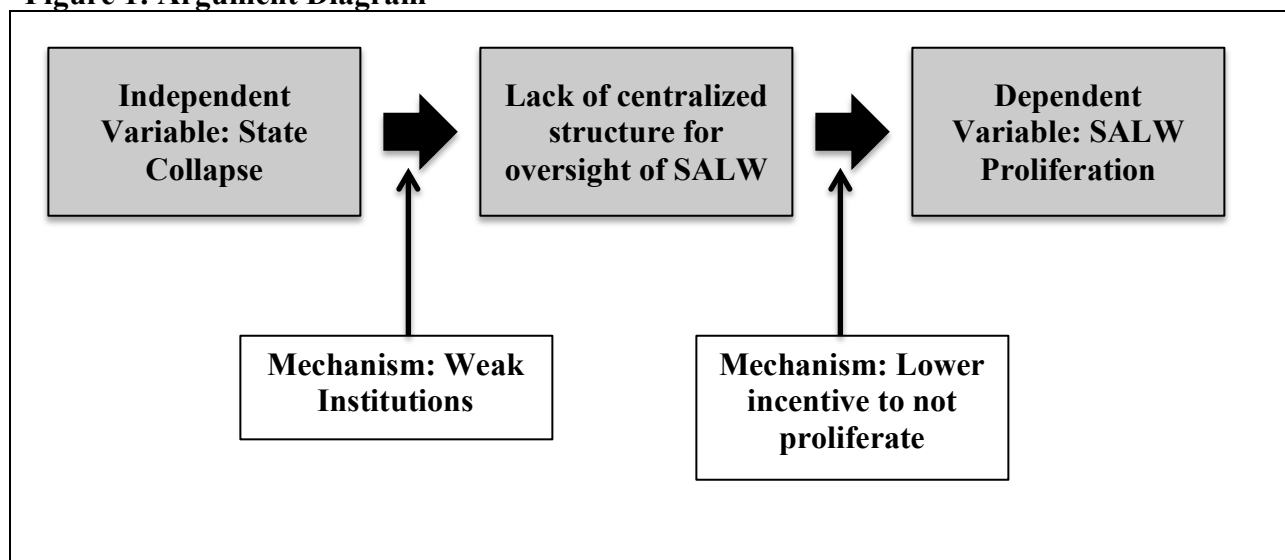
Riley also links the high probability of state collapse in Africa to the state system inherited from colonial rule by Western European powers. In many cases, the African “states” are not nation-states, as they have many strong internal divisions within them that make governing difficult. Many Africans have “sub-state loyalties”, rather than loyalty to the centralized state government. These sub-state loyalties may be to a particular ethnic group, religion, or historic entity. European colonialism drew up the African continent with arbitrary borders without regard to local organization, resulting in many states hosting a multitude of identity groups while most identity groups were divided into multiple states. Furthermore,

because many African states have been unable or unwilling to utilize a federal system or decentralized control, these sub-state loyalties can possibly heat up and lead to conflict, thereby assisting in state collapse (Riley 1997).

#### **IV. Connections Between State Collapse, Institutions, Incentives, and Proliferation**

The dynamics of supply and demand for SALW proliferation linked to state collapse via weak institutions demonstrates how, when a state collapses, there is a much higher possibility of SALW supply proliferation than prior to the collapse. Chronologically, the argument is that following a state collapse institutions weaken to the point that there is not a centralized structure to oversee SALW and incentives to prevent proliferation decrease. This then leads to the new government or rival factions within the collapsed state having much greater political and economic leeway to proliferate SALW as they see fit. This process is outlined in Figure 1.

**Figure 1: Argument Diagram**



State collapse and weak institutions are not enough to explain why there are increases in SALW proliferation following a collapse. Even if the supplier is a rebel warlord in a war-torn state or a newly victorious leader following a collapse, they must have an incentive to proliferate.

One major change in the incentives post-collapse may be economic. A faction engaged in a civil war following a state collapse or a new leader battling for control over the state will likely need economic assistance much more than a former stable standing leader. Therefore, their economic incentive to sell arms is likely higher than before the collapse.

However, other than this small change, the incentives for actors pre and post-collapse do not change significantly. The benefits of selling arms for economic profit or distributing arms for political gain are ubiquitous to all actors. Therefore, the reason SALW proliferation increases following a collapse is not because the incentives to proliferate increase, but rather because the incentives to not proliferate decrease dramatically. Without the strong state institutions that normally regulated SALW within a state, there is no bureaucracy or potential penalty for proliferating SALW. Additionally, a state may fear reprisals, such as sanctions or embargoes, for proliferating arms. A functioning state may also seek to avoid antagonizing its neighbors by keeping tight control of SALW proliferation. Non-state actors or a new leader likely do not care as much about international concerns. For example, it is very difficult for the UN to effectively sanction a rebel group in the midst of a civil war with expectations that such action would actually curtail SALW proliferation. With a great deal of confusion and lack of control following state collapse, actors can get away with proliferating arms with much less fear of international or regional reprisal.

This argument sets up a theoretical framework for when to expect dramatic increases in SALW proliferation following state collapse. It is important to note additionally that, in order to be a supplier state following collapse, the state must have had a significant supply of arms or large arms production capabilities prior to the collapse, or else there would be no SALW to proliferate. With this condition, paired with state collapse and the ensuing weak institutions

allowing for fewer incentives not to proliferate, the new leaders within the collapsed state are far more likely to proliferate SALW to recipient groups than before. To illustrate this phenomenon, analysis of the collapses of the Soviet Union in 1991 and Libya in 2012 will highlight the process and ensuing SALW proliferation. The case of Egypt will show, despite multiple regime changes and popular protests, how there has not been SALW proliferation due to a lack of a full state collapse.

Using the theory proposed in this chapter, carried through the examples of the next three chapters, I will prove how SALW proliferation on the supply side is inherently linked to occur should a state, with the conditions to supply SALW, collapse. Although this conclusion may seem obvious at first, the complexities discussed in this chapter show how state collapse actually precipitates weak institutions and a change in incentives to prevent proliferation. It is the change in incentives to not proliferate that causes those who hold SALW to sell or distribute them for political reasons as they have a significantly lesser fear of retribution or the effects of international actions like sanctions. Highlighting the change in incentives as a part of linking state collapse and SALW proliferation should accentuate the need to add further anti-proliferation techniques, especially as the international community sees a state about to collapse. Anti-proliferation organizations like the UN must diversify their actions against a proliferating group beyond just large, established states, but to react to the disorganized and disparate situation of a state collapse.

## Chapter 3: The 1991 Soviet Union Collapse

**Figure 2: Soviet Union and Individual Republics, 1984 (University of Texas)**



Throughout the monumental struggle of the Cold War, both adversaries, the Western European powers and the Soviet Union, built up massive armies in preparation for war with each other. This included colossal amounts of small arms and light weapons. In 1988, the Soviet Union spent \$371 billion in 2011 USD on military expenditures, not including other Warsaw Pact states (SIPRI 2015). However, the pressures of this struggle eventually caused the Soviet Union to crack. In 1991, the individual republics within the Soviet Union voted to secede, thereby ending the existence of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and ushering in fifteen brand new, independent states.

These new states had an interesting set of circumstances. Most had huge supplies of SALW stored up from the arms race of the Cold War. Additionally, in the early 1990s, there were no major international efforts to curtail SALW proliferation. There were not any effective organizations filling the role of anti-proliferation organizations. Furthermore, there was a constant high demand for SALW. Therefore, following the collapse of the Soviet Union, there was a massive increase in SALW proliferation worldwide. This chapter will illustrate how the case of the Soviet Union fits the theory that state collapse leads to weak centralized institutions to oversee SALW, leading to lower incentives to prevent proliferation, thereby ultimately resulting in SALW proliferation. These lower incentives allowed local commanders or leaders in military or political spheres to distribute SALW without fear of retribution or organization from a centralized oversight institution, as those institutions had been weakened or disappeared during the Soviet Union's collapse. The incentive had been to stay within legal or organizational requirements when they existed because of fear of reprisals. Without that incentive, the local leaders were willing to proliferate SALW.

First, this chapter will demonstrate that the collapse of the Soviet Union was in fact a full state collapse and fits the definition. Second, it will link this state collapse to multiple examples of weak institutions overseeing SALW, primarily in the examples of Ukraine and Georgia. Finally, within these examples, it will provide evidence to show how these weak institutions were not able to prevent SALW proliferation following the collapse of the Soviet Union as actors within these supplier states acted in their own self-interest in proliferating SALW to various recipient groups. These self-interested actors, usually newly appointed politicians or local military commanders, fulfilled the positive incentive of selling or distributing SALW while

avoiding the negative incentive of reprisals from the weakened post-collapse central state institutions.

## **I. State Collapse of the Soviet Union**

Since the Bolsheviks took power in Russia in 1917, the Soviet Union operated as a one-party state, typically under the rule of one dictator as a part of the Communist Party. There was little room for dissent as discipline was harshly enforced through secret police. Despite encompassing multiple diverse ethnic groups and spanning across two continents, the Soviet Union was able to persist for seventy-four years. It added additional territory in the Baltic States and exerted considerable control over Eastern European satellite states after World War II. Despite these gains, there was a significant reduction in the growth of the Soviet Union both as a political entity and as the vanguard of a social idea, socialism. This decline would ultimately lead to the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.

Historian Alexander Dallin identified six processes that led to the weakening Soviet state following the death of Josef Stalin, the General Secretary most powerful in consolidating the Soviet Union, in 1953. First of these factors included a “loosening of controls” in which post-Stalin Soviet leaders did not exercise violence and terror to assert the power of the state over society to the same extent that Stalin did during his 1929-1953 rule. An example of this is the end of the GULAG prison system and the purges of political, military, and everyday citizens of the late 1930s that prevailed during Stalin’s rule. Second, there was a marked increase in corruption, discrediting the state from the eyes of the people. Third, the Soviet Union focused less on achieving a Marxist-Leninist ideological state that they had been pursuing since the October 1917 Revolution, an ideology that many people believed in. This created further disenchantment with the Communist Party that claimed to be moving towards socialism, but in

reality was not. Fourth, as urbanization and education grew, a new class of professionals expected increased privacy and public participation inconsistent with the traditional functions of the Soviet state. Fifth, an increased exposure to Western goods, human rights ideas, and access to economic goods created further disenchantment within the Soviet Union. Finally, a growing technological gap and economic decline hurt the image of the Soviet Union further, such as the embarrassing 1986 Chernobyl nuclear power plant disaster (Dallin 1992).

