

## Excess Arms in South Sudan

### Security Forces and Surplus Management

#### Introduction

South Sudan is saturated with weapons following the long civil war that resulted in its independence in 2011. The weapons that were once in the hands of the rebel forces now officially belong to the newly developed state defence and security forces. In comparable situations elsewhere, a by-product of restructuring such forces is a surplus of small arms, light weapons, and ammunition (Gobinet, 2011, p. 25). The demand for armed personnel and weaponry is clearly at its height during periods of conflict. As conflicts abate, however, many arms remain in circulation.

This study focuses only on small arms. In this context, 'surplus' refers to small arms that are deemed unnecessary for a state's national defence and internal security requirements (Bevan and Wilkinson, 2008, p. xxx). Such an accumulation of surplus firearms is of concern to the international community because it is potentially dangerous. Given that, by definition, a state has no need for surplus arsenal, these weapons are at risk of being illicitly diverted (Karp, 2010, p. 4). It is therefore imperative to manage surplus effectively.

This Brief examines the current management of surplus firearms in South Sudan's state security forces that are under the aegis of the Ministry of Interior: the South Sudanese National Police Service (SSNPS), the South Sudan Prison Service, Wildlife Protection Services, and the Fire



Image 1 **Stacked firearms observed at a South Sudan storage facility**

Brigade. The analysis does not include the Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA).

The Issue Brief offers a brief overview of the existing and proposed laws and regulations to address surplus and the management

arrangements in place at the end of 2013. These regulations and practices are compared to the internationally and regionally recognized standards for surplus management, which set out objectives that all security forces in South Sudan should strive to attain.

Key findings<sup>1</sup> include these:

- South Sudan currently has no surplus management policy. Although new legislation addresses many of the issues, it does not constitute a comprehensive national policy.
- South Sudanese security forces are undergoing significant structural changes that will affect the level of surplus.
- Inventory management is generally weak. There are no national records of stockpiles, and inventory audits are not regularly conducted.
- Despite the lack of formal policy guidelines, security forces do identify obsolete and unnecessary weapons. Selection criteria for these items are consistent and could be viewed as a first step in identifying surplus and serviceability.
- South Sudan has not systematically destroyed surplus or non-serviceable firearms since obtaining independence in 2011.

## About this study

Since South Sudan lacks a comprehensive policy on surplus firearms, this Issue Brief attempts to ascertain the de facto policy by examining existing legislation and stockpile management practices. Surplus management is broken down into its individual components—identification, management, and disposal. These components are established in the international and regional instruments and relevant Best Practice Guidelines, and provide a standard against which to compare South Sudan's practices.

The United Nations Programme of Action (PoA)<sup>2</sup> and the Nairobi Protocol<sup>3</sup> provide a consistent policy framework for South Sudan to follow, as well as general policy recommendations regarding surplus. In relation to the management of surplus small arms, this Brief draws upon two prominent guidelines: the International Small Arms Control Standards

(ISACS) and the Regional Centre on Small Arms in the Great Lakes Region, the Horn of Africa and Bordering States (RECSA) Best Practice Guide. Taken together the guidelines represent a comprehensive framework.

This Issue Brief describes the stockpile management practices observed during several visits to the armouries of each of the four South Sudanese security forces. A checklist outlining the basic requirements of Physical Security and Stockpile Management (PSSM) systems was used to ensure that the observations at each site followed a consistent pattern. The checklist included examining the record-keeping procedures, security features, and infrastructure used for storing small arms. Twelve site visits were made in May and August 2012—eight in Warrap and four in Jonglei states, including three armouries for each service. Each visit entailed interviews with the site commander and on-site armourers as well as tours of the facilities and a chance to observe management procedures. The Bureau for Community Security and Small Arms Control (BCSSAC), based in the South Sudanese Ministry of Interior, facilitated and participated in each site visit.

## The security forces in the Ministry of Interior

This study examines the security forces that come under the aegis of the Ministry of Interior: the SSNPS, the South Sudan Prison Service, Wildlife Protection Services, and the Fire Brigade. Each service was set up following the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in 2005, so their structures are still in their infancy (GoSS, 2011a, p. 107) and the country's national security framework is still being developed (Snowden, 2012, p. 14). Over the past few years, the government has developed legislation to govern each of these security forces, a process that is still underway.<sup>4</sup>

Technically, the list of parties providing security could include the SPLA, whose mandate permits it to

assist in areas affected by internal security concerns (Barltrop, 2008, p. 35).<sup>5</sup> In practice, the SPLA continues to intervene in certain cases.<sup>6</sup> The reason to exclude the SPLA from this Brief is that it is organized as a defence force and its mandate is therefore significantly different from those of the four security forces examined here. In addition, officials at the BCS-SAC, within the Ministry of Interior, facilitated much of the primary research for this Issue Brief while it proved impossible to obtain similar access to the SPLA.

## *South Sudan National Police Services (SSNPS)*

The SSNPS is primarily responsible for ensuring internal security and maintaining law and order (GoSS, 2011a, p. 117). Its role extends from national and community policing efforts to protecting nomadic cattle camps (GoSS, 2011a, p. 117). By 20 June 2013, the SSNPS had 46,427 registered officers (UNSC, 2013a, p. 7), although it is expected that its size will decline. Pre-independence projections anticipated employing a force of 36,000 officers (Snowden, 2012, p. 30).<sup>7</sup> It is not clear whether the projected needs still apply.

## *Prison Service*

The South Sudan Prison Service is responsible for providing 'secure and humane' incarceration at the national, state, and county levels (GoSS, 2011a, p. 117). The Prison Service is the second largest security entity falling under the Ministry of Interior (Small Arms Survey, 2012, p. 4). South Sudan operates 38 prisons and employs a total of 22,000 staff (Snowden, 2012, p. 36; HRW, 2012, p. 13). South Sudan will probably need to cut the staff since the current guard-to-prisoner ratio is more than three times higher than in neighbouring countries (Snowden, 2012, p. 36). If it were to observe regional norms, South Sudan would employ between 7,000 and 12,000 prison staff (Snowden, 2012, p. 36).

