



# Globalization and Proliferations of Small Arms and Light Weapons in Nigeria: The Productive Precursors to the Security Challenges in North-Eastern Nigeria

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## Abstract

The Nigeria North-East geopolitical zone which comprises of Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba and Yobe States has provided safe haven for all forms of insurgents and criminal groups, including Boko Haram, the Islamic States in West African Province (ISWAP), armed banditry, Fulani herdsmen militancy, kidnapping for ransom, cattle rustling and armed robbery. There is also the problem of increased proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) encouraged by the porous nature of the land borders in northern part of the country, yet, the government seem comatose. It is on this premise that this study asserts that Globalization and proliferation of SALW are precursors for the security challenges in North-East, Nigeria. Descriptive analysis was adopted and qualitative method of data collection was utilized in this study. The study finds out that the adversaries of the Cold War protagonists, the defunct Soviet Union (USSR) and United States of America (USA), advanced the progress of SALW proliferation in Nigeria, which in turn favored the terrorist groups in Northern part of the country. Also, there has been relentless onslaught of criminal activities and other overlapping security challenges since the Cold War era in the country ranging from banditry and kidnapping for ransom, insurgency of Boko Haram and Islamic States in West African Province (ISWAP), armed robbery and ritual killings, among others. The study recommends that the peace process in northern Nigeria should be sustained. There should be better border security policy and local policing of the communities in the Nigeria northeast geopolitical zone.

**Keywords:** Globalization; Proliferation; Small Arms; Light Weapons; Security Challenges; North-East; Nigeria

## Abbreviations

SALW: Small Arms and Light Weapons; USSR: Union of Soviet Socialist Republic; IGOs: Intergovernmental Organizations; UN: United Nations; AU: African Union; ECOWAS: Economic Community of West African States; IDPs: Internally Displaced Persons; P-CWE: Post-Cold War Era; SADC: Southern African

Development Community.

## Introduction

Globalization which has contributed to the growth of human civilization in recent times also has its consequences. One of such consequences is man's anxiety to explore the

benefits of Globalization for sinister motives. It has also been adjudged by some scholars and security analysts and experts as the precursor for the proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALW) in Northern Nigeria. The adversaries of the Cold War protagonists, the defunct Union of Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR) and the United States of America (USA), and their allied nations in the Middle East and Africa also changed the narratives. The patterns and trends of proliferation of SALW in Nigeria and the deployment for sinister motives is now the major concern of the global community [1].

Oluwadare [2] holds that the immediate post-Cold War period characterized by internal conflicts and its attendant consequences changed the narratives of the security challenges in the continent of Africa, especially in Nigeria. Currently, Nigeria's North-East geopolitical zone is confronted by new forms of security challenges, notably, armed banditry, cattle rustling, kidnappings for ransom and coordinated Fulani herdsmen attacks, aside the traditional security threat from Boko Haram and ISWAP terrorist groups. Salihu and Ozden [3] maintained that the left-over arms shipped into Africa by the Cold War protagonists fuelled the proxy interstate conflicts and the security challenges in Africa. Mallam and Agbiboa [4,5] averred that these arms, now found in the hands of illegal arm dealers, security entrepreneurs, ethnic militia groups, private military companies, local smugglers, armed robbers, are now being deployed for various armed conflicts, insurgency and terrorism in Nigeria.

Similarly, Chelule as cited in Ebonyi [6,7] holds that a number of these arms and light weapons estimated at two-third, are now found in the arsenals of private individuals and non-state actors in Africa, while over one hundred million are found in Nigeria. Ebonyi [7] affirmed this stand point when he stated that globalization, porous borders, poor security networks and corruption are the reasons for the large number of SALW in Nigeria which also engendered criminal networks operating in various shades across the country, especially in northeast and southeast regions. Furthermore, Ebonyi stated that technological breakthroughs in the manufacturing of weapons, smaller and more portable and easy to operate systems also engendered large scale loss of lives and properties in the country. Globalization and SALW production are intrinsically linked as both foster the behaviours of some of the dissident individuals, cartels and organized criminal groups in Nigeria in recent times. As a consequence, international terrorism in Nigeria is enormous in terms of the application of intelligence, planning, logistics and sophistication.

