

## **SMALL ARMS, LIGHT WEAPONS AND DRUG TRAFFICKING IN AFRICA: ISSUES AND CHALLENGES**

**By**

Mubarak Ahmed Mashi, PhD.

Department of Political Science,  
Umaru Musa Yar'adua University (UMYU),  
Katsina, Nigeria.

[ahmed.mubarak@umyu.edu.ng](mailto:ahmed.mubarak@umyu.edu.ng)

and

Aliyu Mukhtar Katsina, PhD.

Department of Political Science,  
Umaru Musa Yar'adua University (UMYU),  
Katsina, Nigeria.

[Aliyu.mukhtar@umyu.edu.ng](mailto:Aliyu.mukhtar@umyu.edu.ng)

### **Abstract**

Trafficking of small arms, light weapons (SALWs), and drugs in Africa poses severe threats to peace, security, and development in the continent. The continent has long been troubled by the illicit flow of these SALWs and drugs which empowers and motivates terrorists, rebels and insurgent groups to engage in conflict and violence with impunity, fuelling instability and underdevelopment with adverse effects on human security in the continent. The availability and circulation of weapons and drugs is a lucrative venture for those involved in further arms and drug purchases and corrupt officials perpetuating a vicious cycle of violence. Mechanisms in place by states and governments to address the menace in the continent proved ineffective due to corruption, lack of proper and modern border monitoring devices, porous borders, 'vested interest' involved in the crime and lack of inter-agency collaboration between various security agencies. It is against this backdrop this paper sought to examine issues and challenges in arms and drug trafficking in Africa to evolve measures that will guarantee security in the continent. The paper concludes that addressing these challenges requires a multidimensional approach that includes strengthening border controls through the use of ICT, improving governance, intensification of the fight against corruption, enhancing inter-agency collaboration, fostering international and continental cooperation, and tackling the root causes of conflict in the continent such as poverty, unemployment, effects of climate change and illiteracy in the continent.

**Keywords:** Trafficking, Small Arms and Light Weapons, Drug, Africa, Security, Development.

## **Introduction**

Africa is a player, as a transit and destination for cocaine, heroin, cannabis, tramadol, ecstasy, hallucinogens, inhalants, ketamine, marijuana, and methamphetamine with Nigeria, Tanzania, South Africa, Guinea, Uganda, Ghana, Sierra Leone, DRC, Benin and Mauritius as the hotspot of trafficking in the continent. The cocaine comes from South America and heroin from Asia, which are then shipped into East and Southern Africa, then to markets in Europe and North America (UNODC, 2020). Between 2001 and 2006, the annual cocaine seizure in West Africa alone was 14,579 kilograms. Most of these seizures were made in Nigeria, and from 2005 to 2008, annual seizures of cocaine destined for or coming from Africa rather than seizures inside the region have in turn amounted to an additional 11 tons and the region remains a key supplier of cannabis in Southern Europe (Cockayne & Williams, 2009).

Trafficking in SALWs such as machine guns, rifles, grenades, and pistols has led to the death and displacement of thousands of civilian populations across the continent. These weapons have been used in deadly conflicts, particularly in Angola, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda, Sierra Leone, Rwanda, Somalia and other African countries. The weapons are frequently in circulation and moved from one State to another. Their ownership is transferred among gang groups, fighters, security forces, war profiteers and drug barons (Ali & Vendley, nd).

Trafficking of SALWs and drugs are responsible for the majority of deaths in the continent, an estimated 60–90 per cent of all the conflicts and deaths are intensified with the availability of SALWs and drugs in the continent (Ali & Vendley, nd). According to the African Union, there are approximately 40, million illicit SALWs in Africa, and an estimated 80% of them are unregistered and unmarked (African Defence Forum, 2024). On 26 October 2010, for instance, Nigerian security intercepted 240 metric bags of bullets from Iran in 13 shipping containers, suspected that the consignment was in transit to a destination outside West Africa. The Nigerian government estimated that there were 350 million illegal weapons and drugs smuggled into the country in 2018. In the same year, the Ethiopian authorities also seized 21 machine guns, 33,000 handguns, 300,000 bullets and 275 rifles being smuggled into different parts of the country (Financial Crime News, 2020).