## Fire Brigade

With 4,000 officers, the Fire Brigade is the smallest and perhaps the least conventional of the Ministry of Interior's security forces (Small Arms Survey, 2012, p. 4). It has the mandate of a conventional fire-fighting body, but its activities also extend to security provision (GoSS, 2011a, p. 118). First, in fire-fighting operations certain officers may be armed in order to secure the site.<sup>8</sup> In addition, the Fire Brigade serves as a reserve security force that can be called upon to support the SPLA in responding to defence and security threats.<sup>9</sup>

## Wildlife Protection Services

The mandate of the Wildlife Protection Services includes protecting wildlife and promoting cultural tourism.<sup>10</sup> The Services are often used to support local SSNPS in their general policing activities (Snowden, 2012, p. 38). Some 14,000 wildlife officers manage four national parks and 15 nature reserves (Snowden, 2012, p. 37).

## International instruments and best practices

South Sudan has formally committed itself to removing surplus small arms and light weapons from its state holdings. This commitment was made by virtue of the country's participation in two international instruments, the PoA and the Nairobi Protocol, both of which include surplus as part of their multi-faceted approach to reducing arms proliferation.

With regard to surplus, the PoA says that states should:

*regularly review ... the stocks of small arms and light weapons held by armed forces, police and other authorized bodies and ... ensure that such stocks declared by competent national authorities to be surplus to requirements are clearly identified, that programmes for the responsible disposal, preferably through destruction, of such stocks are established and implemented*



Image 2 A general ledger recording operational firearms

*and that such stocks are adequately safeguarded until disposal.*  
(UNGA, 2001, Art. 2. para. 18).

As a signatory to the Nairobi Protocol, South Sudan is legally bound to:

*(a) develop and implement ... national programmes for the identification of surplus, obsolete and seized stocks of small arms and light weapons in possession of the state;*

*(b) ensure that small arms and light weapons rendered surplus, redundant or obsolete through the implementation of a peace process, the re-equipment or reorganisation of armed forces and/or other state bodies are securely stored, destroyed or disposed of in a way that prevents them from entering the illicit market or flowing into regions in conflict or any other destination that is not fully consistent with agreed criteria for restraint.*  
(Nairobi Protocol, 2004, Art. 8)

As these excerpts illustrate, the PoA and Nairobi Protocol are consistent in requiring states to identify and

declare surplus small arms and light weapons in their holdings, after which they are to be stored securely prior to their disposal. The PoA states that destruction is the preferable method of disposal.

Technical guidelines have also been developed to help governments implement the instruments relating to the range of activities in small arms control. The two directly relevant to South Sudan are the ISACS and the RECSA Best Practice Guidelines for implementing the Nairobi Protocol (UNCASA, 2012; RECSA, 2005). The United Nations developed the ISACS to assist with the implementation of the PoA, while RECSA developed its own guidelines to support member states. Although sovereign states may design their own solutions, they are encouraged to refer to these technical guidelines in developing their own programmes or policies.

The recommendations in the international instruments and guidelines are also quite similar. Table 1 portrays the consensus on surplus-related activities, which generally fall into three categories, namely identification, safe storage, and disposal.

Table 1 Recommendations for surplus small arms management

Activity	Instrument		Sub-categories	Guideline	
	UN PoA	NBO Protocol		ISACS <sup>a</sup>	Nairobi Protocol BP <sup>b</sup>
1. Identification	✓	✓	1.1 National strategy	✓	✓
			1.2 National Inventory	✓	✓
			1.3 Review holdings	✓	✓
2. Safe storage	✓	✓	2.1 Declare as surplus	✓	
			2.2 Record as surplus	✓	✓ <sup>b</sup>
			2.3 Remove from service	✓	
			2.4 Store separately	✓	✓ <sup>c</sup>
3. Disposal	✓	✓	3. Disposal	✓	✓
3.a Destruction preferred	✓		3.a Destruction preferred	✓	✓ <sup>d</sup>

Notes:

<sup>a</sup> UNCASA, 2012, 05.20 para. 20

<sup>b</sup> The Nairobi Protocol Best Practice Guidelines do not specifically mention surplus in the inventories, but do require all firearms, including destroyed firearms, to be recorded. Nairobi Protocol, 2004, 1.2.3 b iii

<sup>c</sup> Nairobi Protocol, 2004, 1.4.1 b iii

<sup>d</sup> Nairobi Protocol, 2004, 1.4.1 c

The identification of surplus obliges states to have strategic plans detailing the number of weapons defence and security forces need to meet their objectives, a national inventory of all the current holdings, and a policy requiring regular audits of the inventory. This makes it possible for states to assess their requirements and thus identify surplus.

According to ISACS, surplus should be declared and recorded in the national inventory. The items must be safely and securely stored until their eventual disposal. Although the Nairobi Protocol does not indicate a preferred destruction method, the RECSA Best Practice Guidelines set out the advantages and disadvantages of the current firearm-destruction technologies.

## Surplus Policies for South Sudanese Security Forces

A national policy on surplus generally requires a strategy to determine armament needs, a management infrastructure that makes it possible to identify surplus and keep it safe, and a disposal plan.

## National strategy to identify surplus

The identification of surplus depends on the government having a thorough understanding of what the security forces require and for them to keep detailed information on current holdings. This calls for a strategy to define the respective organizational structures and a process to monitor and assess their assets. A security strategy should ‘provide the basic planning assumptions that determine ... policing and security tasks, the operational concepts and hence the size, organizational structure and equipment requirements of the security forces’ (UNODA, 2011, 19.2). The strategy defines the size, structure, and equipment requirements of the security forces within a set budget (OSCE, 2003, p. 6),<sup>11</sup> on the basis of which it is possible to calculate the types and quantities of weapons and ammunition the security forces need. (See Box 1 for sample calculations.) Moreover, stockpile levels should be ‘necessary, reasonable and justifiable’ (UNCASA, 2012, 12.2).