Sambo, et al. [8] described the northern part of the country as that which presents the main landing base for smuggling of illegal weapons that comes through Lagos,

Cameroon, Niger and Chad borders into Nigeria deployed for criminal activities. Boko Haram and ISWAP members, bandits and kidnappers, and Fulani marauders are now the major beneficiaries. This development informs the persisting question of how the actions of these non-state actors in contact with Nigeria changed the narrative of the security menaces in northeast region which in turn dominated academic discourse in recent times.

### Nature of the Problem

The activities of Boko Haram and ISWAP members, cattle rustlers, farmer-herder conflict and the banditry have greater impacts on socio-economic development in northeast Nigeria. Several lives and properties have been lost and hundreds of thousands of people displaced from their homes, some of who find solace in internally displaced persons (IDPs) camps in the neighboring northern states. Of all the geopolitical zones in Nigeria, northeast and southeast geopolitical zones depict the negative consequences of globalization and availability of SALW in Nigeria. Apart from being vulnerable to all forms of security challenges, factors such as high level of illiteracy and poverty, radicalization of the teachings of Islam, porous national borders and corruption eased the growth of insecurity in the geopolitical zone. Nigerian citizens in the states of the geopolitical zone, especially in the areas acronyms as the "BAY States", Borno, Adamawa and Yobe states, are confronted with the greatest challenges of insecurity occasioned by the activities of members of Boko Haram and ISWAP terrorist organizations, bandits and kidnappers, armed robbers, cattle rustlers and Fulani herders' militancy [9,10].

Oluwadare [2] holds that virtually all the security challenges in Nigeria are perpetrated with the aid of SALW deployed by all sides. The damaging effects of these weapons intercalating the arsenals of the non-state actors in the country is one of the leading causes of the security issues in northern part of the country. Also Identified as a problem is the porous nature of the land borders which encouraged easy smuggling of arms and ammunitions into the country. The acceptance of the notion that SALW is dependable hegemonic tool of the super powers from the global North to acquire wealth, and dependable weapons to compel obedience from the citizens by tyrants and dictators in Africa is also a problem [2]. The weaknesses and fragile nature of the states of the northeast, and the attendant failure of government to deliver and enthrone good governance are plausible explanation for the increasing security challenges in the northeast. For this reason, the marginalized and frustrated groups often in large numbers and located in the larger society resort to aggressive behaviour to express their grievances against the government of Nigeria.

With SALW readily available for use, this group of people became sophisticated and dangerous in their campaign of violence. The consequence of this development is the forcible displacement of the civilian population in the affected states of Borno, Adamawa and Yobe. Humanitarian crises, including prevention and delaying of development projects are associated with this development in the Northeast region. Peacekeeping and peace building efforts of national governments, intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), and regional and sub-regional organizations such as the United Nations (UN), African Union (AU), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), etc., interested in resolving of the menaces in northern Nigeria have always being obstructed by the level of the security issues in the region. When conflict subsides, small arms used remain in circulation which in return leads to additional violence and suffering. In non-conflict areas, small arms may be used in criminal violence, homicides and suicides, making it one of the leading factors that promote insecurity in the region and beyond.

Since SALW are the primary tools for terrorists, insurgents and other criminal groups in causing chaos and discord, they are prohibited by the law of the state, yet they are available for use for sinister motives. In the post-Cold War Era (P-CWE), these weapons are converted into essential instruments for ethnic and inward clashes in Nigeria. They are the wellsprings of savagery, wars, clashes, terrorism, insurgency and other forms of wrongdoing in Nigeria's northeast region [11]. Because of these many causes of uncontrolled accumulation of small arms in Nigeria, there are multiplying security problems in the northern part of the country, especially in the BAY States. It is on this background that this study examined the multiplying problems associated with globalization and proliferation of SALW in Nigeria with a focus on northeast geopolitical zone dominated by the security challenges orchestrated by members of Boko Haram and ISWAP terrorist organizations, and armed bandits, and in most occasions, Fulani herdsmen menace, cattle rustling and armed robbery.

### Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this study is to examine the nexus between the multiplying presence of SALW and the security challenges in Nigeria's northeast geopolitical zone. While the specific objectives are to:

- Examine the major sources of the multiplying presence of SALW in Nigeria,
- Examine the consequences of Globalization and proliferation of SALW in North-East Nigeria, and
- Assess the extent to which the federal government's has fought against proliferation of SALW and the security challenges in North-East Nigeria.

### Research Questions

The following research questions are raised to guide this study:

- What are the major sources of the multiplying presence of SALW in Nigeria?
- What are the consequences of Globalization and proliferation of SALW in North-East Nigeria?
- To what extent has the federal government fought against the proliferation of SALW and the security challenges in North-East Nigeria?

### Method of the Study

Because of its consistency, Descriptive analysis was adopted and qualitative method of data collection was utilized in this study. Through this research design, researchers seek understanding by aspiring to establish facts from secondary sources of data and arrive at conclusions regarding past events. Data on past events can explain what has happened, and the reason why an event happened. It also explains the link between past and present events, or the impact of the past on the contemporary situations. Specifically, descriptive research method can accommodate comprehensive understanding of current and past events. In other words, the relevance of qualitative research method is crucial because it helps researchers in acquiring vital informations from existing literature and assists in collection of data. It implies that researchers relied on secondary sources of data while relying on descriptive research method. The secondary sources of data are materials that are not originally created, started nor commenced by the researcher directly, but from the surveys of textbooks, journal articles, government official documents, periodicals, and internet materials.

### Review of Related Literature and Theoretical Framework

#### The Concept of Globalization

Globalization has become the defining process of the present days' social, economic and political relations of states in the international system. Onyekpe [12] holds that "the term globalization covers all areas that concerns inter-state relations such as economic and commercial relations, political, military and defence, and cultural relations. He defined globalization as, "a process which has made anything, issues, ideas, practices, development, among others, worldwide or universal". Globalization is also defined as, "a process which is intended towards achieving rapid integration of world economics through the deliberate formation and execution of policies and programmes of the already defined goals of the leading capitalist economies of the West". It is "the intensification of worldwide social relations which links

distance locations in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa" [12].

Globalization has also been described as that which has decoupled global spaces and time with emphasis in instantaneous communications, knowledge and cultural understanding which could be shared around the world simultaneously". Again, it was described as, the intensification of worldwide social relations which linked distances places in such a way that what is happening in one place shapes the what happens in another and vice versa" [13]. Ejumudo, et al. [14] defined the concept as, "the network of connections of organisation and people across national, geographical and cultural borders". Adewuyi [15] described it "as the vertical and horizontal integration that involves an increased volume and variety of transnational transactions". Jacob van der as cited in Al-Rodhan [16,17] defined it, "as a process by which most of the developed nations of the world and some of the developing nations aim to improve inter-alia free flow of information, money and ideas; and cooperation, detection, exchange and prosecution of criminals, technology, and trade among themselves". Scholte [18] described it as, "a process whereby social relations become relatively delink from territorial geography so that human lives are now increasingly plays out in the world as a single place". The term can also be defined as the process of world shrinkage of distance getting shorter, things moving closer, and that which pertains to the increasing ease with which the people on one side of the world interact with the others on another side of the world for the purpose of mutual benefits Langhorne [19]. It has also been described as the direct consequence of the expansion of European culture across the world through colonization and cultural replication Malcolm [20]. From the definitions above, it is obvious that globalization has villagized the world to the extent that whatever affects one nation affects the others. It means that global events are in often times systemic in nature making these events to play out in the world as a single place. Good examples of contemporary global events that played out and replicate themselves are proliferation of SALW, Islamic jihadist movements, transnational terrorism, and COVID-19 pandemic, among others.

### **The Concept of Small Arms and Light Weapons, SALW**

Like every other concept in the social sciences, the concepts "SALW" have divergence of conceptual explanations. For example, United Nation General Assembly (UNGA) as cited in Heinrich and Musue [21,22] respectively defined SALW, "as any portable lethal weapon that expels or launches, or designed to expel or launch, or may be readily converted to expel or launch a short, bullet or projectile by the action of an explosive". Aderinwale [23] following in the same step as the

United Nation Institute of Disarmament Research (UNIDR) categorized small arms to include revolvers and self-loading pistols, rifles and carbines; sub-machine-guns, assault rifles; light machine-gun, heavy machine-guns, hand-held under-barrel and mounted grenade launchers, portable anti-craft guns; portable anti-tank guns, recoilless rifles; portable launchers of antitank missiles and rockets system, portable launchers of anti-aircraft missiles systems; and mortars of calibres less than 100mm.