The attempts by rulers after Josef Stalin to distance themselves from the harsh policies of the past actually resulted in a situation leading to state collapse. Particularly under the reform programs of the last ruler of the Soviet Union, Mikhail Gorbachev, there were new, radical avenues for democratization and economic reform, termed *perestroika*. Coupled with increased “openness” regarding foreign travel and publication of ideas, called *glasnost*, these reforms quickly got out of hand for what Gorbachev intended, resulting in a motivated public eager to do away with communism entirely. Reformers wanted to move more towards democratization in the style of Western democracies (Strayer 1998: 139-140). The attempted conservative coup aimed at restoring the Soviet Union and Communist Party in August, 1991 ultimately failed and led to Boris Yeltsin’s assertion of Russia’s independence as the center of the Soviet Union, as other nationalities clamored for their own sovereignty. By December 25, 1991, the Soviet Union, once one powerful state, now consisted of fifteen independent states. These states were remarkably different from the autocratic Soviet Union that existed prior to Gorbachev’s reforms in 1985. There was a complete economic shift towards a market economy, democratization with an involved public, and a multi-party system with a functioning legislature, none of which existed in the Soviet Union prior.

In this sense, then, the 1991 experience of the Soviet Union clearly fits the definition of state collapse. The state of the Soviet Union was no longer able to maintain its sovereignty as the respective republics within the Soviet Union all sought to declare their own sovereignty, thereby ending the Union. Where there was once a single, centralized power, now there were fifteen sovereign states. As such, these fifteen new sovereign powers inherited a massive military complex, including huge surplus stores of SALW. The collapse of the Soviet Union then created new states without experience in building strong structures of the state to oversee SALW.

## **II. Weak Institutions in the Former Soviet Union**

Prior to the collapse of the Soviet Union, a massive bureaucracy in the Communist Party oversaw SALW, nestled under the military as a whole. The Soviet Union funded, produced, and stored SALW in preparation for a massive yet unrealized war with the Western powers.

Although the Soviet Union did sell and distribute SALW extensively while in competition with the West for influence in many Third World states, this proliferation was rather structured and not as large as the proliferation that occurred after 1991. This is because during the Cold War, the Soviet Union needed to preserve a high level of SALW in preparation for a massive ground war. Therefore, the Soviet Union hoarded most of their SALW in armories throughout the state, waiting to use them in a war that would never come.

However, the new independent states that emerged from the former Soviet Union had little need for such arms. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Cold War ended. There was no longer a need to keep a large expensive standing army, and therefore no need to keep surplus SALW stored up for war. This allowed the former Soviet Union states the latitude needed to proliferate SALW as they saw fit. Additionally, there were no longer any strict, centralized institutions to control the SALW. In the Soviet Union, the central party had control over storing

SALW in the event of war. After the collapse, the individual governments did not immediately construct the same degree of government control over the SALW that existed prior. This led to an increase in SALW proliferation.

In regard to incentives, the new governments did not have the structures necessary to limit the economic incentives of selling SALW. Through black markets and sales to other states, the former Soviet Union states began to make a profit off of their surplus SALW. There were not any repercussions for states that allowed their arms to flow throughout the world. Therefore, without any incentives internally for security purposes or without fear from international sanctions or condemnation, the former Soviet Union states proliferated arms extensively. At the time of the collapse of the Soviet Union, anti-proliferation was not a major issue for organizations like NATO or the UN. They focused more so on Weapons of Mass Destruction, like nuclear arms, that had ended up in the hands of the newly independent republics, while paying little mind to the large stockpiles of conventional arms.

There were a number of elements that allowed for the proliferation of SALW following the collapse of the Soviet Union. First, these states no longer required the massive stockpiles they inherited from the Cold War era. War with the West now looked unlikely, and maintaining a massive standing army was extremely expensive for these new states already in economic straits. Second, the incentive to sell or proliferate SALW of course existed. These new states and leaders within them had opportunities to gain economically and politically by distributing SALW for profit or to boost up certain groups in various countries as they saw fit, as we will see in the case of Georgia. Third, we recall our assumption from the previous chapter that demand is usually rather constant and high. There were potential buyers in states or rebel groups in Africa, or even within these former Soviet republics. Fourth, the institutions of the new states, along with a lack

of international anti-proliferation organizations willing to take action, could not curtail the incentive to proliferate SALW for economic or political gain from these self-interested local actors who actually held control over the SALW stockpiles.

### **III. Example 1: Ukraine**

One example of this process within the Soviet Union specifically is the state of Ukraine. Following independence in 1991, Ukraine had hundreds of companies and organizations legally authorized to sell arms internationally, but without many legal restrictions on export controls. In 1996, Ukraine created a state-owned company called Ukrspetsexport to handle all arms deals with other countries. Ukrspetsexport is part of the greater Ukraine Defense Industry and acts as a conglomerate of over 130 state-owned companies focused on military industry within Ukraine. Ukrspetsexport and its member companies and organizations enjoyed relatively high autonomy within the Ukrainian government to sell arms (CACDS 2012). Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, Ukraine, along with all other former Soviet states, had a huge amount of surplus arms for a reduced standing army. In a 2011 report, SIPRI estimated that in 1991, Ukraine had millions of SALW and tons of ammunition in surplus. They valued total conventional arms at \$90-100 billion USD (Holtom 2011). Clearly, Ukraine had the supply and the surplus to sell.

The incentives to not proliferate were essentially nonexistent for Ukraine at this point. With a huge surplus of aging weapons and willful purchasers in sub-Saharan Africa, most embroiled in conflict following independence and an end to the Cold War, Ukraine could profit economically from selling these weapons. Especially with independence, Ukraine and other former Soviet states were in dire economic straits. Selling surplus SALW was a lucrative method through which the state could raise funds quickly. Additionally, without the political motives of the Cold War, now Ukraine could sell arms to whoever was willing to pay, rather than just those

dictated by Soviet foreign policy. This expanded the market for Ukrspetsexport, allowing them to sell to rebel groups and state authorities alike. Furthermore, Ukrspetsexport was focus purely on sales and dispersing SALW rather than containing and controlling them. There were also minimal efforts to control SALW sales in the immediate aftermath of the Soviet Union's collapse.

Ukrspetsexport has operated “more as a specific process rather than as a component of international state activity,” according to a 2012 Center for Army, Conversion, and Disarmament Studies (CACDS) study on Ukrainian arms sales. There have been minimal legal remedies to prevent or prosecute any Ukrainian citizens, bureaucrats, or politicians who illegally sell arms. According to the CACDS report, “the Ukrainian arms export control system was performing poorly in its early period,” since the exports were easily approved and conducted among over one hundred different businesses and organizations overseeing the arms export process. This changed very slowly, as it was not until 1996, five years after the collapse of the Soviet Union, when the Ukrainian Cabinet of Ministers established the State Service of Ukraine for Export Control (SSUEC) to oversee all arms exports, including SALW. Furthermore, it was not until 2006 that the SSUEC certified compliance with internal export control compliance programs in the majority of arms exports companies and organizations (CACDS 2012). This gap between the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 to export control compliance in 2006 represents a huge time period during which the SALW oversight institutions of Ukraine were considerably weak. This then allowed the politicians and the businessmen of Ukrspetsexport to sell arms without many restrictions from the state.

A modern example of Ukrainian SALW proliferation was the MV *Faina*, a ship transporting arms in 2008 from Ukraine to Mombasa, Kenya. This was intended to be a routine

shipment of SALW and ammunition, in addition to artillery and tanks. However, Somali pirates hijacked the ship and held the operators captive until the shipping company paid the ransom. At the time of the hijacking, the United States Navy's Fifth Fleet, stationed for anti-piracy operations off the Horn of Africa, monitored the *Faina*, realizing that it was a large conventional arms shipment headed to Kenya (Associated Press 2009). The Fifth Fleet reported that they believed that Kenya anticipated diverting the arms onboard the *Faina* to South Sudan and that the Kenyan government had set up the arms deal on behalf of the South Sudanese forces. In reality, both Ukrainian and Kenyan officials claimed that they were not looking to reroute these arms to South Sudan. However, satellite imagery showed T-72 tanks moving from Kenya to South Sudan, and following a Kenyan parliamentary investigation, only 26 of the 110 T-72 tanks were accounted for in Kenya (Holtom 2011). If the T-72 tanks went to South Sudan, there is a high probability that Kenya rerouted the SALW and ammunition as well.

Despite this diversion of SALW and ammunition from Kenya to South Sudan and US claims that they had evidence proving it, there were no steps taken to curtail Ukraine's continued arms exports. The case of the MV *Faina* shows how that, even when a supplier state like Ukraine was caught selling arms illicitly, there was no international response. With such weak enforcement, the incentives for Ukraine to not proliferate SALW were so low that they clearly were willing to sell in large quantities. Despite this propensity to proliferate SALW, there were some movements to quell this outflow from domestic institutions.

In 2002, the Ukrainian Government requested support from NATO, with the US at the lead, to destroy 1.5 million surplus SALW and 133,000 tons of surplus ammunition. NATO agreed and began an international aid effort to help Ukraine dispose of these weapons, preventing their use domestically for security or possibility of proliferating and being used

abroad. However, the structures of the Ukrainian government were not strong enough to overcome the incentives to sell SALW instead. Although the first of four phases of the surplus destruction was slated to conclude in December 2008, in reality it did not conclude until April 2011 due to multiple delays from the Ukrainian government (Holtom 2011). As the SIPRI report states, Ukraine found it more beneficial to profit from these surplus SALW, sometimes through illegal arms transfers, rather than destroy them. This is a clear example of how the incentives to proliferate SALW outweighed the efforts and control of the state following the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Overall, Ukraine has been a major arms exporter since its independence. The United Nations consistently ranks them as one of the top ten arms exporting states in the world. In the period of 2005-2009, 11% of SALW shipped to sub-Saharan Africa came from Ukraine, and 72% of those arms were from surplus stocks (Holtom 2011). Incidents such as Ukraine's propensity to choose SALW sales over surplus destruction or the diversion of arms in the MV *Faina* incident demonstrate that, even over a decade after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Ukraine lacks the strong institutions to counter the incentives to proliferate SALW.

#### **IV. Example 2: Georgia**

Although the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 was largely without bloodshed, there was some conflict in some of the exterior republics, namely Georgia. Prior to the collapse and ensuing conflict, largely exasperated by SALW proliferation, Georgia had to contend with contentious ethnic differences within its borders. While Georgia was a part of the Soviet Union, the regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia were designated as autonomous oblasts within the greater Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic, thereby enjoying greater autonomy in conducting political affairs. However, after Georgia achieved independence in 1991, the newly elected

President Zviad Gamsakhurdia attempted to assert full governmental control over these territories. This move resulted in violent retribution and military resistance from Abkhazian and South Ossetian separatists (Demetriou 2002).

During Georgia's existence as a Soviet Republic within the Soviet Union and the Cold War system, the Soviet military built up large arsenals in Georgia. Georgia represented a strategic position due to its proximity to Turkey, a NATO member state, and as the southern tip of any potential entrance into the greater Soviet Union through the Caucasus Mountains. Additionally, in the 1980s, Georgian Soviet military bases were used to supply and stage military units set to deploy to Afghanistan as a part of the Soviet-Afghanistan War. These arsenals included large numbers of SALW stored up within Georgia to support these Soviet military operations.