South Sudan produced several strategic documents related to

national security prior to obtaining independence. Some are accessible; others remain confidential. Of the accessible early security strategies and policies,<sup>12</sup> none defined the size, structure, or armament needs for each security force. For instance, the 2008 National Security Strategy established the security goals of the respective professional organizations, but did not address the specific requirements (The SPLA General Officers SSG, 2008, p. 14). Similarly, the South Sudan Development Plan 2011–2013 establishes a general framework for security provision rather than presenting a more strategic outline.<sup>13</sup> The one document to establish the security force and armament size requirements was the Civil Security Transformation Action Plan (Snowden, 2012, p. 30). This confidential document reportedly set the SSNPS force target at 36,000 officers (Snowden, 2012, pp. 30 & 43), although it is unclear whether this figure remains the current target.

While the limited access to confidential documents prevents a fuller analysis of existing strategies, it is possible to speculate about the early conception of small arms requirements based on enacted legislation. Armament levels for the SSNPS, Wildlife Protection Services, and Fire Brigade are likely to be high compared to those of state security forces in less conflict-ridden nations. The SSNPS and Wildlife Protection Services are governed by Acts that dictate that each security force can serve as a reserve or auxiliary force of the SPLA (GoSSb, 2009b, 14.2-3; GoSS, 2011b, 7.2).<sup>14</sup> The Fire Brigade lacks this legislative mandate, but was mobilized as recently as 2012 to respond to fighting in Heglig.<sup>15</sup> If a future national security strategy were to maintain this provision, the security forces would probably require more arms than do other countries.

More recent national security plans are underway. In 2012, the Ministry of National Security spearheaded an effort to develop a new national security architecture.

It is intended that this should include a national security policy and strategic plans to cover national, state, and local needs (ISSAT, 2013, p. 4). The plan was developed by the National Security Council, with technical support from UNMISS and other international advisors (ISSAT, 2013, p. 4; UNSC, 2013a, p. 12). A draft National Security Policy was drawn up in September 2013 (UNSC, 2013b, p. 12) and awaits the approval of the Council of Ministers and the National Legislative Assembly.

Given that the draft National Security Policy is confidential, it is unclear how far it relates to the identification of surplus, but since UNMISS provided technical advice to the drafting committee, it is likely to include strategic features related to surplus identification. Part of the UNMISS mandate includes counseling on small arms proliferation.<sup>16</sup> It can therefore be assumed that its advice would be consistent with the PoA and ISACS guidelines.

There is further evidence of likely strategic thinking on surplus in the draft small arms legislation and regulations, which also received technical support from UNMISS and several international advisers. According to the draft Small Arms and Light Weapons Control Act, 2012, the GoSS must establish a Joint Planning and Forecasting Committee (GoSS, 2012, section 35(2)). This Committee will be responsible for determining surplus small arms and light weapons, based on the requirements established by the National Security Council. A draft set of regulations for the Small Arms Control Bill states that the Joint Planning and Forecasting Committee will oversee the annual audit, determine surplus, and make proposals to the National Security Council (GoSS, 2013).<sup>17</sup> If the proposed Bill and Regulations are consistent with the National Security Plan—and assuming they are approved—South Sudan should have the necessary framework for identifying surplus.

### Box 1 Estimating surplus using the ISACS method

South Sudan's National Security Council can use the ISACS methods to establish stockpile requirements in order to assess their armament needs. The sample calculation presented here demonstrates the value of a normative procedure for estimating the necessary stockpile holdings. It uses the best open-source data available on South Sudan. While the following results are imprecise, they are nevertheless illustrative.

The ISACS method calculates the total required number of serviceable small arms (operational and reserve) using the **force population** (i.e. number of personnel) and a state-determined **multiplier** (or enhancement factor) (UNCASA, 2012, Annex B). The multiplier ensures that training and reserve weapons are included in the calculations of holdings needs (UNCASA, 2012, Annex B). It considers variables such as the proportion of each force that is armed and the percentage of firearms that are held in reserve in order to replace missing or damaged items. The multiplier rate varies from one country to another, and there is no consensus ratio.<sup>18</sup>

#### Force population x multiplier = Firearms stockpile requirements

Table 2 illustrates the **projected firearms holdings requirements**. The projected totals are based on speculated future force sizes, as reported. In order to determine adequate future holdings, a standardized multiplier for firearms-to-security force member is used. The multipliers in this example are the ratios recommended by UNLIREC (UNLIREC, 2012, p. 2). The projected holding requirements are calculated by multiplying the strength by the ratios.

Table 2 Projected firearm holdings requirements

Security force	Projected personnel total	Multiplier <sup>a</sup>		Projected holdings requirements	
		(Low)	(High)	(Low)	(High)
SSNPS	36,000 <sup>b</sup>	1:0.3	1:1.20	10,800	43,200
Prison	12,000 <sup>c</sup>	1:0.3	1:1.20	3,600	14,400
Fire Brigade	4,000	1:0.3	1:1.20	1,200	4,800
Wildlife Protection	14,000	1:0.3	1:1.20	4,200	16,800

<sup>a</sup> For this example, UNLIREC recommended multiplier ratios are used (UNLIREC, 2012, p. 2).

<sup>b</sup> Snowden, 2012, p. 30.

<sup>c</sup> The estimate is based on an analysis in a previous Small Arms Survey publication suggesting that there are 10,000–15,000 too many officers for the number of prisons in operation. The future force estimate subtracted 10,000 officers from the current force (Snowden, 2012, p. 36).

By comparing these estimated needs with current holdings, it is possible to estimate surplus. Subtracting the projected requirements from the total current holdings indicates the discrepancies between current holdings and projected needs.