The connexion of these two challenges in the continent has severe consequences on the regional peace, security and development. The free circulation of these arms and drugs has contributed to a complex web of ethno-religious and political violence, socio-economic backwardness, food insecurity, threat of diseases, loss of lives and property, gross human rights violation, displacement of persons and the continuous rise of criminal elements. The two played a critical role in fuelling and financing armed rebels, terrorism, coup d'état, insurgency and banditry in the continent especially in Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria, Niger, Togo, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Senegal, and Sierra Leone. Largely due to the porosity of the continent's borders, corruption, poor condition of service of employees, weak institutional capacities and travesty of justice. This calls for the need for international assistance, regional cooperation and strategic policy responses aimed at addressing these interrelated challenges.

It is against this backdrop this paper sought to examine the issues and challenges posed by SALWs and drug trafficking in Africa.

### **Conceptual Clarification**

#### **Trafficking**

According to the GIABA Report (2013), trafficking is the unlawful import, export, possession, trade, delivery, movement or transfer of illegal goods or firearms from or across the territory of one country to another or within the territories of states (GIABA Report, 2013).

#### **Small Arms and Light Weapons**

According to Nte (2011), small arms are smaller infantry weapons, such as firearms that an individual soldier can carry. It is usually limited to revolvers, pistols, submachine guns, shotguns, carbines, assault rifles, rifle squad automatic weapons, light machine guns, general-purpose machine-gun, medium machine guns and hand grenades. However, it can also include heavy machine guns, as well as smaller mortars, recoilless rifles and some rocket launchers, depending on the context. Large mortars, howitzers, cannons, vehicles and larger pieces of equipment are not considered small arms (Nte, 2011).

Small arms comprised of arms operated by one person, which include firearms and other destructive arms or devices like revolvers, pistol, rifles, machine guns, landmines, bombs, grenades, rocket launchers and missiles. Generally, “small arms” refer to weapons meant for individual use, including revolvers and self-loading pistols, rifles and carbines, sub-machine guns, assault rifles and light machineguns (Katsina, et al, 2021).

### **Light Weapons**

Light weapons are portable arms designed to be used by several persons working together as a team such as heavy machine guns, portable grenade launchers, mobile anti-aircraft cannons, non-recoilless guns, portable anti-tank missile launchers, and mortars with a calibre of less than 100 millimetres (SADC Firearms Protocol, 2004: Article 1.2).

**Table: 1.1**

#### **Categorisation of Small Arms and Light Weapons**

S/N	Small Arms	Light Weapons
1.	Recoilless Rifles	Heavy Machine gun
2.	Sub-Machine Guns, Assault Rifles, Light Machine Gun	Portable anti-aircraft guns
3.	Heavy Machine Gun	Recoilless rifles
4.	Anti-Aircraft Missile	Portable anti-tank guns
5.	Portable Launchers	Mounted grenade launchers

Source: Researcher, 2024

## **Illicit Drugs**

Illicit drugs are drugs, whose production, distribution, transfer and use are proscribed or prohibited under international law, because they pose threat to human lives, society and development. These includes; cocaine, heroin, cannabis, tramadol, ecstasy, hallucinogens, inhalant, ketamine, marijuana, and methamphetamine.

## **Drugs Trafficking**

Drug trafficking is illegal or black-market deal that has to do with the manufacture, distribution, sale, shipping, exportation or importation and transfer of illicit substances which are under drug proscription laws (UNODC, 2020). According to Naylor (2003), drug trafficking is a market-based crime, that has to do with the production, distribution of goods (drugs) that are illegal; it is a multilateral exchange that involves producers, distributors, retailers and money-managers on the supply side and willing consumers on the demand side (Naylor, 2003).

Drug trafficking therefore, refers to the international or local transfer/movement of illicit goods from producing country or transit country to another country either for consumption or for further shipment to another country, it revolves around secrecy to tactically avoid security personnel.