The Georgian Civil War, 1991-1993, shows how the state collapse of the Soviet Union and the ensuing power vacuum led not only to conflict, but also specifically to SALW proliferation. In addition to conflict with Abkhazia and South Ossetia, both of which wanted to maintain their autonomous status that existed while a part of the Soviet Union, Georgia faced internal political divisions that escalated into armed violence. In 1991, just months after his election, President Gamsakhurdia was forced from power by street demonstrations and various armed paramilitary groups. Gamsakhurdia and his paramilitary National Guard then waged an insurgency in western Georgia for the next two years before capitulating after the new Russian Federation assisted the new Georgian government.

Spyros Demetriou's "Politics from the Barrel of a Gun: Small Arms Proliferation and Conflict in the Republic of Georgia (1989-2001)" is an in-depth study on how SALW affected the Abkhazia, South Ossetia, and Georgian Civil Wars respectively. Demetriou claims that, prior

to August 1991, as the Soviet Union was crumbling, the Soviet military in Georgia was largely passive and SALW did not leak from the military arsenals to either the Georgian military or the various paramilitary groups throughout the country. Therefore, any armed conflict in Georgia prior to the collapse of the Soviet Union were fueled by arms preserved over long periods of time or by arms that were training rifles not originally intended for use in actual combat. In a statistical analysis, Demetriou claims that President Gamsakhurdia's National Guard paramilitary and the White Eagles, another pro-Gamsakhurdia paramilitary group, were only able to equip themselves with enough SALW to arm 60% of their combatants in 1990-1991. Furthermore, a large number of these arms were traditional hunting rifles, replicas, training rifles, or bolt-action rifles preserved since WWII half a century earlier, severely limiting the combatants' combat capabilities.

As the Soviet Union collapsed and control of the military and the state as a whole fell into disarray, the arsenals of the Soviet military in Georgia opened up to many combatant groups. This process was not centrally organized by the Soviet military, but rather by local ZaKVO commanders.<sup>1</sup> As the Soviet Union collapsed, there was no clear command and control for the Soviet military as a whole, which allowed individual commanders within Georgia to make their own decisions. Additionally, the new Russian military attempted to influence Georgian politics through SALW proliferation in contrast to the efforts of the actual head of state, Boris Yeltsin. This disconnect between the government and military demonstrates how there were weak institutions in the recently collapsed Soviet Union that allowed for local ZaKVO commanders to supersede their official military orders in favor for their own political

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<sup>1</sup> ZaKVO was the abbreviation for the Soviet *Zakavkazskii voennyi okrug*, a military organization that translates to Transcaucasian Military District. In August 1992, it was renamed the GRVZ, or Group of Russian Armed Forces in the Transcaucasus.

agendas within Georgia. Finally, mid and low-level officers in ZaKVO, by 1992 renamed GRVZ, suffered massive salary and funding cuts from the central Russian military. Therefore, they succumbed to the economic incentive of selling SALW to groups within Georgia to enhance their reduced military salaries (Demetriou 2002).

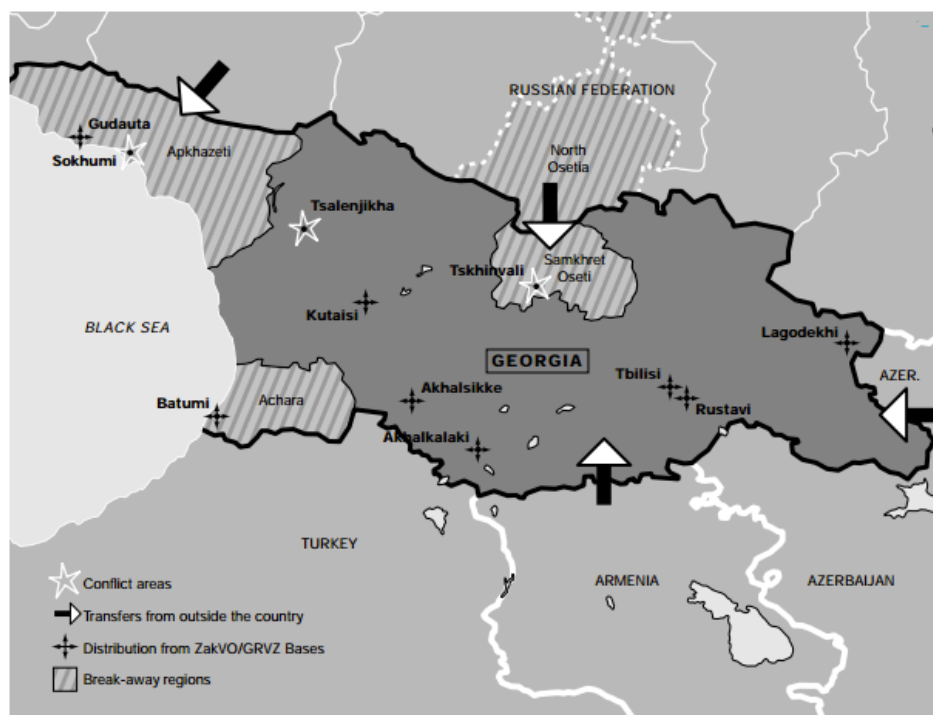
Armed groups within Georgia acquired SALW in four ways. First, groups would seize arms from former Soviet stockpiles and convoys. In late 1991 into 1992, there were 600 recorded incidents of seizures of Soviet stockpiles following President Gamsakhurdia's proclamation nationalizing all Soviet arms left in Georgia. Primarily, Gamsakhurida's paramilitary National Guard benefitted the most by forcibly seizing arms from ZaKVO stockpiles (Demetriou 2002).

Second, Georgian groups received SALW by free distribution from Russian and Soviet forces. As mentioned before, local ZaKVO commanders exercised their own discretion in supplying arms to Georgian groups, not only the National Guard but also groups like the Abkhazia separatists. These local commanders were able to get away with simply gifting these SALW by writing them up as forcibly stolen in the style of the seizures mentioned in the previous method of acquisition. Since there was no powerful central institution to oversee these SALW stockpiles, commanders were able to get away with this proliferation with ease.

Third, Russian military forces would sell SALW to combatant groups within Georgia. This process was very similar to how local commanders would gift SALW to fighters. Since there was no central institution powerful enough to oversee them, the local commanders were able to exercise their own judgment in proliferating SALW. In this case, the only difference is that they were now turning a profit and yielding to the economic as well as the political incentives of proliferating SALW. Georgian groups were still able to acquire these weapons because they were very inexpensive, typically only \$295 USD for an AK-74 assault rifle. The

price was so cheap because the local commanders had such massive stockpiles left over from the Cold War that they had no need for, creating a massive and unnecessary supply to be sold (Demetriou 2002). Distribution stockpiles for all of these first three methods were spread throughout Georgia. They were not unique to any one area, so many different recipient groups within Georgia benefitted from the discretion of the local ZaKVO commanders who were willing to give away or sell SALW from their stockpiles (See Figure 3).

**Figure 3: SALW Proliferation Sources in Georgia, 1991-1993 (Demetriou 2002)**



Fourth, Georgian groups were able to import arms from regional suppliers, such as Armenia and Azerbaijan. This represents how state collapse resulted in weak institutions not just within the Russian ZaKVO military organization, allowing for local commanders to proliferate SALW, but also within Georgia as well. During the early 1990s immediately following the collapse of the Soviet Union, there was no clear central organization to prevent SALW transfers from external parties. Therefore, paramilitary groups on all sides were able to acquire SALW

from these outside states (Demetriou 2002). Arms came into Georgia from states such as Russia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan (See Figure 3).

The influx of SALW from outside states and primarily from local Georgian GRVZ military stockpiles drastically altered the course of the Abkhazia, South Ossetian, and Georgian Civil War conflicts. Now, the paramilitary groups on all sides were extremely well armed both in terms of quantity and quality of SALW. In 1991, many of the arms were outdated hunting rifles or replicas scavenged from training sites. By 1992 and 1993, all combatant groups in Georgia had plentiful access to stockpiles of modern AK-74 assault rifles, Rocket Propelled Grenades, mortars, RPK light machine guns, and others. This allowed the Abkhazia and South Ossetian separatists to resist a takeover during Georgia's independence, and these regions remain autonomous to the modern day. Additionally, the National Guard insurgency was able to last for two full years in exile in western Georgia, relying on SALW supplies for survival. One example highlighting the massive SALW influx following the Soviet Union's collapse in 1991 is the size and armament percentage of the National Guard paramilitary group. Prior to the collapse, the National Guard had less than 400 combatants and only 60% had a firearm. By 1993, the National Guard numbered approximately 12,000 combatants and they had acquired enough weapons to equip 150% of that number (Demetriou 2002).

In review, the case of Georgia following the collapse of the Soviet Union clearly fits the argument structure laid out in the previous chapter. First occurred the state collapse. In 1991, the Soviet Union was quickly losing its grip on its constituent republics until its ultimate dissolution in December. The ensuing mechanism was weak institutions. The new Russian Federation and Georgian governments had major power vacuums, leading to weak institutions. These weak institutions were unable to create a centralized structure for the oversight of SALW. The Russian

military could not effectively control its subordinate commanders and the Georgian authorities were scattered and ineffective. The next mechanism was a lower incentive to not proliferate SALW. ZaKVO commanders did not fear retribution from their commanders due to the decentralized command and control, so they had lost the incentive to prevent proliferation (Demetriou 2002). These factors all combined to result in extensive SALW proliferation in Georgia following the collapse of the Soviet Union. Georgian SALW proliferation following independence led to the creation of large technologically advanced paramilitary groups competing within the new Georgia for power, leading to the bloody Abkhazia, South Ossetia, and Georgian Civil Wars. It cost Georgia a chance at a peaceful transition to democracy and significantly damaged an already stagnant post-communist economy.

## **V. Conclusion**

The collapse of the Soviet Union has become a typical example of the dangers of SALW proliferation globally. Prior to 1991, SALW proliferation was not as large an issue because most SALW in the world were stored up in preparations of the Cold War. However, with the collapse and end of the Cold War, the global system of SALW proliferation changed forever. When the Soviet Union collapsed, it created a power vacuum and lack of centralized leadership not just in one new nation, but fifteen, including the examples of Ukraine, Georgia, and the Russian Federation discussed in this chapter.

These new governments were woefully inadequate at creating thoroughly strong institutions to limit SALW proliferation. This lack of centralized oversight allowed others, such as ministers of Ukrspetsexport or Russian military ZaKVO commanders stationed in Georgia, to proliferate SALW without fear of retribution internationally or domestically. Although the

incentives to proliferate remained the same, these new leaders had little incentive to prevent proliferation due to the lack of oversight. This in turn led to SALW proliferation.

Although many scholars refer to the collapse of the Soviet Union as leading to a large wave of SALW proliferation, none have sought to put it within the context of a general theory linking state collapse and SALW proliferation. This chapter has concretely placed the Soviet Union case into the theory discussed in the previous chapter of linking state collapse to weak institutions, lack of centralized oversight, reduction of incentives to prevent proliferation, and ultimate SALW proliferation.