#### Total current holdings - projected holdings requirements = discrepancies between current holdings and projected needs

Table 3 Discrepancies: Surpluses and shortages

Security force	Estimated current holdings <sup>a</sup>	Projected requirements (from Table 2)	Discrepancies
SSNPS	50,000	10,800-43,200	6,800-39,200
Prison	6,000	3,600-14,400	2,400 - Shortage 8,400
Fire Brigade	2,000	1,200-4,800	800 - Shortage 2,800
Wildlife Protection	9,000	4,200-16,800	4,800 - Shortage 7,800

<sup>a</sup> Current holdings come from Small Arms Survey, 2012, p. 4. Note: All South Sudanese security forces use Kalashnikov-pattern rifles as their standard service rifle. All estimated holdings are, for purposes of this calculation, assumed to be Kalashnikov-pattern rifles.

Table 3 illustrates the potential firearms surplus or shortage based on the estimated current holdings and future requirements (see Table 2). The estimates indicate that the security forces' holdings do not match their potential needs. Depending on the multiplier used, each security force potentially possesses significant surplus. However, if higher multipliers are used, the Fire Brigade, Prisons and Wildlife Protection services could conceivably have an armament shortfall.

As stated earlier, these calculations are merely examples to illustrate the ISACS method for identifying surplus small arms, and as such do not constitute recommendations.

## Existing National Legislation and Regulations pertaining to Surplus Management and Disposal

States need to formalize their surplus management and disposal policy in national legislation and regulations: it is impossible to harmonize practices unless there are comprehensive national regulations (Anders, 2009, p. 5). According to the PoA, the provisions should permit identification of surplus by 'competent national authorities', secure storage protocols, and timely disposal plans, preferably via destruction (UNGA, 2001, art. 2. para. 18). By establishing laws and regulations on surplus management, a state ensures that once stocks are identified as surplus, they are monitored continuously and handled consistently. The laws and regulations also authorize agents to dispose of certain assets.

In view of the lack of comprehensive legislation on surplus management,<sup>19</sup> each of South Sudan's security forces are governed by a set of acts and regulations that provide only a few indirect rules on surplus management.

The Police Act 2009, for example, provides little guidance on surplus management. Its sole contribution assigns personal responsibility to those issued with or responsible for managing weapons (GoSS, 2009b, arts. 44(1-2)). This responsibility covers the storage facility and contents (art. 44(2)). Failure to keep these items safe is a criminal offence (art. 66(1)), as is disposing of state property (including weapons) without proper authorization (art. 68). The Acts covering the other security forces are similarly vague regarding surplus. The Prisons Service Act 2011 and the Wildlife Act 2011 also criminalize the disposal of a weapon without proper justification (GoSS, 2011c, art. 52 and GoSS, 2011b, art. 50).

The Southern Sudan Police Service Regulations 2010 (SSNPS Regulations) lay some foundations for surplus management, including procedures for handling 'excess'. For instance, they include basic storage requirements (such as storing ammunition and weapons separately) (GoSS, 2010, arts. 55-56), although none of the provisions is specific to storing excess or surplus.

The SSNPS Regulations also contain substantive measures conducive to monitoring the quality and condition of arms. If followed, these regulations could offer SSNPS officials the information needed to identify non-serviceable weapons and to calculate surplus. According to the regulations, each police headquarters and unit under its supervision is to maintain a 'gross' registry of every arm received, issued, and remaining in its holdings (GoSS, 2010, art. 52a). The registry should include identification information pertaining to each firearm and its parts (bolt, barrel, and 'metallic' number), as well as to the officer allocated and the unit (GoSS, 2010, art. 52d). The condition of the equipment should be categorized as well as 'Good', 'Fair', or 'Damaged' (GoSS, 2010, art. 47a). The unit head then recommends that all 'Damaged' items be condemned (GoSS, 2010, art. 54a). Once referred for 'condemnation', the Arms Unit must inspect the weapon to determine if repairs or 'condemnation' is necessary (GoSS, 2010, art. 54c). It is unclear whether the 'condemned'



Image 3 A storage container with operational weapons on one side, and obsolete and surplus weapons on the other



Image 4 **Markings on a Wildlife Services rifle**

status then requires destruction or other actions to be taken.

Periodic stocktaking at the unit level and yearly audits by state and national authorities would generate accurate registration at the national, state, and local levels (GoSS, 2010, arts. 59-60). Storekeepers must report all items deemed as excess—implicitly including small arms—to the Inspector General of Police (IGP) for inclusion in its annual stock-taking report (GoSS, 2010, art. 51c).

No equivalent regulations were found relating to the Wildlife Protection, Prisons and Fire Brigade services.

### **New proposed legislation: The Small Arms and Light Weapons Control Bill (2012)**

The Government of South Sudan (GoSS) is considering a more comprehensive national framework for small arms control. At the time of writing, legislation was awaiting parliamentary approval that would ‘address the threats posed by illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons to stability’ by controlling civilian possession and tightening controls on state-

owned small arms and light weapons (GoSS, 2012, ch. 1, point 3). The Small Arms and Light Weapons Control Bill 2012<sup>20</sup> (hereafter, ‘the Small Arms Bill’) provides a broad legislative framework on small arms that defines issues such as possession (ch. 3), licensing (ch. 9), and transfers (ch. 10). It also sets out rules for the marking (ch. 4), and collection and disposal of small arms (ch. 13).

The text of the Small Arms Bill makes several direct or indirect references to surplus. It addresses several key requirements for effective surplus management outlined in the PoA, and provides much of the basic legal framework from which to derive further regulations.

First, the Bill recognizes the need for state agencies to identify surplus stocks. According to the Bill, the state must establish strategic plans in order to forecast future firearms needs (GoSS, 2012, ch. 5, part 1, s. 35). Special panels would determine the needs, capacities, and surplus on behalf of the state. New small arms and light weapons acquisitions must comply with this framework and procurement must include disposal strategies for

the replaced stocks (ch. 5, part 1, s. 36, para. b (i)). Such a provision would prevent unnecessary stockpiles.