Southern African Development Community (SADC) Firearms Protocol [24] defined small arms, "as those weapons meant for individual use, including revolvers and self-loading pistols, rifles and carbines, sub-machine guns, assault rifles and light machine guns". "Light weapons are portable weapons designed for use by several persons serving as a crew heavy machine guns, automatic cannon, howitzers, mortars of less than 100mm calibre, grenade launchers, anti-tank weapons and launchers, recoilless guns, shoulder fire rockets, anti-aircraft weapons and launchers and air defence weapon". When compared to other major weapons systems, small arms are portable, cheap, easily accessible and easy to operate, and easy to repair and replace. In addition, they are easily acquired and used in armed conflict by both state and non-state actors. Above all they are highly lethal [24]. The UN Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDR) Chelule [6] categorized small arms to include revolvers and self-loading pistols, rifles and carbines, sub-machine guns, assault rifles, light machine-gun, heavy machine-guns, hand-held under-barrel and mounted grenade launchers, portable anti-craft guns, portable anti-tank guns, recoilless rifles, portable launchers of anti-aircraft missiles systems, and mortars of calibres less than 100millitres.

Similarly, Chelule [6] citing UN General Assembly defined SALW as, "any portable lethal weapon that expels or launches is designed to expel or launch, or may be readily converted to expel or launch a shot, bullet or projected by the action or an explosive". Attah, et al. [25] citing the UN General Assembly described SALWS as, "any man-portable lethal weapon that expels or launches, is designed to expel or launch, or could be easily transformed to launch or dispense at shot, bullet or projectile through the action of an explosive, including antique small arms and light weapons or their replicas". Small arms and light weapon thus include handguns and long guns such as rifles and carbines sub-machines guns as well as their parts, component and animation. The UNIDR estimated that there are around 640 million such weapons in circulation around the world, many of which are not government controlled. Although they are used for legitimate national defence and security needs, they are also used by rebels, irregular armed groups, terrorist and criminal gangs. Equally to say that small arms are also used for personal protection, hunting and sporting activities which amount to restating the obvious [26].

According to the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Convention on SALW, Ammunition and other Related Materials (2006) as cited in Okeke and Orji [27], “small arms are arms destined for personal use including firearms and other destructive arms or devices such as an exploding bomb, an incendiary bomb or a gas bomb, a grenade, a rocket launcher, a missile, a missile system or a mine”. Others include revolvers and pistols with automatic loading, rifles and carbines, machine guns, assault rifles and light machine guns. The ECOWAS Convention also described light weapons, “as portable grenade launchers, mobile or mounted portable anti-aircraft cannons, portable anti-aircraft missile launchers, and mortars with a calibre of less than 100 millimetres” [27]. Department for International Development (DFID) [28] described small arms as, “weapons designed for individual use, such as pistols, sub-machine gun, assault rifles and light machine guns”. For the UN Panel of Government Experts Report on Small Arms [29] small arms are, “weapons designed for personal use, designed for use by several persons serving as a crew”. SALWs are known as firearms or guns are portable lethal weapons made for individual use and that can expel and launch a shot, bullet or projectile by a way of explosive.

- **Theoretical Framework**

This study is anchored on combination of two theories: the System theory and the Failed State theory.

- **The System Theory**

The origin of System theory is traced to the investigation of Ludwig Von Bertalanffy in the 1920s is premise on the notion that, “like the human body which contains several component parts, units or sub systems which forms the whole, the world as it stands today is a system which also comprises of several entities or nation-states located in several areas across the world and each of which are sovereign or independent entities with several units but interact in one way or the other for the benefit of the whole”. The system theory is also premise on the fact that no state of the global system is an island and can live in isolation; therefore, in the cause of interactions within and among themselves, there will be mutual benefits, as well as negative influences. Scholars like Karl Deutch, Morton Kaplan, David Singer, David Easton, Talcott Parsons, and a host of others, are associated with development of this theory in the social sciences, including political science and international relations [30].