## **Chapter 4: The 2011 Libya Collapse**

On September 1, 1969, the Free Officers Movement in Libya, headed by a signal corps officer named Muammar Gaddafi, seized power from the standing monarch, King Idris, in a military coup. From that day on, Gaddafi, known as Colonel Gaddafi following his self-appointed promotion, was the *de facto* dictator of Libya. During his autocratic reign, Gaddafi imported huge amounts of weapons, including SALW, and supported anti-Western ideologies. He went so far as to provide clandestine support for anti-Western terrorist organizations. However, Gaddafi primarily stockpiled these arms for his large military apparatus, which was largely responsible for helping Gaddafi retain and enforce his power for so long.

Gaddafi was not able to maintain this political system. In response to the initial 2011 Arab Spring uprising in neighboring Tunisia, Gaddafi declared support for the standing Tunisian president. The Tunisian uprising inspired action amongst the Libyan population, leading to large-scale popular protests against the rule of Gaddafi. Gaddafi rejected this movement, allowing the police and military to use deadly force against the protestors, further inspiring protest and eventually open rebellion. Many other states worried that Gaddafi's military forces were using lethal force and torture against civilians. This led to a UN Security Council Resolution and ensuing NATO intervention, resulting in the ultimate overthrow of Gaddafi's regime and the dictator's death at the hands of the rebels.

Although there was one major rebel organization, called the National Transitional Council (NTC), which NATO and the UN expected to take power and oversee the change of power from Gaddafi to a democracy, this expectation failed. The NTC was not able to maintain control of the various brigades or militias that had banded together to overthrow Gaddafi. Despite forming together to act militarily against Gaddafi's forces, these diverse groups had very

different ideas of what Libya would look like after they forced Gaddafi from power. Some were Islamists, some favored local self-rule, and others simply wanted to maintain the local power they had achieved during the civil war. Therefore, the collapse of Gaddafi's Libyan regime created a power vacuum that the NTC could not adequately fill. Actors within this collapsed state proliferated SALW profusely internationally and within the Libyan militias. Libyan arms have exacerbated conflicts in Mali, Nigeria, Sudan, Syria, and within Libya.

In this chapter, I will lay out how Libya became a supplier state by importing large amounts of weapons. This created the potential for SALW to proliferate if the state collapsed, which it did. Next, I will examine how Col. Gaddafi's regime collapsed, showing how the state went from exercising control over SALW stockpiles, to distributing them, to losing control as the NTC rebels, supported by NATO, won the civil war. Next, I will demonstrate how the NTC attempted to take control, but was unsuccessful and exerting control throughout the entirety of Libya as local militia leaders instead exercised significant control. This created a decentralized system, dissolving the centralized military oversight of SALW and placing the stockpiles into the hands of various groups. The UN, NATO, and regional states were unable to influence these local leaders in a situation as volatile as the civil war, so the incentives to not proliferate SALW quickly evaporated. This then led the various new leaders of Libya to sell and distribute SALW, both to increase their own lethality as well as to generate economic gains.

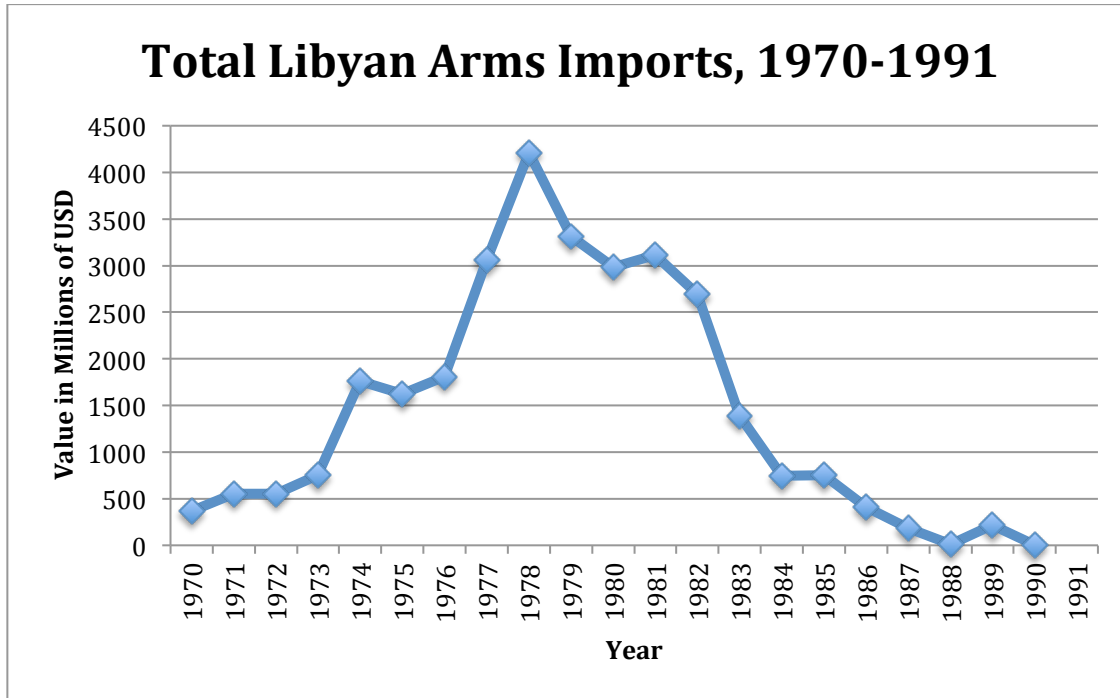
## **I. Becoming a Supplier State**

When Col. Gaddafi took power from the Libyan monarchy in a military coup d'état in 1969, the military was rather small, and so were its SALW reserves. In 1969, Libya only spent the equivalent of \$30 million USD on total military expenditures, or approximately 1.9% of the 1969 GNP. The military itself numbered only around 8,000 forces (United States Department of

State 1969). Gaddafi immediately moved to reform the military. Libya's armed forces were largely pro-Western, in line with the previous monarchy's overall foreign policy. The United Kingdom trained Libyan military officers, including Gaddafi himself. This pro-Western approach was one of the largest grievances that the Free Officers Movement and the general populace held against King Idris. Therefore, Gaddafi's military reforms looked to revamp the Libyan military as something independent of Western influences.

In addition to stopping Western military training, Gaddafi increased the size and capabilities of his military. Libya's economy was primarily dependent on massive oil reserves, so there was little industrial capacity to use for arms productions, unlike the case of the Soviet Union. Therefore, Gaddafi imported arms from around the world, primarily in the 1970s soon after consolidating control. The arms imports peaked in 1978 and quickly declined from there. This peak occurred because Gaddafi was able to retrofit and increase the size of the military during his first eight years in power. After 1978, it was no longer necessary to import SALW. These imports were later proliferated after the collapse of the Gaddafi regime. Many of the arms recovered from these stockpiles and after transit to different countries can be traced to arms shipments sent to Libya during the 1970s and early 1980s. Therefore, most of the SALW that Gaddafi purchased during this armament period was stockpiled and proliferated after the state collapse of 2011. Figure 4 below shows Libya's arms imports (SIPRI 2015).

**Figure 4: Total Libyan Arms Imports in Millions of USD, Constant 1990 Price, 1970-1991**

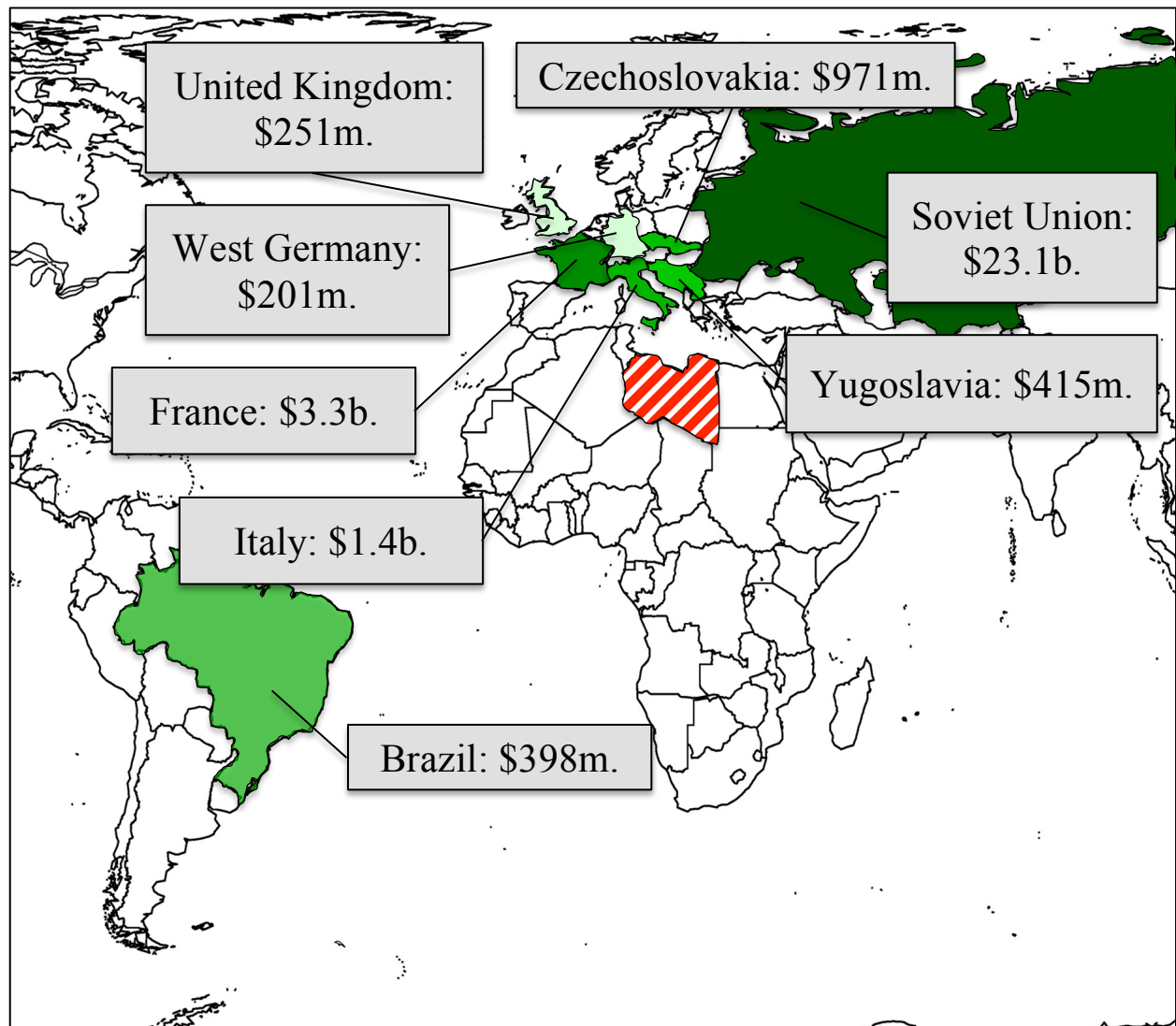


Once Gaddafi took power and consolidated control in the early 1970s, spending on military imports increased dramatically. Just by 1974, Gaddafi spent \$1.76 billion USD on arms imports alone. Counting adjustments for inflation to a constant 1990 scale, as SIPRI uses, King Idris spent the equivalent of only \$107 million USD in 1969 on total military expenditures. Five years later, Gaddafi spent over sixteen times that amount on arms imports alone, not including other military expenditures, with an armed forces boasting 25,000, a tripling of the 1969 count (United States Department of State 1977). This armament campaign reached its peak in 1978 with a total of \$4.2 billion USD of imports. Although these figures include imports of weapons not classified as SALW, such as military aircraft or vehicles, there was a large amount of SALW importation. Furthermore, this SALW proliferation was extremely diverse, coming from a variety of different states. Figure 5 shows where the arms discussed above actually came from. The darker the state on the map, the greater the value of arms exported to Libya. Regarding

SALW, this included Soviet AK-47s, Belgian rockets, French mortars, and many others (SIPRI 2015). Although Gaddafi notoriously distributed some of these SALW to other states or organizations, such as the Irish Republican Army or the Secret Armenian Army, he invested them primarily in his own military, including large stockpiles throughout the country. His actions and support for insurgencies and rebellions worldwide drew the attention anti-proliferation organizations, leading to enforcement.