The Small Arms Bill also stipulates that all state agencies and local governments must conduct annual ‘physical stocktaking’ (GoSS, 2012, ch. 5, part 1, s. 34, para. 1), which would generate a comprehensive inventory. These assessments are essential in order to identify surplus. The Small Arms Bill also obliges all state security forces to register and enter their holdings in a Central Small Arms and Light Weapons Database (ch. 5, part 1, s. 34, para. 3). The Bill stipulates that identification information should be recorded for all items,<sup>21</sup> although it omits two key elements—serviceability and condition are not mentioned in relation to record-keeping or stocktaking. These elements are critical to national authorities’ ability to track the number of operable service items.

Perhaps the Bill’s most significant contribution is its reference to destroying all surpluses and items deemed obsolete (GoSS, 2012, ch. 5, part 1, s. 34, para. 7). Many governments struggle to opt for the disposal of surplus, particularly if the items have

potential resale value (King and Diaz, 2011, p. 21). Should the Bill be approved, the security forces would have the legal grounds to destroy selected weapons.

The management of stockpiles of small arms is discussed in the Small Arms Bill, but there is no specific requirement concerning surplus management, such as storing surplus separately. The only instructions following the identification of surplus are that it should be destroyed. However, as is evident with ISACS, there are many steps between identification and destruction (i.e. declaring weapons as surplus, removing them from services, and storing them separately) (UNCASA, 2012, section 12.1).

The Small Arms Bill was awaiting approval at the end of 2013, and parliament may either require changes or reject it outright. If approved, the drafted Small Arms and Light Weapons Control Regulations, 2013 and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) must follow in order to render the new law operational.<sup>22</sup>

## Stockpile Management Practices observed

The following analysis is based on the observations made during the 12 armoury visits undertaken in 2012, plus interviews conducted in 2012 and 2013 with site staff and representatives of security forces from headquarters in Juba.

### Record-keeping and inventory management

As at mid-2013, national holdings data were incomplete, which means there was no full national stockpile inventory. National authorities lacked the records needed to determine how many firearms were in the possession of national, state, or local security forces.<sup>23</sup>

There was, however, an inventory of recently imported firearms. In 2010, the Ministry of Interior imported 40,500 Russian-manufactured AKMs from Ukraine (Small Arms Survey, 2012, p. 4). More than 30,000 were

designated for the SSNPS and the others were distributed among the security services coming under the aegis of the Ministry of Interior. Before being issued, each firearm was marked with the name of its destined state and security force (for example, firearms designated for the Police Head Quarters in Juba would be marked with SSPS HQ – see Image 5) (Bevan and King, 2013, p. 19). Records for each firearm were registered at the time of marking. The manufacturer's serial number plus the import markings were recorded for every firearm.<sup>24</sup> These records were listed in a Microsoft Word document (Bevan and King, 2013, p. 28), a printed copy of which was kept at the national level and in each state.

These records are incomplete, however, and do not constitute a national inventory. Previous holdings (those possessed by the security forces before the 2010 imports) are not registered in a national database and these older items remain scattered throughout the security forces' armouries across the country. It was thought that

Image 5 Markings on a South Sudan National Police Service (SSNPS, formerly SSPS) rifle







Image 6 **Unrecorded firearms at a state security forces storage facility**

there were more detailed data held at the state level,<sup>25</sup> but this was not observed in practice.

In fact, evidence suggests that local inventory management is no more thorough than it was at the national level. The general ledgers observed at the armouries visited in Jonglei and Warrap included only the 2010 imports (identifiable because of the markings). None of armouries included records of older firearm stocks, despite the fact that these weapons were observed in each storage facility. Local records also did not indicate a status or a condition<sup>26</sup> (see Image 7a).

In addition, several other shortcomings may well hinder the implementation of surplus management. First, the failure to record a firearm's condition, designation, and specific location would limit the data available to the National Security Council, which is necessary for calculating surplus. Records would not indicate the serviceability of a firearm, thereby distorting the total number of functioning weapons. This would also prevent items being recorded as identified surplus, as is recommended (UNCASA,

2012, section 12.1). The second and perhaps more significant flaw is that the national records are out of date. Since there were no efforts to audit or monitor the data, firearms that went missing or were subsequently damaged went unrecorded. National authorities know how many of the 40,500 firearms were given to states and security forces, but have no means of knowing what remains and still functions.

The United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) is working with national security officials to rectify the inventory-management system. To this end, UNMISS has purchased new marking machines and record-keeping software. Over the coming years, South Sudan plans to mark all weapons in its stockpiles and to record the information in national inventories.<sup>27</sup> This is part of a broader initiative to improve stockpile management.

### Ad hoc identification

Despite poor inventory management, the security forces do identify and put aside certain weapons and munitions

in their armouries. While the practice is subtle, it was evident at every armoury visited. Daily-issue service items are stored together in accessible lines, propped up against a wall, or occasionally on a rack (see Image 7a). All other weapons are stacked in distinct and separate piles, or are less accessible and less orderly (see Images 7b and 7c). The small arms and ordnance in the latter grouping lacks a particular purpose. Rather, for various reasons, these items are considered unnecessary for the foreseeable future and so are separated from operational arms and ammunition. Combined, this could represent the beginning of surplus identification.

The following patterns of identification are clearly recognizable:

#### *Obsolete stocks (previous holdings and non-functioning rifles)*

In each armoury visited in South Sudan, the largest 'piling' of weapons consisted of Kalashnikov-pattern rifles no longer in use. This collection mainly comprised former operational rifles recently replaced by the 2010 imported Kalashnikov-pattern rifles.<sup>28</sup>

Images 7 **Sorting of operational and obsolete or surplus firearms**



Image 7a) Operational firearms on racks



Image 7b) Typical grouping of different weapons



Image 7c) Less accessible and unrecorded firearms

The armoury visits indicate that the new imports were the primary weapon issued to officers, an observation confirmed in interviews.<sup>29</sup> Non-serviceable rifles were also found in these piles. Most of the non-functioning rifles are relics of the civil war, although a few are from the 2010 imports.<sup>30</sup> Most appear to have been heavily used, showing signs of wear and tear and rust.