Sanubi [31] defined a system as, “a body made up of integrated parts or units, including the state and non-state actors, and all of which perform specific functions for the ultimate existence or continuity of the whole”. Interestingly, individual units or parts by this provision are expected to perform certain functions that are expected of them for the benefit of all the interacting units or sub-systems of the

whole. It implies that there is an interdependence between the various units without which such individual units cannot function or exist on their own since knitting together and by an organized arrangement will promote interdependence and collective security to all [31]. Ansari [32] averred that, “the behaviour of the whole is significant and much greater than the sum of its parts, therefore, whatever affects the whole may affect the sub systems”. Therefore, circulation and trafficking in SALW which are found in the hands of criminal gangs and terrorist groups in the Nigeria northeast made the operations of these groups systemic in nature. The system theory therefore provides the useful framework for explaining the events and processes that have taken place, and as they affect the people at different times, and at different places in northeast geopolitical zone of Nigeria. It implies that what affects a sub system (states of the geopolitical zones) may also have consequential or positive effects of the whole and likewise.

- **The Failed State Theory**

The Failed State theory is a political science theory that first appeared in an article on foreign policy magazine in the 1990s. It was popularized in several articles by some scholars including William Zartman [33] and Jean-Germain, Beasley [34,35]. This theory argued that a state or government that fails to provide adequate security to its citizens including food and shelter, and security of life and property is a failed state. According to Weber [36] a state, “that maintains total control or has monopoly of its legitimate physical force within its borders and able to ameliorate the presence of corruption, and the activities of armed gangs, terrorism and any other related illegitimate activities can maintain economic and political stability”.

Anyanwu [37] as cited in Peterside [38] defined a failed state, “as a nation-state that has failed in its duties to protect its citizens”. “It is a state that has weak and defect in its structure and institutions, including the police force, the armed forces, the judiciary and bureaucracy, which invariably leads to partial or total breakdown of law and order, poor judicial system, and feeble legislature and executives”. “Any nation-state that have poor state of infrastructure, capital development index, and fails to protect life and property, and all that are required to ensure there is human security including food and shelter is a failed state” [38]. As Zartman [33] cited in Hussein and Cornelia [39] puts it, “the collapse of a state in reality is a sudden development but it takes a gradual period to occur, hence it is a long-term degenerative disease”. In essence, Nigeria depicts this character since it cannot provide all that encompasses the phenomena that are paramount to the security of the citizens. In truism, the contemporary Nigeria society is a true reflection of what Jackson and Rosberg [40] as cited in Stein [41] refers to as a ‘quasi-state’ which is a state that by its position as a sovereign

entity is recognized by the international community not because it possesses the empirical features of statehood, such as monopoly over the means of security over its territory, but because it exists alongside others sovereign entities.

The Nigerian system, especially the northern region in which security of life and property is a mirage reflects this position. Freedom from the threats orchestrated by Boko Haram, ISWAP, banditry, cattle rustling, armed robbery, and the militancy of the self-styled Fulani herdsmen, and other sundry offences is not guaranteed at any given time all over the region. The fragility of the security architecture in the northeast and the other regions in northern part of Nigeria shows that the country is a failing state. Also, the emerging threat from the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) in the South-East; and the militancy of Fulani herdsmen, armed robbery, ritual killings in the South-South and South-West geopolitical zones, shows that Nigeria is a failing state, though, not yet a failed state, but may attain the status of a failed state if these security challenges persist longer without government's presence in these under-governed areas.

The system theory and the failed state theory, thus, collaborate with the Nigeria contemporary situation dominated by myriads of security challenges in the northern region, and by extension, in other regions, causing security threats that seem to have no end in the nearest future. The fragility of the state security architecture affects the entire system, from the North to South, and East to West. This ugly trend and lack of political will by government to fight the insurgent groups is the reason for the seemingly increasing activities of Boko Haram, ISWAP, the bandits, cattle rustlers, ethno-religious conflict in the North-East, North-West and North-Central; and IPOB, ESN, unknown gunmen, herder-farmer conflict and armed robbery in South-East; and ritual killings, armed robbery, kidnapping for ransom, militancy, piracy and farmer-herder conflict in South-West and South-South geopolitical zones, making the Nigerian system conquered by all manners of security challenges with limited government presence, therefore, promoting the failed state thesis.