These organizations, primarily the UN headed by the United States, imposed sanctions and embargoes against Libya, thereby enacting the incentive to not proliferate. For example, in the 1980s, the United States military conducted a series of actions, military and economic, aimed at thwarting Libya's international proliferations. In 1981, they shot down two Libyan fighter jets, and in 1982 started an oil embargo. In 1986, there were additional airstrikes following further Libyan support of terrorist organizations. However, Gaddafi never proliferated SALW on a massive scale, largely to prevent any further sanctions or airstrikes from the United States or the United Kingdom, with whom Gaddafi had further strained relations. During the 1990s, Gaddafi actually renounced sponsoring terrorism and providing SALW in an eventually successful attempt to reconcile relations with states like the US or the UK (Kaplan 2007). These large-scale, diverse SALW imports demonstrate how Libya became a supplier state through the 1980s. By importing and stockpiling large quantities of SALW, supplemented by SALW imports to NTC rebels during the 2011 civil war, Libya had the potential to become a supplier state should the incentives to not proliferate dissipate.

**Figure 5: Top Eight Arms Exporters to Libya, 1970-1991**



## **II. Libya's State Collapse**

Following the United States' actions against them in the 1980s, Libya then enjoyed a relatively peaceful time until the civil war broke out in 2011. Despite privatizing some portions of the economy, Gaddafi maintained a firm grip upon all political discourse in the state. After a long history of preventing any political opposition, enforced through fear and imprisonments, the people of Libya, based primarily in the less economically developed east, began protesting the Gaddafi regime. After killings of many unarmed protestors, the protestors moved to violently

overthrow the Gaddafi regime. Following NATO's intervention with UNSC approval, the NTC declared victory in Libya and attempted to hold elections to create a new government to build a new Libya.

Even prior to the point when the entire Gaddafi regime fell, there were significant instances of decentralizing oversight of SALW. As the tides turned against Gaddafi, he sought help from other groups within Libya to fight against the NTC rebels. One example of a group that he brought into the fold was the Tuaregs. These nomads traveled all throughout the Sahara Desert, including in southern Libya. Gaddafi provided the Tuaregs with arms and other benefits to join in the suppression of the NTC-led rebellion (Nossiter 2012). This was Gaddafi's attempt to increase his military capabilities in the face of increasing opposition from his own people, boosted by NATO, and decreasing support from the military, many of who defected to the NTC. When Gaddafi's regime fell, however, these Tuaregs had little loyalty to any remnant governments or the NTC in Libya. Instead, they kept the weapons for themselves.

As the NTC attempted to set up a new government in Tripoli, NATO forces drew back their role, leaving the NTC to assume control. However, with no true unitary standing military, as the former Gaddafi forces were discredited, many of the militia leaders decided to remain armed and mobilized, declaring themselves "guardians of the revolution" in attempts to prevent a counterrevolution or abuses by the new government. Although the NTC created a constitution aimed at creating a new, permanent government, the elected parliament, called the General National Congress (GNC), was very unpopular with the majority of Libyans and militias. Protestors accused the NTC and GNC for a slow pace of reform and lack of transparency in the creation of the new government. People also wanted former Gaddafi supporters to be banned from serving in the new government. These protests and the unwillingness of the militias to stand

down or turn over their weapons to the GNC show how weak the new government really was. Not only did the general population protest against it, local commanders, not a unified military structure, commanded the de facto military forces of the militias.

Therefore, post-Gaddafi Libya can be considered a collapsed state. Despite the GNC auspices of control, there were huge increases in crime and inter-factional violence between the militias refusing to stand down. According to the *Libya Herald*, there was a 503% increase in murders from 2010 to 2012, and a 448% increase in theft (2013). The militias also largely refused to follow orders from the GNC to turn in their weapons or to depart major cities. Many of these groups fought with each other or foreign groups. The most infamous of these was the 2012 attack on the United States diplomatic compound, killing four, including the US ambassador. The inabilities of the GNC to prevent crime, inter-factional violence, violence against foreigners, and encourage disarmament all demonstrate the post-Libya regime as a collapsed state.

With Libya as a collapsed state, the institutions overseeing SALW stockpiles, in this case the military, eroded. Suffering a military defeat at the hands of the NTC rebels, backed by NATO and certain Persian Gulf states like Qatar, Gaddafi's military fell into disarray. Without any oversight of the stockpiles, the NTC and local militias quickly seized the weapons caches throughout Libyan military posts. Due to the decentralization of oversight of SALW, there was little way to enforce incentives to prevent proliferation. This made it much more appealing to these new militias to proliferate SALW for their own gain.

### **III. SALW Proliferation in Post-Gaddafi Libya**

With the collapsed state of Libya, the new militia commanders, decentralized from the weak GNC, were able to proliferate arms as they wished. First and foremost, many of these

militias sought to gain arms to secure their own military standing. As there was some significant vying for power following the end of the civil war, those groups with better and more weapons, primarily SALW, were able to exert greater control in their localities and in the capital of Tripoli. However, militias were also willing to proliferate arms for economic reasons. Various conflicts, ranging from the Syrian Civil War to the ethnic violence in the Central African Republic, provided significant demand for SALW. The newly largely autonomous militia groups in Libya were able to operate outside the realm of the centralized GNC and do whatever they wanted with the SALW they had seized from Gaddafi or received as military aid from countries like France or Qatar.

As opposed to the system under Gaddafi, these local leaders were able to proliferate SALW since they did not fear international or regional retaliation. Although many international groups and powers decried the SALW proliferation occurring in post-Gaddafi Libya, they were unable and unwilling to take action against the groups that were proliferating. The UN and NATO, for example, were not able to pass sanctions against any of the groups, as there were no significant forces, either domestic Libyan police or military or NATO/UN peacekeepers, to enforce them (Chivvis and Martini 2014). The UN and/or NATO could have placed peacekeeping troops on the ground to enforce restrictions on SALW proliferation, but the original UNSC Resolution 1973 authorizing a no-fly zone and airstrikes strictly prohibited any permanent ground troops. Any international forces in Libya would be in violation of this resolution or require additional UNSC approval.

Without the fear of airstrikes, international intervention, or sanctions, militias had little incentive preventing them from proliferating SALW easily, and easy it has been. In addition to trading arms within Libya, there is no centralized government organization preventing arms

flows by ship through the Mediterranean or by land through the porous borders of the Sahara Desert in Libya's southern regions. During Gaddafi's reign, Libya's massive, sparsely populated southern region was self-policed. Gaddafi's form of border control, particularly to the south along the Sahara Desert, was to align with local tribes and use them to police the region. In the current situation, the central government does not retain these alliances, nor do they have the ability to influence the people in the region as Gaddafi may have used to. Therefore, the border is not well policed and can easily become an avenue out of the state to smuggle weapons.

In response to concerns over SALW proliferation, the UNSC appointed a Panel of Experts (PoE) to investigate SALW flows out of Libya. The PoE published a letter to the President of the UNSC in February 2014, detailing their findings from investigations not just within Libya, but from neighboring conflicts as well. The report argues that the post-Gaddafi Libya's procurement office, responsible for overseeing external arms transfers, not only took a long time to come into effect, but it has also been largely ineffective at regulating arms transfers. Many transfers that are illegal occur with little prevention efforts from the new government, while others may actually be state-sponsored or at least facilitated by the new official government forces (UN Document S/2014/106).

In addition to significant internal SALW proliferation, the report commented heavily on SALW proliferation to at least 14 other states. Some of these states have acted as transit states, relaying the arms through their territory to the end users in a different state, whereas most have received SALW directly within their borders, either to state or non-state actors. However, it is not only established states that press the demand for SALW throughout the world.

One factor that increases the likelihood of SALW proliferation in a collapsed state is the role of non-state actors controlling SALW. The PoE attributed much of the external proliferation

to groups other than the NTC/GNC authorities, writing, “the vast majority of Libyan stockpiles are under the control of non-State actors, which are the main protagonists in the trade. Most transfers under investigation appear to originate from stockpiles located in Benghazi, Misrata, Zintan and the area of Sebha, where national authorities have very little presence.” (UN Document S/2014/106: 27). That the SALW trade is conducted primarily by non-state actors show the decentralization of control allowing these local groups control of SALW. Since it is local groups and not a centralized authority, it is difficult for anti-proliferation organizations to take action to enforce the incentives to prevent proliferation.

A second factor is the issue of porous borders. The PoE’s report highlights the difficulties of preventing SALW proliferation in a region where most states have porous borders. Niger, which shares a border to Libya’s southwest in the Sahara Desert, has attempted to prevent large-scale SALW proliferation from Libya. However, they have had a large amount of difficulties. “According to the Niger, no convoys transporting arms and ammunition out of Libya into the Niger were stopped during 2013 for several reasons, including a lack of government resources, such as proper desert vehicles; a change in the methods of traffickers, who are using smaller convoys that are harder to detect;” (UN Document S/2014/106). For any West African military attempting to patrol large swaths of unpopulated territory without advanced military technology, there are bound to be gaps allowing for SALW proliferation. This represents a weakening of the negative incentive of being caught by international forces while the SALW are in transit from the supplier state to the recipient group. As the risk of proliferating SALW decreases, so does the opportunity cost of being caught and punished. With a lower opportunity cost, groups are more likely to proliferate SALW.