Drug trafficking is a major source of revenue for organised crime groups, the profits accrued from trafficking is what they use in financing other heinous crimes such as illegal firearms purchase and financing terrorism (National Crime Agency, 2020). Trafficking usually passes through various stages from the producers, distributors, suppliers and drug barons (dealers). The most commonly trafficked drugs globally are cannabis, cocaine, heroin and methamphetamine. Drug trafficking affects all countries of the world as either source, transit or destination countries, undermining economic, social and political stability, destroying human lives, especially the youths and destroying communities (Interpol, 2020).

### **Small Arms, Light Weapons and Drug Trafficking: Profiling the Rising Trend in Africa**

Historically, Africa is a strategic point for trafficking through air, land or marine transportation, mostly of small arms and light weapons, drugs (cocaine, heroin, cannabis and methamphetamine) and goods that contravene laws of the land. The countries of Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania, and Zambia in Africa have emerged as the epicentre of global trafficking of arms and drugs. This is due to the structural shifts in global drug trafficking patterns, as a result of the increase in European demand for cocaine, international efforts to combat narcotics and other illicit goods and the preponderance of corruption in African countries, which made criminals syndicate sees Africa as an alternative route for their illegitimate trade (Wylér & Cook, 2009).

The involvement of West African countries in drug trafficking was engineered by Nigerian drug-trafficking organizations. Some are of the view that the involvement can be traced back to the collapse in the price of crude oil in near the beginning 1980s. Numerous Nigerian students studying abroad who cannot continue to rely on family support, opted to drug business as alternative financial support, with military dictators and corrupt civilian leaders who provided protection and support. It is this unfortunate situation that made West Africa a major hub in international drug trafficking (Cockayne & Williams, 2009).

In the mid-2000s, Africa turned out to be a major player in drug trafficking. In the cocaine deal, traffickers more and more began to use West Africa, and to a lesser extent Southern and East Africa, as transshipment hubs for smuggling cocaine from South America to Europe and for the heroin deal, the traffickers began to use East Africa as a hub for moving heroin from Asia to Europe and other regions. During this period, Africa has become a destination and transit point for cocaine and heroin flows (USAID, 2016). UNODC estimates that 40 to 45 tons of heroin flowed into Africa in 2009 out of global flows of 460 to 480 tons, this gave Africa a nine (9%) percent share in worldwide heroin trafficking (USAID, 2016). To give life to the above assertion, Wylér & Cook, (2009), reveals that, each year between 46 and 300 metric tons of South American cocaine transit to West Africa en route to Europe (Wylér & Cook, 2009). UN World Drug Report (2017), also reveals that two-thirds of the cocaine

smuggled between South America and Europe passes through West Africa, in particular Benin Republic, Cape Verde, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Nigeria and Togo. Ghana, Nigeria, Kenya and Tanzania as the countries with utmost traffic in opiates passing from Pakistan and Afghanistan to western destinations (African Centre for Strategic Studies, 2017).

According to the US International Narcotics Control Strategy Reports (INCSR) 2018, South Africa is the chief market for 22 prohibited drugs in Sub-Saharan Africa and serves as a transshipment point for cocaine and heroin mainly destined for European countries (Financial Crime News, 2020). South Africa is an important regional importer of chemicals used in the manufacture of illicit drugs, predominantly synthetic drugs. Nigeria and India are the centres for the precursors used in South Africa to synthesise methamphetamine (FCN, 2020).

The United Nations Environmental Programme (2014) estimated that the value of illegal drugs in East, Central and West Africa was US\$2.65 billion and the 4 regions with the highest illegal drug use, across Africa was 19% for East Africa, 12% for Southern Africa, 8% for North Africa, 6% for Central Africa and 55% in West Africa (FNC, 2020). UNODC reported in 2011 that, Africa generated US\$1.5 billion as profits for Cocaine, with 62% or US\$1 billion on hand for laundering (FCN, 2020).

**Table: 1.2**

*An estimated African sub-regional distribution of firearms trafficked in 2017 in the hands of civilians*

<b>Sub-region</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Number of firearms held by civilians</b>	<b>Civilian-held firearms per 100 population</b>
<b>Total in Africa</b>	1,246,505,00	40,009,000	3.2
<b>Eastern Africa</b>	416,676	7,802,000	1.9
<b>Middle Africa</b>	161,237	4,981,000	3.1
<b>Northern Africa</b>	232,186	10,241,000	4.4
<b>Southern Africa</b>	63,854	6,012,000	9.4
<b>Western Africa</b>	372,551	10,972,000	2.9

*Source: Small Arms Survey 2019*

From Table 1.2, West Africa has the uppermost number with about 11 million and then followed by North Africa with 10.2 million and Eastern Africa with 7.8 million arms, which are illegally in the hands of civilians in the continent.