### *Military weapons and munitions unsuitable for security forces*

Military-style ordnance is frequently found in the storage facilities of security forces and comprises mostly remnants from war. These are weapons and munitions designed for use by defence forces. Some were seized from civilians or former SPLA members, who subsequently joined the police. Others are Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) items left in former SAF armouries that became the property of South Sudan after the CPA.<sup>31</sup> During the research, several rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs), RPG rounds, and

mortar tubes were identified in storage units as well as rifles from security forces. These items were designed for military use and are generally considered inappropriate for professional internal security purposes.

### *Rifles requiring NATO-standard ammunition*

Security force armouries frequently possess a small number of rifles requiring NATO-standard ammunition, such as the German-designed Heckler and Koch G3. Most of these are said to have once belonged to the SAF and it is said that the SPLA seized them during the war, together with other weapons (Heyman, 2000, p. 680).<sup>32</sup>

Despite their potential use, these weapons appear to have been of little value to the SPLA during the war. There are two explanations for this. First, some officers viewed the Kalashnikov as superior.<sup>33</sup> The second relates to ammunition requirements. Ammunition procurement in South Sudan, both pre- and post-CPA, focused on supplying the 7.62 x 39 mm round

needed for the Kalashnikov. Ammunition for a G3 (7.62 x 51 mm NATO) rifle would call for additional procurement and the associated logistical considerations. Given that no NATO-standard ammunition was found in the security services' armouries, procuring non-Warsaw Pact standard ammunition does not appear to have been a priority.<sup>34</sup>

### *Rifles obtained through disarmament*

Several armouries store firearms collected during civilian disarmament campaigns. Although these weapons are not technically owned by the state, the security forces are responsible for their management.<sup>35</sup>

### **Declaring, storing, and disposing of surplus**

Once surplus is identified, the management process begins. ISACS recommends that surplus pass through three basic management steps: declared, stored separately, and then disposed of permanently (UNCASA, 2012, section 12.1).

Image 8a and 8b **Military material and NATO-standard items found in a store**



### *Declaring items as surplus*

There is no indication that any firearm in South Sudan has been declared surplus or obsolete. Indeed, the notion of excessive firearms is not widely accepted. The main reason for this appears to be concern about immediate and future security threats. When asked about removing the excess weapons from the stores, several officers explained that the guns may well be needed in the future.<sup>36</sup> A return to conflict with Sudan is still viewed by many people possible, as the flare-up in spring 2012 indicates. Dissident militias operating in Jonglei, South Kordofan, and Upper Nile have further eroded the general perception of security.<sup>37</sup> As a result, any functioning firearm is deemed potentially valuable.

### *Storing surplus items*

Removing surplus from service stockpiles is a practical but also a

symbolic step. The process reiterates that these items are no longer part of the security forces' arsenal and further protects them against accidental or unintentional use.

The removal of surplus items presupposes the availability of a second storage space. Such a facility needs to meet the security and safety standards required for other service weapons.

In South Sudan, security forces generally lack appropriate storage infrastructure (Kahl, 2011, p. 2). Most existing facilities are basic and possibly inadequate for storing their primary small arms (see Image 9). As storage infrastructure is limited, many units are also filled with non-weaponry items such as food and furniture (see Image 10). Without additional facilities, the most sensible option is to maintain items in the most secure available storage area.

This typically demands that items be kept in the primary storage.

Of the 12 sites visited, only one possessed an adequate secondary storage unit, which was used to store obsolete and non-operational firearms and ammunition. According to the armoury manager, all of the items housed were either deemed non-functioning (although not necessarily non-serviceable, as some were thought to be salvageable) or were collected during the civilian disarmament campaign. Other units kept non-serviceable items grouped together in the same storage area as operational weapons.

Developing additional permanent arms storage facilities is a long-term goal of the Ministry of Interior. In the short term, security forces could employ certain low-cost solutions used in other countries. One option would be to remove the bolt and bolt carrier from each excess firearm.<sup>38</sup> Storing the bolt carriers requires significantly less space, making this an easier logistical proposition for most security forces. The part is easily removable and renders the firearm unusable. This action reduces the appeal of the weapon and should reduce the threat of leakage or theft.

### *Disposing of surplus items*

Firearms are not permanently disposed of in South Sudan. To date, the state has not authorized surplus exports, at least not officially,<sup>39</sup> and firearms are not systematically destroyed. For instance, weapons collected by the SPLA during the various Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) campaigns have often been transferred to the capital, but then linger in storage containers at the headquarters of the SPLA and SSNPS.<sup>40</sup> Indeed, the default long-term solution for surplus items remains indefinite storage.