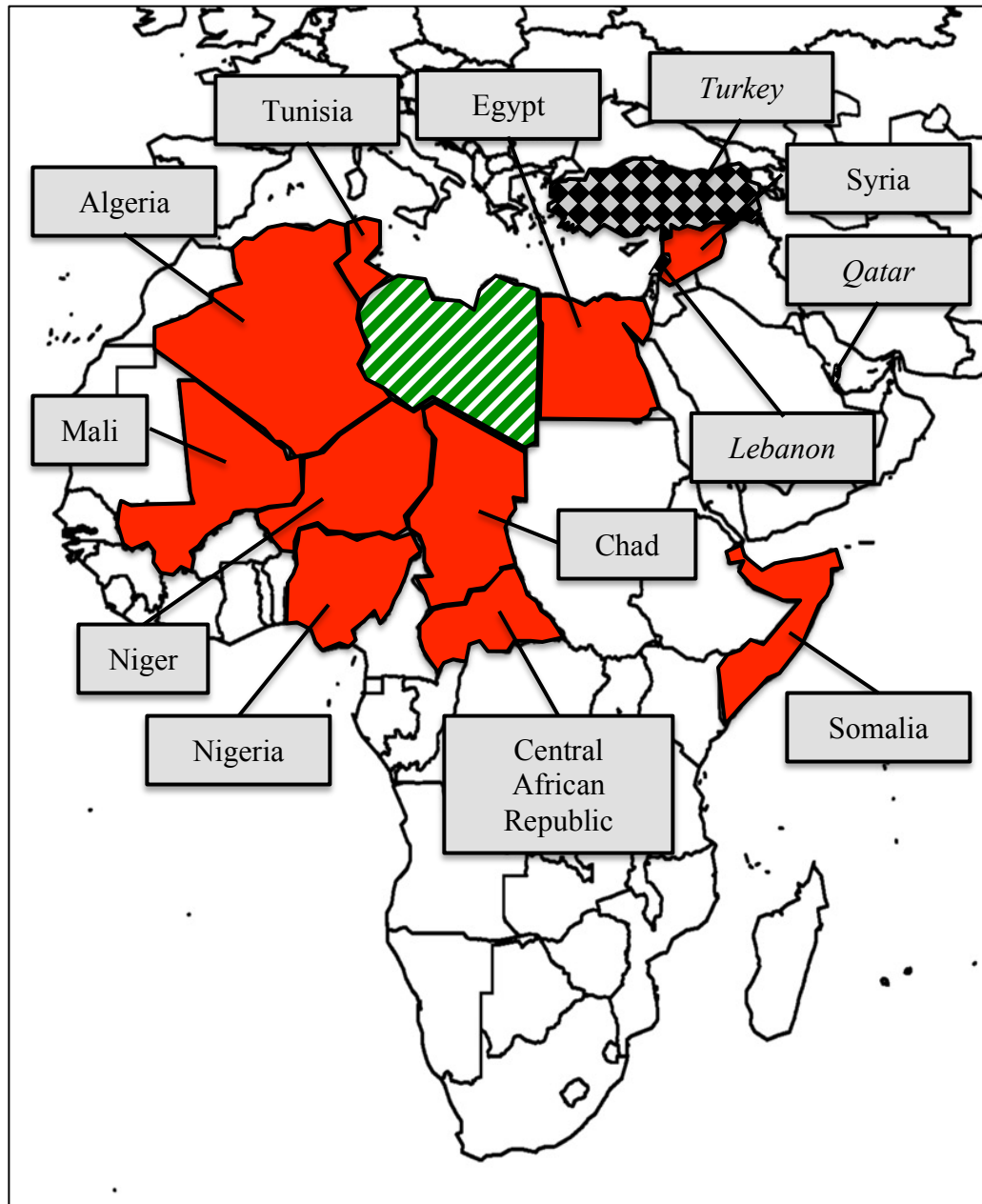
The PoE's report goes on to detail extensive photographic evidence showing SALW from mortars to rifles in 14 different states all having originated in Libya. Typically in the report, the PoE traced serial numbers and case markings, many of which were as blatant as listing "Tripoli" or Libya's official name in Arabic, back to Libya, and even back to the original manifests of Gaddafi's imports of the 1970s and 1980s. An example was a box of Yugoslav 60 mm. mortars, exported to Libya in 1974, recovered by French military forces in the Central African Republic following violence and a 2013 coup. Figure 6 shows the vast geographic distribution of SALW proliferation from Libya from 2011 until the report's publication in February of 2014.

SALW proliferation from Libya has been very destructive to the region as a whole. There has been consistent fighting in Libya since Gaddafi's overthrow in 2011 and no permanent government can claim power throughout the entirety of the state. SALW proliferation led directly to the Tuareg rebellion in northern Mali. Rebel groups and criminal organizations in other West African states gained additional SALW, exacerbating existing conflicts in Niger, Nigeria, and Chad with Boko Haram, for example. Finally, arms routed primarily through Lebanon and Turkey has ended up with Syrian rebels in that state's long and violent civil war. The spread of arms from a controlled situation under Gaddafi's military to various groups within and outside of Libya pose the possibility of creating additional conflict. This in turn will affect the already economically impoverished area, hurting the economies and societies of the states affected by Libyan SALW proliferation.

#### **IV. Conclusion**

Libya is an excellent case study to examine the theory of state collapse leading to decentralized control of SALW, with a lessening of incentive to not proliferate, then resulting in SALW proliferation. As Col. Gaddafi's regime collapsed in the face of internal civil war aided

**Figure 6: States with Confirmed Libyan SALW Proliferation<sup>2</sup>**



by international forces, a power vacuum opened up, including over Gaddafi's massive SALW stockpiles imported during Gaddafi's militarization in the 1970s and 1980s. This allowed

<sup>2</sup> Libya, the supplier state, is denoted with diagonal lines. States that were recipient groups or had recipient groups within their borders are colored and transit states are marked checkerboard and their state name in italics.

militarized local militias to exert control over SALW stockpiles and create their own systems for overseeing their seized SALW. With no internal regulations, a lack of international or regional monitoring and enforcement, and an inability for neighboring countries to prevent SALW infiltration, it was very easy for the militias to sell or distribute arms to various recipient groups by land, sea, and air. Whereas Gaddafi feared international reactions to proliferating SALW, such as the US sanctions, embargoes, and airstrikes of the 1980s, the new government following Gaddafi did not fear any of these actions.

## **Chapter 5: Explaining Egypt's Nonproliferation**

As Libya's Col. Gaddafi suffered from destabilization from the Arab Spring, so too did neighboring Egypt feel the effects of the Arab Spring movement. Unhappy with the long, autocratic rule of Hosni Mubarak, and inspired by the movements elsewhere, Egyptian citizens famously took to Tahrir Square starting on January 25, 2011 in a peaceful protest. They hoped to remove Mubarak from power and replace his regime with one focused on democratic ideals. In just a few weeks, Mubarak stepped down, allowing the military to take control of the government and prepare for a new constitution and elections. Via these elections, Mohamed Morsi of the Muslim Brotherhood came to assume the presidency.

However, once again the people were not satisfied. After just little more than a year in office, Morsi too was ousted from power in the face of large-scale public protests. Once again, it was the military, particularly Field Marshal Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, who took power. Therefore, in Egypt, there were not one, but two significant changes in power. The state moved from the control of Mubarak to Morsi in one revolution, then to the military and the newly elected al-Sisi in a second.

Due to the tumult and sporadic violence of the 2011 and 2013 revolutions, we might have expected to see an example of state collapse. Mubarak's thirty-year reign had ended, giving way to a new yet unstable system in Egypt, a state battling widespread economic issues in which the state had increasingly been unable to meet basic needs of the people (Anderson 2011). Furthermore, the first attempt at creating a democracy was unseated by public protests again, allowing the military to take control. With these subsequent revolutions, SALW proliferation may have been expected. Egypt has a massive military with large stockpiles of SALW. Just as Gaddafi's military lost control of the SALW in Libya, so too could protestors or regional non-

state actors, perhaps like the now-exiled Muslim Brotherhood, secure control over the vast SALW supplies in Egypt. This could lead to proliferation throughout and outside of Egypt, similarly to how it did in Libya. However, as this chapter shows, that was not the case.

Despite two revolutions and changes in power, Egypt did not meet the conditions of a full state collapse. Although there was wide-scale unrest, delays in government services to the people, and a resulting conflict between the Muslim Brotherhood and the military, I argue that at no point did Egypt truly collapse. The military, long the true source of power in Egypt during and even before Mubarak's rule, remained intact and in control of the political discourse when needed (Anderson 2011: 4). Although it attempted a more hands-off approach during Morsi's rule, it reacted to the public protests in 2013, effectively removing Morsi and establishing its own power to prevent the state from collapsing.

In this chapter, I demonstrate how Egypt had the military apparatus to become a supplier state should the central oversight of SALW collapse, primarily through large-scale imports and stockpiling of arms. Next, I will trace both the revolutions of 2011 and 2013 to show how there never truly was a full state collapse in Egypt. This section places particular emphasis on how the military remained intact and prevented the state from collapse. Egypt presents a case opposite of Libya and the Soviet Union. It did have the potential to become a supplier state and underwent political changes, but never collapsed, never allowing for the ensuing lack of centralized SALW oversight and SALW proliferation seen in other cases.

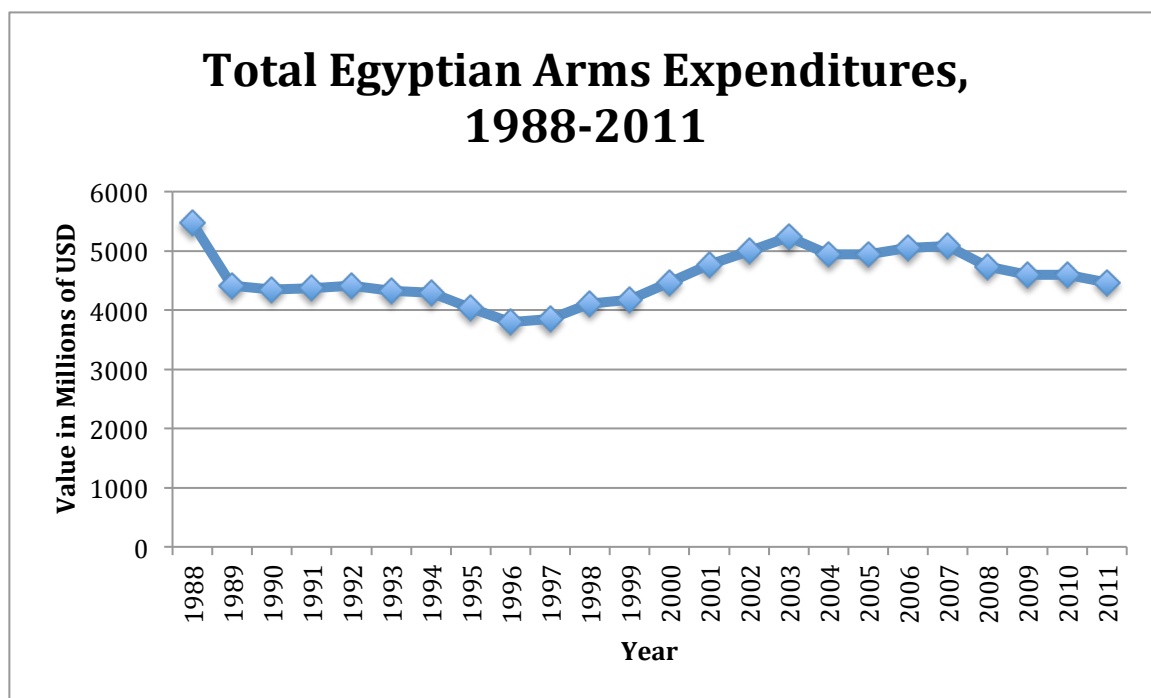
### **I. Conditions of a Supplier State**

When Egypt first faced the protests of the Arab Spring in 2011, it certainly had the potential to be a supplier state. Egypt possessed one of the largest militaries in the region, largely through imports. Additionally, Egypt also maintained a defense industry responsible for

producing small arms and ammunition. It relied more so upon more technologically advanced states, such as the United States, for more advanced defense technologies, such as aircraft. These stockpiles and imports also included large counts of SALW to equip the police and Egyptian military. Egypt maintained this large military as a result of consistent conflicts with neighboring Israel and due to a military patronage system that consistently exerted great political influence in preserving the status and size of the military (Anderson 2011: 4).