### **Countering Small Arms, Light Weapons and Drugs Trafficking in Africa**

The threat posed by arms and drug trafficking on peace and security in Africa compelled African heads of state and governments at continental, regional and sub-regional levels to seek international assistance and to come up with measures aimed at combating drug and



arms trafficking in the continent. The United States for instance came up with three measures aimed at assisting African countries against arms and drugs trafficking:

1. The U.S. Department of State, assist African countries in combating illicit drug production and trafficking.
2. The U.S. Department of Défense (DOD) is responsible for detecting and monitoring illicit drug air and maritime transit.
3. The U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), helps in the coordination of law enforcement investigations, which involves international production, trafficking and sale of illegal drugs and illicit substances particularly in Africa (Wyler & Cook, 2009).

This assistance was rendered to reduce the devastating effect of drug trafficking in the region. As President Obama rightly observed, “Drug trafficking threatens stability all over West Africa”. He requested \$7.5 million in the 2010 budget for combating illegal drug transactions in Africa. His administration also trains about 500 African law enforcement officials yearly on drug enforcement, anti-corruption, financial crimes, and border security to ensure effective counternarcotics measures in Africa (INCSR, 2009 cited in Wyler & Cook, 2009).

In Africa, there are several frameworks aimed at combating arms and drug trafficking. These include:

1. African Union Commission and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, launched in March 2009, is a joint plan to ensure the implementation of the A.U. Plan of Action on mutual efforts, focused on reducing the demand for drugs and drug trafficking, among other crime prevention and criminal justice issues (UNODC, 2009 cited in Wyler & Cook, 2009).
2. Financial Action Task Force (FATF), is working with other regional bodies such as the Intergovernmental Action Group against Money Laundering in West Africa (GIABA), Eastern and South African Anti-Money Laundering Group (ESAAMLG), Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force (MENAFATF), to achieve its targets.

3. International Narcotics Control Board (INCB). The INCB is a sovereign and quasi-judicial control appendage that monitors the implementation of United Nations Drug Control Treaties. The INCB is to assist in checking and stopping illicit deals in precursor chemicals throughout Africa, called 'Operation Crystal Flow'. One of its achievements of the operation is the discovery of Africa as a transshipment point for international trade in unlawfully diverted precursor chemicals.
4. The 2010 Central African Convention for the Control of SALWs and their components that can be used for the production, repair and assembling of SALWs, is known as the Kinshasa Convention (Lamb & Dye, 2009).
5. INTERPOL, an International Criminal Police Organisation, facilitates police cooperation and combat criminal activities globally. Each country has an INTERPOL National Central Bureau (NCB), which connects national police with INTERPOL global network. The INTERPOL assist in drug trafficking and heinous crimes in member countries. The INTERPOL in Africa launched a Project in 2006, known as the COCAF (Cocaine Trafficking from Western Africa to Europe), which provides information between European and African law enforcement agencies to mark and target rising drug trafficking routes, particularly cocaine shipment on commercial air flights from West Africa (Wylter & Cook, 2009).
6. Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), a regional economies and political organisation of fifteen West African countries, was established 28 May 1975 in Lagos, Nigeria. ECOWAS was established purposely to foster economic integration and security in West Africa. In her efforts to combat drugs and arms trafficking in West Africa.

All these frameworks were geared towards addressing arms and drug trafficking and other security challenges in the region, nevertheless, with no commensurate result due to corrupt practices and lack of political will on the part of the African heads of State.