## Data Presentation and Discussion

### Sources of Small Arms and Light Weapons in Nigeria

The large number of SALW available in Nigeria has been traced to several sources including existence of porous borders and corruption among the ranks in the custom service and the army. Nte [42] holds that, "the increase in the availability of SALW in Nigeria exacerbates armed banditry, militancy, insurgency and terrorism in some parts of the country. According to the United Nations Disarmament

Commission (UNDC) Report, the earlier supply by the Cold War adversaries contributed to the circulation and accumulation of SALW in many areas of conflict in Africa, including Nigeria. Much attention was given to the large number of SALW in the post-Cold War Era (P-CWE) because these weapons are converted into the essential instruments of ethnic and inward clashes. They have been the wellsprings of savagery, wars, clashes, insurgency and other forms of wrongdoings in Africa as of late Stohl & Hogendoorn [11].

As Ayissi and Sall [43] and Ayuba and Okafor [44] as cited in Ebonyi [7] put it, "the increasing number of SALWs in Nigeria is because of the fallout of not just the armed conflicts at the global arena, but as the consequence of failure government to genuinely and holistically address the issues of underdevelopment and low standard of living of the Nigerian people. On a general perspective, the increasing number of SALW circulated in Nigeria is associated with clandestine local fabricators, as well as residue of guns used during civil war, theft from government armouries, smuggling, dishonest government accredited importers, ethnic militias, and insurgents from neighboring countries [21]. Abdel-Fatau [45] traced the sources of SALW in Nigeria to the stockpiles that were pumped into Africa in the 1970s, 1980s and early 1990s by the ex-Soviet Union, the USA and their allies to fan proxy intra-state and interstate wars". Interestingly, the leftover weapons found their ways through clandestine networks involving rogue arms brokers, private military companies, shady airline companies and local smugglers to exacerbate on-going conflicts and facilitate the commencement of new ones in Nigeria.

Yacubu [9] opined that the hundreds of kilometers of porous land borders and maritime areas of the Atlantic Ocean between Nigeria; and Benin, Cameroon, Chad and Niger Republics respectively, made it very easy for smugglers of small arms and ammunitions to smuggle arms into the country which in turn help in increasing crimes in the country. He summarizes the sources of SALW in Nigeria to include: illegal weapons captured from confrontations with the Nigerian military and police, weapons sold to militia and illegal arms dealers by the Nigerian military, weapons provided by political parties for electoral violence/intimidation purposes, weapons provided in exchange for stolen oil by tankers offshore, and foreign/local arm dealers, and weapons bought with funds from members of the communities living outside Nigeria or directly supplied by them.

### The Consequences of Globalization and Proliferation of SALW in Nigeria

The large number of SALW in the northern part of Nigeria is not a new development but the rate at which these weapons

are intercalating the arsenals of the insurgent groups for sinister motives has impacted the most on the daily lives of the citizens, as well as foreign direct investment (FDI) in the country. Boko Haram and ISWAP terrorist organizations, armed banditry and kidnappings for ransom are now the dominant security threats in northeast Nigeria. This is a problem that beats the imagination of both the citizens and governments in the country. As Stohl and Tuttle [46] cited in Attah and Ogwu [25] rightly stated, "The circulation of SALW and their misuse in Nigeria have impacted the most on the larger society, and undermine all forms of development, especially in the northeast which is the most affected areas in the country". SALW explosion in the country has also prevented the delivery of humanitarian aid, and increased the population of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDP) in the northern region [25].