Egypt spent large sums of funds on both military imports and domestic arms production. From 1988 through 2011, the year of Mubarak's removal, Egypt averaged \$4.56 billion USD per year on military expenditures (SIPRI 2015). Figure 7 shows how this spending was relatively constant throughout this period. SIPRI's Arms Expenditures project only began in 1988, so there is little credible data from any period prior to 1988.

**Figure 7: Total Egyptian Arms Expenditures, 1988-2011**



This data clearly demonstrates how Mubarak's regime consistently spent large sums of the military, particularly domestically. The spending is consistent, showing Mubarak's long-term investment in the military throughout his rule. In this time period, military spending changes by not more than \$1.7 billion, with the lowest in 1996 at \$3.795 billion, and the highest initially at \$5.472 billion in 1988. Statistics relating Egypt's military specifically to arms imports paint an even clearer picture of not just spending, but actual arms acquisition. During Mubarak's 1981-2011 rule, Egypt imported a total of almost \$30 billion USD of various arms, with an average of about \$1 billion USD per year (SIPRI 2015). These huge acquisitions show the arms buildups in Egypt under Mubarak.

Combining the large internal expenditures with the massive arms imports from other countries shows Egypt as having a large, well-equipped military dense with SALW. One counterargument would be that Egypt might have been proliferating SALW before the protests ousted Mubarak from power in 2011. However, SIPRI estimates that Egypt exported not more than \$564 million in all total arms from 1981 to 2011. This amount is only 1.88% of the amount imported during the same time period. There is no further anecdotal evidence that Egypt proliferated SALW in any large capacity to any other states or non-state actors. Therefore, the military spending and imports create a situation with Egypt holding and stockpiling large quantities of arms, including SALW.

These imports and production created the conditions for Egypt to become a supplier state should the structures of the state collapse. It is important to note that the majority of the SALW in Egypt remained within the control of the military. They were the primary organization that oversaw SALW throughout Mubarak's rule. As the narrative carries forward into the revolutions

of 2011 and 2013, SALW proliferation would only be possible if the military lost its centralized control of the SALW stockpiles.

## **II. The 2011 Revolution**

Hosni Mubarak had ruled Egypt for thirty years by the time 2011 and the Arab Spring protests began in Egypt. Mubarak had earned his way to the presidency as many modern Egyptian leaders had: through the military. Mubarak joined the Egyptian Air Force immediately after completing high school and rose through the ranks, eventually earning a spot as Vice President, staged to take over in 1981 following Anwar Sadat's assassination.

Mubarak's rule consisted of thorough and persistent violations of human rights. During his thirty-year reign, Egyptian government organizations routinely imprisoned and tortured members of any political opposition. Any democratic bodies were sufficiently rigged to ensure Mubarak's easy reelection or election of members friendly to the Mubarak government. This lack of political openness and increasing economic issues led to widespread discontent with the Mubarak regime. Without any political avenue to affect change, the public moved towards protests starting on January 25, 2011.

Despite considerable attempts at providing concessions to the protests, by February 11, Mubarak was forced to step down. He passed on power to the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) to take over and begin democratization (Kirkpatrick 2011). The Supreme Council was able to quickly call for a constitutional referendum on March 19, paving the way to create democratic institutions in a new government. The military also sponsored parliamentary elections and presidential elections within the next year even in the face of recurrent protests.

SCAF effectively conducted the role of the state despite tensions and consistent protests as the interim government before the democratically elected Mohamed Morsi could take power.

Although the military and protestors clashed consistently, resulting in the deaths of protestors, there was a relative calm in Egypt in hopes of securing a democratic form of government. In the period of interim SCAF rule and the rule of Mohamed Morsi, the military remained fully intact. SCAF repealed the powers of the military police and intelligence, hoping to reduce the role of torture or military arrests in Egypt. In general, however, the military sided with the popular protests (Kirkpatrick 2011).

Since the protestors generally supported the military and the military remained intact throughout the 2011 revolution, the state of Egypt did not collapse. Therefore, the centralized military oversight over the large stockpiles of SALW remained. The incentives to not proliferate SALW remained intact, preventing those who held the arms, in this case the Egyptian military, from proliferating them. In terms of SALW proliferation and oversight, little had changed from before to after the rule of Mubarak. The military remained very powerful in Egypt. If anything, SCAF was able to assert its dominance in Egypt's political system through its important role as the transitory body from Mubarak to the parliamentary and presidential elections. Therefore, the 2011 revolution did not result in a state collapse, as the military remained intact and powerful, thereby preventing any SALW proliferation in 2011 Egypt.

### **III. The 2013 Revolution**

When Mohamed Morsi won the presidential elections on June 24, 2012, many Egyptians may have felt optimistic about the future. Protestors had ended the rule of Mubarak and ensured that the military turned over power to democratically installed institutions in a timely fashion, ensuring there would be no military dictatorship. It appeared, at least for a time, that democracy would prevail in Egypt following the difficult year and a half of protest and clashes.

Many members of the Egyptian public were unhappy with Morsi's reforms, particularly in regard to the increased role of the Muslim Brotherhood. Some parliamentary members of the Constituent Assembly, tasked with creating a new Egyptian constitution, walked out, fearing that the Muslim Brotherhood, newly legalized and politically active, aimed to create an Islamist state. Morsi increasingly consolidated power, much to the disapproval of the public. On June 30, 2013, one year after Morsi won election as president, wide-scale protests once again took place throughout Egypt and Tahrir Square (Kirkpatrick 2013). Field Marshal al-Sisi, fearing collapse, orchestrated a military coup against Morsi, deposing him and arresting many of the leading members of the Muslim Brotherhood. Once again, SCAF assumed power for the interim until new elections could be held.

Unlike the 2011 revolution, a much greater degree of violence marked the 2013 SCAF coup. The Muslim Brotherhood, quickly outlawed in September 2013 and heavily persecuted, began a campaign of violent resistance. During the immediate period following the coup, clashes between the military and the Muslim Brotherhood resulted in 638 deaths, with approximately 4,000 injured (Michael 2013). Clearly, Egypt faced a much more unstable situation than in 2011 with a high possibility for large-scale violence.

However, the military was again able to remain intact and in power, preventing any real state collapse. Morsi and much of the institutions of government, such as the Constituent Assembly and many of the courts, dissolved with pressure from SCAF. Rather than allowing for a power vacuum, the military asserted control in its coup. SCAF clamped down on the Muslim Brotherhood, preventing any large retribution that might threaten their newfound control over the government. The military stabilization resulted in al-Sisi's election as the newest president.

Just as in 2011, the military prevented any state collapse in Egypt. Without a state collapse and with a powerful military, oversight of SALW remained intact and effective, even in the face of increasing conflict with the Muslim Brotherhood. Therefore, Egypt did not experience a state collapse in 2013. The incentives to prevent proliferation remained, preventing actors within the Egyptian military, who retained possession and control of the SALW supplies, from proliferating them to various political groups or for economic gain.

In fact, Egypt faced some of the negative incentives that actually prevented the arms imports it had so heavily relied upon historically. After the military took power in 2013, many states, including Egypt's primary arms supplier, the United States, placed a ban on further arms shipments to Egypt. Although this action was not in response to SALW proliferation, it certainly restricted the military while it was taking power in the coup and placed significant international pressure to prevent any erstwhile action, such as SALW proliferation. The United States later loosened their embargo and only fully repealed it on March 31, 2015 (Al-Jazeera 2015).

#### **IV. Conclusion**

Despite the protests and political upheavals of 2011 and 2013, the Egyptian state remained intact largely due to the stability offered by an intact military. The military had long been the primary source of power in Egypt, ensuring Mubarak's rule for thirty years (Anderson 2011: 4). It acted on the side of the people with the protests of 2011 and 2013, removing those in power. At no point did the military lose its political clout, despite restrictions on the military police and intelligence in the areas of torture and arrests.

As a result of the military's intactness, the oversight of SALW remained in place through the 2011 and 2013 upheavals. The head of government and those ministers who were responsible for overseeing SALW were still subject to internal and external incentives to prevent

proliferation. Therefore, there was no SALW proliferation in this case. The case of Egypt offers an example of how, although conditions were ripe for possible proliferation due to Egypt's stockpiling and political upheavals, it is much less likely for SALW proliferation to occur unless there is an actual state collapse. State collapse is the key independent variable, precipitating weak institutions in a collapsed state. This leads to the lack of centralized oversight, allowing the negative incentives to dissipate, resulting in SALW proliferation. Without a state collapse, such as in Egypt, the institutions responsible for Egypt's SALW, nestled under the military, remained strong, able to project oversight and prevent proliferation.

## **Chapter 6: Conclusion**

Studying SAWL can be extremely complex due to a restricted amount of data and the difficulty in tracking SALW transfers, as this paper and past research has shown. Despite these difficulties, I have succinctly connected the issue of state collapse to the resulting SALW proliferation. Although this connection seems apparent, there are additional mechanisms within the process to explain the transformation of a state not proliferating SALW into a collapsed state that proliferates. Understanding this transformation helps better explain why and how SALW proliferate following a state collapse, allowing for future research and development of better methods to combat proliferation.

This conclusion chapter will recap the major points of the theory connecting state collapse and SALW proliferation. It will also review briefly how this theory fits in the examples of the collapse of the Soviet Union and Libya, but does not fit for Egypt, as there was no case of state collapse. It will conclude with the real-world implications of this theory and how policymakers can attempt to counter the difficulties of preventing SALW proliferation in a collapsed state.

### **I. Theory**

The theory linking state collapse to SALW proliferation is essentially a four-step process. First, a state with the conditions to become a supplier state, i.e. stockpiles of SALW, must collapse. A state can be considered to have collapsed when it no longer effectively guarantees the basic necessities of governance to the people, such as internal and external security. Internal conflict oftentimes, although not always, follows state collapse. This conflict may exacerbate the possibility of SALW proliferation. However, state collapse can be initially peaceful, such as the 1991 collapse of the Soviet Union.