## **Challenges of Combating SALWs and Drug Trafficking in Africa**

Efforts toward combating SALWs and drug trafficking in Africa by heads of state, government and regional bodies faced multidimensional challenges. The first challenge has to do with the lack of institutional capacities and competencies to discharge the roles and functions of containing and eliminating illicit trade in drugs and arms coming into the continent. The institutional challenges are due to the poor condition of service of employees such as non-payment of their salaries, honour, compensation and encouragement, which made them vulnerable to corruption to compromise their official duties of allowing illicit inflow of arms and drugs (Mashi & Bala, 2022). For instance, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2007), reveals that security personnel in Africa are underpaid and often irregularly paid, which contributes greatly to their vulnerability to corruption. Once a crucial bunch of law enforcement is taking bribes, it may become complex, or even hazardous to remain honest (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2007).

Lack of modern or dearth devices in line with global best practices to combat trafficking. Security agencies in most African states lack modern security and hi-tech devices such as surveillance cameras, fitness trackers, drones, CCTVs, drug detectors, scanning devices and bio-data of criminals at their duty post, that could be used to monitor or track down illicit movement of arms, drugs and criminals. Musa (2013) opined that African countries' border security management system is so poor and ineffective when it encompasses the problem of patrol vehicles, surveillance helicopters and equipment as well as neglect or non-functioning of intelligence services. Furthermore, there is also a lack of technical or well-trained personnel to handle surveillance, detection, monitoring and scanning devices that are crucial for the successful monitoring of trafficking. The police, customs, immigration and other sister agencies that are saddled with the responsibility of blocking or intercepting the illicit drugs and arms are ill-motivated, as they lack sophisticated phones, computers, monitoring and tracking devices and even electricity, have no patrol ships and aircraft to make surveillance, and little fuel for their patrol vehicles to effectively monitor trafficking of any kind (United Nation Office on Drugs and Crime, 2007). The truth is that they are not encouraged to attend

conferences, seminars, or workshops on cutting-edge technology or even to go for further studies on new trends in border security management.

Ungoverned space or porosity of the African borders, encourages free movement of illicit without obstruction, thereby increasing transnational crimes, arms and drug trafficking. According to the African Union, Africa has over 160 international borders and the majority are porous. The countries with the highest number of porous borders for the trafficking of arms and drugs are Nigeria, Morocco, Angola, Ghana, Libya, Mali, Rwanda, Benin and South Sudan. In Nigeria for instance there are about 1, 479 illegal routes, with less than eighteen thousand (18,000) workforces, expected to man all the official and illegal borders, which makes the war against trafficking a mirage (Olomu, et'al, nd).

Money laundering by traffickers poses a serious challenge in the continent, traffickers use the continent to launder their illegitimate proceeds, through trade-based money laundering, which is defined as the “process of disguising the proceeds of crime and moving value through the use of trade transactions in an attempt to legitimise their illicit transaction. This malpractice makes financial transactions more difficult to track while creating additional income opportunities, giving traffickers additional financial strength for their criminal activities (UNODC, 2024). Most illicit arms and drugs inflow into the African countries is a result of the unchecked conspiracy between arms traffickers, drug barons and security personnel at the borders; where the traffickers bribe border officials at entry and exit points (Mashi & Bala, 2022). The “West African Cocaine Coast Scandal” was a case in mind, a conspiracy between corrupt security personnel, captains of industries, politicians and drug traffickers into the shipment of drugs and other illicit goods in the region.

Absence or lack of cordial inter-agency collaboration and communication between the relevant security agencies such as the immigration, customs, police and other para-military in the fight against trafficking and insecurity in Africa. Monitoring, and detection of drugs and arms cannot be a one-man affair; it must be a joint responsibility. Therefore, inter-agency rivalry constitutes an inherent challenge in policing trafficking in the continent. In 2007, for instance, cocaine worth \$2 billion was apprehended in Ghana, investigations carried out revealed that the cocaine was allowed to pass through the West African countries of Guinea,

Sierra Leone, and Liberia without being detected due to a lack of synergy between various security agencies in the respective countries.

### **Successes Recorded in the fight against SALWs and Drug Trafficking in Africa**

Despite the challenges faced in the fight against trafficking, the continent has recorded many successes.