It is unclear which body is entitled to authorize the destruction of security force weapons. The only existing policies regarding weapons destruction strictly prohibit anyone from the

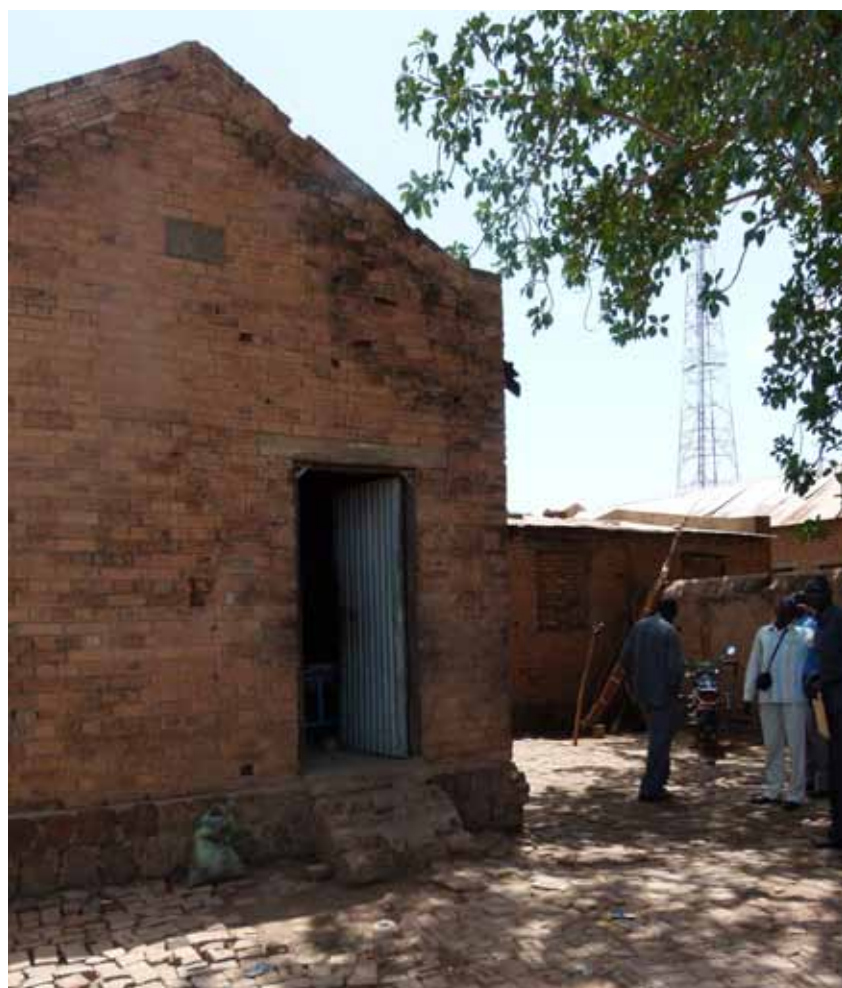


Image 9 Type of building used for storage outside of state capitals

Image 10 Firearms and non-weaponry items found in a storage site



security forces to destroy 'state property' (GoSS, 2011b, chap. 8, s. 50; GoSS, 2011c, chap. 7, s. 52).

Even if they had the mandate to do so, South Sudan's defence and security forces appear to lack the capacity to destroy weapons systematically. This lack of capacity is evident in the operations to rid South Sudan of explosive remnants of war (ERW), unexploded ordnance (UXOs), and landmines. The United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are responsible for destroying munitions because South Sudan has lacked the capacity to do so (Landmine and Cluster Munitions Monitor, 2012). The same situation appears to apply to the firearms of the security services. All forces currently lack both dedicated firearms-destruction equipment, and any plan to dispose of the weapons.<sup>41</sup>

## Conclusion

South Sudan's security forces currently lack the necessary policy and practices

to manage surplus arms. While there is a mixture of laws, regulations, and practices that touch on various aspects of surplus management, no national policy exists that would enable its comprehensive management. The current conditions prohibit security forces from being able to identify, manage, and destroy surplus small arms.

Recent developments suggest, however, that South Sudanese security forces could have greater capacity to manage surplus in the near future. New strategic planning could make it possible for the government to determine its need and subsequently identify surplus. If approved, the proposed legislation and regulations will establish much of the necessary framework to manage and dispose of surplus. Certain assistance projects currently underway, such as the UNMISS marking and record-keeping project, can address some of the recognized shortcomings in stockpile management.

The eventual outcome of these efforts has yet to be determined.

While the general framework for surplus management is developed, legislators, the National Security Council and the armed forces coming under the aegis of the Ministry of Interior will all need to take action. Strategies, laws, and regulations await approval, and the relevant tasks they set out will need to become operational. Funding limitations will undoubtedly constrain the Ministry of Interior's efforts to enact reform, so low-cost, temporary solutions should be explored whenever possible (see; Kahl, 2012; King and Diaz, 2011). Until all of this takes place, however, South Sudan will be unable to manage its surplus in a sustainable manner.

## Notes

- 1 Research for this Issue Brief was completed before the hostilities that broke out in mid-December 2013. The crisis was continuing at the time of printing (March 2014). The findings do not therefore address the ramifications of that violence.
- 2 United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit

- Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects.
- 3 The Nairobi Protocol for the Prevention, Control and Reduction of Small Arms and Light Weapons in the Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa.
  - 4 See: Prisons Act 2011 (GoSS, 2011c), Wildlife Act 2011 (GoSS, 2011b), Police Act 2009 (GoSS, 2009b), and SSNPS Regulations 2010 (GoSS, 2010).
  - 5 According to HSBA (2009, p. 3), the 2008 Defence White Paper provides this mandate (Small Arms Survey 2009, p.3).
  - 6 In 2013, the SPLA has intervened following cattle raids in at least six South Sudanese states: Western Equatoria (*Sudan Tribune*, 2013b), Jonglei (UNMISS, 2013), Warrap (G. Mayom, 2013), Eastern Equatoria (*Sudan Tribune*, 2013a), and Upper Nile (J. Mayom, 2013).
  - 7 The future staff estimate is based on the confidential South Sudanese *Civil Security Transformation Action Plan* as reported by Snowden (2012, p. 30).
  - 8 Author's interview with a Fire Brigade official, Juba, 22 August 2012.
  - 9 Author's interview with Fire Brigade official, Juba, 22 August 2012.
  - 10 Taken from the GoSS Ministry of Wildlife, Conservation, and Tourism website. <http://www.goss-online.org/magnoliaPublic/en/about/tourism.html>
  - 11 The Nairobi Protocol Best Practice Guidelines recommends similar analysis with which to determine the needs of a particular force (RECSA, 2005, 1.3.1 Managing Surplus, p. 15).
  - 12 It is worth noting that in 2011 the Ministry of National Security submitted the *White Paper on South Sudan's National Security Architecture* to parliament (Mwanika, 2012, p. 20). This document is confidential, which precludes an assessment of its significance in relation to surplus (Snowden, 2012, pp. 15 & 43). It is, however, considered to be a major policy document (Mwanika, 2012, p. 21).
  - 13 See Mwanika, 2012, p. 21.
  - 14 The Prison Service Act 2011 does not include this measure (GoSS, 2011c).
  - 15 Author's interview with a Fire Brigade official, Juba, 22 August 2012.
  - 16 <http://unmiss.unmissions.org/Default.aspx?tabid=5442&language=en-US>
  - 17 The draft set of regulations was observed on 16 December 2013.
  - 18 United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (UNLIREC) recommends using a multiplier of between 0.3 and 1.2 for state security forces, depending on the security threats to the given state and its level of police armament (UNLIREC, 2012, p. 2). UNLIREC describes these as 'justifiable police ratios of individuals to firearms.' Different ratios do exist. According to a 2006 Small Arms Survey estimate, the average police-to-firearm ratio is 1:1.5 (Small Arms Survey, 2006, p. 41). ISACS does not suggest a best-practice ratio, but uses 1:1.25 as an example (UNCASA, 2012, section 12.4).
  - 19 Author's interviews with SSNPS, Prison, Fire Brigade, and Wildlife logistics officers and representatives, including members of the Arms and Ammunition Working Group, 15–18 August 2012.
  - 20 Regulations relating to the implementation of the Small Arms Bill have already been drafted. At the time of writing, the draft Small Arms and Light Weapons Control Regulations, 2013 were being reviewed by state-level committees (UNSC, 2013b, p. 12). The Regulations are meant to be consistent with the Small Arms Control Bill, 2012, as prescribed in Section 106. They establish procedures for determining surplus as well as stockpile management tasks. Since the draft document is confidential, it is not possible to analyse its contents.
  - 21 The Bill requires the following information for small arms and light weapons in state possession: the type, action, make, model, serial number, calibre, and other 'relevant markings' such as engravings, proof marks, country identification marks, and other markings that can identify the weapon (GoSS, 2012, ch. 2, s. 7, para. (biii)).
  - 22 Interview with a representative from the South Sudan Bureau for Community Security and Small Arms Control (BCS-SAC), Juba, 14 February 2013.
  - 23 According to a representative at UNMISS, the SSNPS logistics team, with the help of UNMISS, completed an inventory of all SSNPS assets, including all small arms. This had not been done at the time of the research. This information was learned as this *Brief* was being prepared for print and was not verified. Email correspondence with UNMISS employee, 11 December 2013.
  - 24 Interview with an SSNPS logistics officer, Juba, 17 August 2012.
  - 25 Interview with an SSNPS logistics officer, Juba, 17 August 2012.
  - 26 It should be noted that all local armouries observed maintained daily issue records. Duty officers signed and recorded firearms in and out of a storage facility.
  - 27 The author attended a conference regarding the design of the new database. The conference was hosted by UNMISS and held in Entebbe, 3–7 December 2012.
  - 28 The old Kalashnikovs are discernible by their lack of the import marking found on all 2010 imports.
  - 29 Interview with a representative of SSNPS, Bor, 17 August 2012.
  - 30 Interview with a police armourer in Bor, 17 August 2012.
  - 31 Interview with a police armourer in Kwajok, 31 May 2012.
  - 32 Author's interview with a police officer in Kwajok, Warrap, June 2012.
  - 33 Interview with a BCSSAC representative, Juba, 14 February 2013.
  - 34 No rounds of NATO calibre ammunition were observed in any of the armoury inspections.
  - 35 Interview with SSNPS Logistics Officer, Juba, 14 February 2013.
  - 36 Author's informal discussions during the armoury visits.
  - 37 See 'Insurgent Militias' on HSBA website. <http://www.smallarmssurveysudan.org/de/facts-figures/south-sudan/armed-groups/insurgent-militias.html>
  - 38 Author's email exchange with Richard Boulter, formerly of Halo Trust, 9 January 2013.
  - 39 South Sudan has not reported an export to UN COMTRADE. HSBA Project Coordinator Jonah Leff also confirmed that there has been no officially reported export (email correspondence, 15 October 2013).
  - 40 Author's interview with an SPLA Ordnance Division Officer, Juba, 13 February 2013; and an SSNPS Logistics Division Officer, Juba, 14 February 2013.
  - 41 Author's interview with an SSNPS Logistics Division Officer, Juba, 14 February 2013.

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## List of abbreviations

BCSSAC	South Sudan Bureau for Community Security and Small Arms Control
BICC	Bonn International Center for Conversion
CPA	Comprehensive Peace Agreement
DDR	Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration
ERW	Explosive remnants of war
GoSS	Government of South Sudan
HSBA	Human Security Baseline Assessment
IATG	International Ammunition Technical Guidelines
ISACS	International Small Arms Control Standards
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non-governmental organization
PoA	United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects
PSSM	Physical Security and Stockpile Management
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
RECSA	Regional Centre of Small Arms in the Great Lakes Region, the Horn of Africa and Bordering States
RPG	Rocket-propelled Grenade
SAF	Sudanese Armed Forces
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
SPLA	Sudan People's Liberation Army
SSNPS	South Sudanese National Police Service (formerly the South Sudan Police Service – SSPS)
UNMIS	United Nations Mission in Sudan
UNMISS	United Nations Mission in South Sudan
UXO	Unexploded ordnance

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The Small Arms Survey serves as the principal international source of public information on all aspects of small arms and armed violence, and as a resource centre for governments, policy-makers, researchers, and activists. In addition to Issue Briefs, the Survey distributes its findings through Occasional Papers, Special Reports, a Book Series, and its annual flagship publication, the *Small Arms Survey*.

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