Second, the institutions of state, specifically those responsible for oversight of SALW in the state, will weaken as a result of state collapse. Typically, a state collapses as the institutions of state weaken to the point where they are no longer able to conduct their assigned task. For example with a case in which the military controls SALW, if that military loses control of the SALW stockpiles, disbands altogether, or loses centralized control, the institutions can be considered weakened, especially by state collapse. As a result of the institutional breakdown that comes with state collapse, centralized oversight of SALW evaporates. Replacing the weak institutions are new ones, either of the new state replacing the collapsed one or non-state actors attempting to assert their own power. However, in a collapsed state, these institutions are decentralized and cannot effectively assume the strength of their predecessors before the collapse. For SALW, this means that there is no central oversight, allowing for local control or seizures of SALW stockpiles by other groups, like militias in Libya. Rather than a “free-for-all” idea of SALW spread after a state collapse, it has historically been a structured spread through the new institutions of the emerging state or local leaders who took power during the state collapse. Ukraine offers an example of how the new institution taking over immediately after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the arms exports conglomerate Ukrspetsexport, was weak and unable to prevent SALW proliferation. Georgia and Libya show instances where local ZaKVO or militia leaders, respectively, used their new decentralized control of SALW to sell or proliferate for political gains.

Third, the incentives enforced by anti-proliferation organizations do not affect these new or weakened institutions overseeing SALW. Usually, state institutions have the incentive to prevent proliferation because of internal security issues as well as to avoid enforcement, such as sanctions or embargoes, from regional or global anti-proliferation organizations. However, in a

collapsed state, anti-proliferation organizations are unable to implement appropriate countermeasures to ensure actors are not proliferating SALW illegally. Since it is much more difficult for anti-proliferation organizations to enforce sanctions or other penalties on weakened institutions or new, remote groups holding SALW, the new actors overseeing SALW do not fear retribution should they proliferate SALW.

Fourth, with an absence of incentives to prevent proliferation, actors who have taken over the SALW in a collapsed state are much more likely to fulfill the economic and political positive incentives in proliferating SALW. Since there is a constant demand for SALW to use in conflicts or to bolster security around the world, suppliers can easily sell or distribute SALW for lucrative economic gains or to support various states or non-state actors militarily by providing SALW. Anti-proliferation organizations may attempt to take action to limit SALW proliferation flowing out of a collapsed state, but are usually unable to apply the pressures necessary on the new groups holding SALW.

## **II. Case Study of the Soviet Union**

The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 precipitated one of the first large-scale distributions of SALW since their invention. After building up huge and expensive stockpiles of SALW in preparation for a war with the West that never materialized, the former Soviet states quickly realized these stockpiles as unnecessary. When the Soviet Union collapsed into the resulting new states, they did not have the same institutions to oversee the massive SALW stockpiles left behind. In the case of Ukraine, the new political leaders of the state were willing to sell SALW throughout the world for personal economic gain. In Georgia, local military commanders gave SALW to the different groups fighting to boost their own salaries and attempt to alter the conflicts of Abkhazia, South Ossetia, and during the Georgian Civil War.

In 1991, anti-proliferation was not a major goal of many organizations or states. Since it had never really happened on a large scale prior to the Soviet Union's collapse, the international community did not take significant steps to combat SALW proliferation. For example, the UN did not establish the Office for Disarmament Affairs, also responsible for combating SALW proliferation, until 1998. UN arms embargoes, a major way to prevent SALW proliferation, did not exist prior to 1991. Therefore, the only incentive usually to prevent SALW proliferation was internal. When the former Soviet Union states no longer needed the arms for their own internal security or security against a war with the West, they were willing to sell the SALW without fear of any retribution for their actions. This situation led to a huge increase in SALW throughout the world.

### **III. Case Study of Libya**

After taking power in a military coup, Col. Gaddafi built up a huge stockpile of arms during the 1970s and 1980s for a revamped military, including large stocks of SALW. This stockpile remained firmly in Gaddafi's military's hands until 2011. A huge public protest exploded into an armed revolution, one that toppled Gaddafi from power and collapsed the state, including Gaddafi's military, which held centralized control of the SALW. The National Transitional Council was unable to assume control of the SALW stockpiles as they instead fell into the hands of local militias and leaders throughout the country.

Although at this time there were anti-proliferation organizations that could normally impose sanctions or other punitive actions for any actor caught proliferating SALW illegally, the new groups who had control over Libya's SALW could not be affected by them. Decentralized, exerting local control, and in a volatile violent situation, there was no way for anti-proliferation organizations to effectively reach them. Furthermore, the UN and NATO decision to not use

ground forces to oversee the change of power from Gaddafi to the NTC further complicated any anti-proliferation enforcement since they did not have an actual forceful presence in the country. Without any enforcement to prevent proliferation, these local militias have taken to selling and distributing SALW throughout Africa and the Middle East.

#### **IV. Case Study of Egypt**

Similar to Libya, in 2011, Egypt had a large military with large stockpiles of SALW accrued over the years and especially under the rule of Mubarak. Also in 2011, and again in 2013, Egypt faced large-scale public protests for the first time in decades. These movements succeeded in ousting longtime dictator Mubarak and then the democratically elected Morsi. In both cases, the military was the driving force that stepped in to take power from the old leader and help prepare a transition to a fresh democracy.

With these large shifts in government and public unrest, coupled with Egypt's huge military, there might have been an expectation to see SALW proliferation as the regimes fell. However, since the state of Egypt never truly collapsed, there was no SALW proliferation. Despite a few reforms and reorganization, the military remained intact throughout these changes. Since they were the state institution tasked with overseeing SALW and they never weakened, there was never a lack of centralized oversight. Therefore, the military and other actors of the state were still susceptible to internal and external incentives to prevent proliferation. In this way, there was no SALW proliferation within or outside of Egypt since there was no state collapse.

#### **V. Implications**

Although SALW proliferation may seem to be an obvious by-product of state collapse, scholars and policymakers oftentimes do not understand the complexities inherent to this connection. By examining the individual steps leading from state collapse to SALW

proliferation, future research or anti-proliferation efforts can focus on new ways to combat SALW proliferation coming out of a collapsed state situation.

First are the implications of a lack of centralized oversight of SALW. If a state were to proliferate SALW while the state remains intact, anti-proliferation organizations could effectively enforce sanctions to punish those within the state responsible for the proliferation. It would be easy to identify the individuals and organizations within the state responsible for conducting and allowing for the proliferation of SALW. This allows anti-proliferation organizations to take the prescribed actions. The ability for anti-proliferation organizations to take actions against actors who proliferate SALW creates an incentive for actors to prevent proliferation. However, this is not possible in a situation where SALW oversight is decentralized and anti-proliferation organizations cannot take action. If various groups control SALW or if control shifts from a single, centralized system to local leaders, anti-proliferation organizations are less able to enforce punishment, especially while avoiding any direct action such as military reprisals.

Another implication of this decentralized oversight of SALW is the recognition that SALW proliferation coming out of a collapsed state is not random. Rather, the proliferation occurs through new leaders and organizations, albeit smaller and more remote from the centralized structure that existed during the previous state. When studying the supply of SALW from collapsed states, scholars and policymakers need to focus on these new decentralized organizations with new ways to ensure that they do not proliferate SALW.

Second, there are significant implications of the change in incentives in a collapsed state for the actors. It explains why these decentralized organizations are willing and decide to proliferate SALW whereas they did not previously. The incentives to proliferate remain rather

constant, as the demand for SALW remains rather constant. Suppliers can receive economic and political gains from proliferating SALW. Therefore, it is a change in the incentive to not proliferate that causes groups to proliferate SALW after a state collapses. This indicates that anti-proliferation organizations need to enforce punishments in order to recreate an incentive to force these groups not participate in proliferation. Sanctions or embargoes are ineffective against decentralized or local leaders. Anti-proliferation organizations instead need to create or enforce new methods of preventing these actors from proliferating.

Third, this theoretical framework highlights the need to prevent SALW proliferation, especially following the state collapse of a supplier state. SALW supply is generally constant in a normal international environment. However, it increases drastically when a supplier state collapses as it allows for the new local groups to seize and proliferate SALW untouched by anti-proliferation organizations. State collapse is really the only example of a cause of massive SALW supply increases. Otherwise, SALW supply remains generally constant internationally as the states and anti-proliferation organizations keep a tight control on any spreads.

The recent tendency for SALW proliferation to follow after a state collapses should raise alarming concern amongst anti-proliferation organizations and the international community. As the case study in Libya showed, drastic increases in SALW caused or worsened conflicts in a number of countries, including a large destabilization of Mali requiring international intervention. To prevent proliferation and the ensuing international security crises, it is necessary to create new methods of ensuring a quick and effective transition of centralized SALW oversight that is not usually possible in a collapsed state. For example, in Libya, the NTC requested the local militias to turn in their weapons to the centralized NTC. However, the local militias had more to gain militarily and economically by keeping and later proliferating these

weapons (UN Document S/2014/106). Clearly, the NTC needed better methods to enforce this SALW return program to help force the militias into not proliferating their arms.

The lesson from the example of Libya is that in order to create a new centralized oversight of SALW after an instance of state collapse, the new government or international anti-proliferation organizations need to create new incentives for local leaders to willingly give up their SALW to a centralized organization that can be regulated and enforced to prevent proliferation. One example may be an arms buyback program in which the new government pays for the SALW as the local leaders turn them in. This easily defeats the economic incentive that local leaders would have in selling arms, although it could be expensive for a the new centralized government to pay for. The new government could also use political motivations against local leaders if they do not turn in their SALW stockpiles. An example of this would be refusing political participation or elections until the group turns in their SALW to prevent proliferation, although the greatest danger in all of these centralization campaigns are recurring conflict between the new government and newly empowered local leaders.

Although scholars, policymakers, and international organizations tend to focus on Weapons of Mass Destruction, SALW have truly been the actual weapons of mass destruction in recent history, as they cause more casualties and fatalities in conflicts than any other category of weapons (Small Arms Survey). Despite the resources and attention given to WMD proliferation, relatively little goes towards studying and preventing SALW proliferation. One area of future focus, as I have shown, needs to be SALW proliferation resulting from state collapse since that is the only large change in SALW supply, thereby resulting in proliferation. The international community needs to determine new economic, political, and, if necessary during peacekeeping operations, military means to prevent SALW proliferation in a collapsed state. By studying the

weakening of institutions, decentralization of SALW oversight, and resulting change in incentives, scholars and policymakers should be able to devise these new means in concerted efforts to stop the proliferation of small arms and light weapons throughout the world. This should help reduce conflicts as well as their severity as the cost of participating in armed conflict increases. In turn, reducing the access and use of SALW throughout the world, particularly the developing world, should help ensure more consistent economic growth and political stability.

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