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), reported that in December 2019, authorities in the port of Cotonou, Benin, seized 755 kg of cocaine in a container en route from Brazil to Niger via Burkina Faso. On the 9<sup>th</sup> June 2020, the Customs Division of the Ghana Revenue Authority, in collaboration with other security agencies, intercepted illicit drugs, including 40 blisters of 10 tabs 225mg of tramadol tablets (353.5g) from a Nigerian drug syndicate (Petetsi, 2020). On 22 May 2020, the Nigerian Customs Service in Lagos arrested cannabis from Ghana, valued at N1.2b, which is the largest single seizure on waterways in the history of the Nigerian Customs Service (Sahara Reporters, 2020). Similarly, the police in Lagos seized a 40ft container loaded with tramadol and codeine on 6th August the same year (Sunday, 2020).

An international police operation coordinated by INTERPOL targeting the movement of illicit arms and drugs in Africa has arrested 120 persons and the seizure of firearms, gold, drugs, fake medication and cash. An additional 78 arrests were made in connection with trafficking in illicit goods, with more than 45 tonnes seized, including more than 3 of fake medication, 1.5 tonnes of drugs (cannabis, amphetamines and opioids) and more than 10,000 litres of contraband petrol (INTERPOL, 2022). A joint security operation between elements of the Sûreté Nationale and Customs at the El Guergarat border, southern part of Dakhla, led to the seizure of 362 kg and 950 grams of cocaine predestined for Morocco from overseas (*Africanews*, 2022).

In November 2021, 20 kg of cocaine was seized at Kourémalé, the border station between Guinea and Mali, from a Malian national attempting to transport the drugs to Mali. On 7 November 2021, Malian law enforcement agencies seized 34 kg of cocaine concealed in two

handbags at Modibo Keita Senou International Airport, Bamako. On 24 February 2021, more than 1 ton of cocaine was seized in Cote d'Ivoire (UNODC, 2024).

In September 2022, the mobile unit of the customs office in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, seized 596 kg of cocaine on the road between Ouagadougou and Bobo Dioulasso. According to the subsequent investigation, the drugs were concealed in the floor of a vehicle en route from Guinea to Niger. A national from the Niger was arrested in the case (UNODC, 2024). In March 2023, Côte d'Ivoire seized 21 kg of cocaine concealed in food packages at a shipping agency in Abidjan. The investigation revealed that the drugs came from Kidal in Northern Mali and were destined for France (UNODC, 2024).

In 2024 the Nigeria Customs Service in Tin Can Island Lagos command, intercepted cocaine, arms and ammunition worth N4.3 billion from South Africa and Canada. The command also intercepted Colorado Indica weighing 32.5 kilogrammes. Other illegal imports included 65 packets of Colorado Indica weighing 32.5kg seized from a 40-foot container with number, UACU 534833/6 imported from Canada. "17 packets of a substance weighing 16.690kg confirmed to be cocaine, 151 packets Colorado Indica weighing 107 kg, one piece Gen2 Air Soft Pistol with serial number, 471908, the empty magazine"49 rounds of 7.62 mm live ammunition, 197 rounds of 9mm live ammunition, precursor chemicals for the manufacture of crystal methamphetamine, 8bags of tartaric acid weighing 25kg, 100kegs of unspecified substances seized from one 40 foot container with a number, MSCU 458177/0 imported from Durban, South Africa (Egole, 2024).

## **Conclusion and Way Forward**

Despite the international support and policy frameworks put in place by African heads of State and government in addressing the trafficking of SALWs, drugs and other criminal activities in the continent, the continent remains a transit and destination point for the trafficking of arms and drugs. Principally due to the porosity of the countries' borders, corruption, free-movement of goods and people across borders without restrictions, poor condition of service of the border security personnel and absence of cutting-edge technology to monitor, detect and apprehend criminals, which has created an atmosphere of violence,

insecurity, and other socio-economic and political challenges that characterised the continent. To address these challenges, there is a need to improve the condition of service of security personnel to discourage them from ill practices. The government should provide modern border scanning and surveillance devices for effective monitoring of formal and informal borders with additional manpower. African States should also come up with a strong policing union across the continent; that will be saddled with the responsibility of monitoring trafficking across the continent and there is the need to strengthen anti-money laundering policies in the continent as a remedy to the challenges of trafficking in the continent.