Salihu and Ozden [3] averred that the left-over arms shipped into Africa by the Cold War protagonist are deployed to fuel the proxy inter-state conflicts and other forms of security challenges in Africa, including Nigeria. Similarly, Mallam and Agbiboa [4,5] averred that these arms, now in the hands of illegal arm dealers, security entrepreneurs, ethnic militia groups, private military companies and local smugglers are now use for various armed conflict in some states in Africa, including Nigeria. Onuoha [47] agreed that the number of small arms and light weapons in circulation in Nigeria are the weapons used in ethno-religious conflicts, insurgency, militancy and abduction for ransom, armed robbery, cattle rustling and terrorism. Today, the 'BAY States' of Borno, Adamawa and Yobe have the highest confirmed incidences of death, displaced persons and destructions of properties following the activities of Boko Haram, ISWAP and other security issues. The availability of SALW, tactics adopted and sustained terror campaigns by the violent groups have also impacted the most on socio-economic development of the people of northern region. As the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) [48] puts it: The continuous campaign of violence by Boko Haram and ISWAP in the northeast region, particularly in the 'BAY States' of Borno, Adamawa and Yobe, resulted to the loss of lives and properties and people displaced from their ancestral homes into the IDP camps (UNHCR) [48].

In Borno State, members of Boko Haram and ISWAP have conducted several coordinated attacks, ambushed and mounted illegal vehicle check points along major routes in Maiduguri-Monguno, Bama-Pulka-Gwaza, Maiduguri-Damboa, and Maiduguri-Damatoru areas. In Dikwa, Monguno, Bama, Gwoza, Pulka, Ngala, Konduga and Jere areas, these terrorist groups continue to infiltrate into camps to perpetrate mayhems on innocent occupants despite government's effort to secure life and property in the region. In July 2020, some humanitarian workers were targeted when a UN Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) helicopter was attacked in Damasak. In Yobe state, similar situations are common with Julluri village, Gujba and Bursari Local Government Areas (L.G.As) as the most volatile areas in the state. The most Common threats in the state include destruction and theft of properties, physical assault, hostage-taking, abduction for ransom and killings of local dwellers (UNHCR) [48].

In Adamawa State, especially in the areas along the Sambisa Forest, armed robbery, abduction for ransom and extortion from civilian population are regular incidences until significant presence of government security forces in the forest area. There are also reported cases of civil unrests in Jemeta, Demsa, Guyuk and Lamuz L.G.As of the state. While Lamurde and Guyuk L.G.As witnessed land related dispute between the Boshikiri and Anguwan communities, ethnic clashes which resulted to the killings of several persons and destruction of houses are associated with communities in Lamz area (UNHCR) [48]. Apart from the internal influences associated with the causes of these security situations in northeast region, there is the obvious which is globalization and large number of SALM in Nigeria that now serve as propelling factors to the security challenges in northern part of the country and beyond.

### Summary of the Major Challenges in the North-East Nigeria

In the face of the security challenges in the region, there are the obvious challenges are cause by the continuum campaign of terror. These are summarized by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, UNHCR [48] as follows:

S/N.	Nature of Challenges	Most Affected States and Locations
1	Deteriorating security situation cause by the terrorist groups and other criminal gangs.	Borno, Yobe and Adamawa (i.e. the BAY States) in the geopolitical zone.
2	There is also the challenge of overcrowding of the IDP Camps due to the increase numbers of displaced persons.	Bama-Banki, Gamboru Ngala, Gwoza and Pulka located in the "BAY States" of Borno.
3	Insufficient livelihoods and income earning activities.	Finds in all locations, especially in the BAY States.
4	Limited support for the most vulnerable groups, especially the elderly, persons with disabilities, and children.	Finds in all locations.

5	Affected population remain completely dependent on the government as well as non-governmental organisations (NGOs) for humanitarian assistance.	All locations are affected.
6	Unsatisfactory support from the government and NGOs for members of the armed groups rehabilitated and released from the rehabilitation centres.	Bama
7	Limited access to cooking fuel was also recorded.	All locations were affected.

### Government Responses against the Proliferations of SALWs in Nigeria

Since the return to democratic rule in May 1999 to date, Nigeria has been experiencing one form of security challenge to the other with the northern part of the country standing as the most affected. Currently, Boko Haram and ISWAP terrorism have constituted lesser threat compare to farmer/herder conflict and banditry and kidnapping. Following the recent trend in the activities of “Yan Bindiga group” and “Yan Ta’adda group” (armed bandits) which in Hausa language means “gunmen” and “terrorists” respectively, the Federal Republic of Nigeria Official Gazette dated 29 November 2021, Volume 108 declared these group terrorists. Officially, this Gazette was signed on Wednesday 5 January 2022 by the Attorney-General and Minister of Justice, Mr. Abubakar Malami [49-51]. Although, the Fulani marauders have not been directly declared terrorists by the federal government of Nigeria but their activities equate that of the terrorist groups in the country. Both groups posed grave threat to lives and properties, and the stability and unity of the country.