## References

- Africa News (2022). Morocco: 363 kg of cocaine from sub-Saharan Africa seized. <https://www.africanews.com/2024/01/02/morocco-363-kg-of-cocaine-from-sub-saharan-africa-seized/>
- Africa Defence Forum (2024). African security leaders seek ways to stop flow of illicit small arms and light weapons. <https://adf-mahazine.com/2024/03/africa-security-leaders-seek-ways-to-stop-flow-of-illicit-small-arms-and-light-weapons/>
- Ali, M. Y & Vendly, W.F (nd). Small Arms and Light Weapons: Africa Resource Guide for Religions for Peace. <https://www.rfp.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Small-Arms-and-Light-Weapons-Africa-English.pdf>
- Chelule, E. (2014). Proliferation of small arms and light weapons: challenge to development, peace and security in Africa. *Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 19 (5), 80-87.
- Cockayne, J & Williams, P. (2009). *The invisible tide: towards an international strategy to deal with drug trafficking through West Africa*. International Peace Institute. [www.ipinst.org](http://www.ipinst.org).
- Egole, A., (2024). Customs intercept cocaine, arms worth N4bn. <https://punchng.com/customs-intercept-cocaine-arms-worth-n4bn/>
- Financial Crime News (FCN). (2020). Drug trafficking in SSA. Retrieved: [www.finacialcrimenews.com/drug-trafficking-in-ssa-by-fcn](http://www.finacialcrimenews.com/drug-trafficking-in-ssa-by-fcn). Accessed 27 August 2020.
- Gberie, L. (2013). State officials and their involvement in drug trafficking in West Africa. <http://www.wacommissionondrugs.org>.

Gberie, L. (2016). Crime, Violence, and Politics: Drug Trafficking and Counternarcotics Policies in Mali and Guinea. Retrieved: October 25, 2020, [www.undocs.org/PBC/5/GUI/2](http://www.undocs.org/PBC/5/GUI/2).

GIABA Report, (2013). The nexus between small arms and light weapons and money laundering and terrorist financing in West Africa. *Institute of Governance and Social Research*.

INTERPOL, (2020). Our role to fight drug trafficking. [www.interpol.int/en/crimes/drug-trafficking/our-role-to-fight-drug-trafficking](http://www.interpol.int/en/crimes/drug-trafficking/our-role-to-fight-drug-trafficking).

INTERPOL, (2022). Arrests, thousands of seizures in African clampdown on firearms trafficking. <https://www.interpol.int/News-and-Events/News/2022/Arrests-thousands-of-seizures-in-African-clampdown-on-firearms-trafficking>.

Mashi, M.A., & Bala, B. (2022). Policing Contraband and Drugs Trafficking in African Borders and Ports. *Policing Criminality and Insurgency in Africa: Perspectives on the Changing Wave of Law Enforcement*, 307.

National Crime Agency (NCA), (2020). Drug trafficking. [www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/what-we-do/crime-threats/drug-trafficking](http://www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/what-we-do/crime-threats/drug-trafficking).

Naylor, R.T (2003). Towards a general theory of profit-driven crimes. *The British Journal of Criminology*, Vol. 43 (1), 81-101. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/23638918>.

Shaw, M & Mangan, F. (2014). *Illicit* trafficking and Libya's transition: profits and losses. (Report) United State Institute of Peace. [www.usip.org](http://www.usip.org).

Small Arms Survey, (2019). Weapons compass: mapping illicit small arms flows in Africa. <http://www.smallarmssurvey.org>.

United Nation Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). (2007). Cocaine trafficking in West Africa; the threat to stability and development (with special reference to Guinea-Bissau). [www.unodc.org](http://www.unodc.org).

United Nation Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). (2007). Cocaine trafficking in West Africa; the threat to stability and development (with special reference to Guinea-Bissau). [www.unodc.org](http://www.unodc.org).

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2024). Drug trafficking in the Sahel. [https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/tocta\\_sahel/TOCTA\\_Sahel\\_drugs.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/tocta_sahel/TOCTA_Sahel_drugs.pdf).



US Legal (2019). Contraband law and legal definition. [www.definitions.uslegal.com](http://www.definitions.uslegal.com).

Wyler, L.S & Cook, N. (2009). Illegal drug trade in Africa: trends and U.S. policy. [www.crs.gov](http://www.crs.gov).