The level of violence in the northeast Nigeria remains very high in spite of the earlier declaration by the President Buhari’s administration that Boko Haram and other related activities have been defeated by the federal government counterterrorism networks or the joint armed forces operations in the region. For instance, ISWAP in particular has grown significantly in the use of sophisticated weapons, in relevance and territorial gains around the Lake Chad region, and is behind a number of the violent attacks alongside Boko Haram in the region. ISWAP has also tried to win the support of the local population by digging wells, punishing cattle rustlers, providing basic health care and prosecuting its members and supporters who treat the civilian population in an unacceptable manner. It on the basis that Mr. Vincent Foucher, an International Crisis Group (ICG) expert stated that ISWAP has established or rather running a Jihadist proto-state around the Lake Chad Basin with its power centre located in the Southern Shore and the Alagorno forest in the border between Borno and Yobe States, and along the islands in the border area between Nigeria, Niger, Cameroon and Chad (The Hague Country of Origin Information Reports (HCOIR) [52].

As the International Crisis Group (ICG) Report [53] rightly stated, “what were once spontaneous attacks in north-eastern region of the country is now conscious wilful intent taking to unsuspecting villages and farm settlements, and now extended by Fulani marauders to other parts of the country. The modus operandi and sophistication adopted by Fulani marauders, bandits, Boko Haram, ISWAP and kidnapping syndicates to carryout violent attacks against local dwellers constitute the greatest challenges to the agencies of government involved in counter responses against these insurgent and terrorist groups. The sources of finances and weapon supplies have also constituted one of the greatest challenges to the federal government and its security agencies. Notwithstanding, the federal government has taken several steps to stop the menaces and bloodsheds by these terrorist organizations in the country, particularly in the northeast region.

One of the areas the Nigerian government has keyed into its programmes in its fight against increasing flow of SALW in the country is the ECOWAS Treaty and Protocol known as a Moratorium and Code of Conduct on the import, export and manufacturing of light weapons in Africa, cum Programme to Coordinate, and Assistance for Security and Development in Africa (PCASED) [54]. These programmes have been very useful in the fight against conflicts and weapons sources in West African sub region, including Nigeria. Specifically, Article 58 of the Treaty contains the guidelines needed in combating insecurity in the West African sub region entitled “Regional Security”. The article contains the following provisions:

1. Members nations of the Community should work together to safeguard and consolidate on their relations,
2. In pursuit of the Community’s objectives, member nations should cooperate with the Community in order to establish and strengthen mechanism for the prevention and resolution of intra-state and intra-state conflicts.

This provision of ‘regional security’ of the ECOWAS is contained in The Revised Treaty of 1993. Because it was not contained in the Community Treaty during the Community’s intervention mission through its Military Observation Group (ECOMOG) in Liberia in 1990, it was criticized by the international community as illegal. After the ratification of the provision of Article 58 of the Community, security issues



in the sub region become the general concern of all member states. On 10 December 1990, the Protocol relating to mechanism for conflict prevention, resolution, management, peacekeeping and security was signed in Lome, the Capital City of the Republic of Togo by member nations of the ECOWAS. Articles 50 and 51 of the Protocol specifically dealt with the questions of the proliferation of small arms within the jurisdictions of the Community. While Article 50 dealt with the control of the proliferation of small arms, Article 51 dealt with preventive measures against illegal circulation of SALW. It provides that ECOWAS shall take necessary measures to combat all forms of illicit trafficking and circulation of SALW [54].

Another legal instrument of note is the Nigeria Firearm Act of 1959 which was reviewed in 2001. This instrument addresses the problems production, importation and export of SALW in the country. In July 2000, the Federal Government set up a twelve-member National Committee on the Illicit Trafficking of Arms and Weapons (NCPTAW) aimed at gathering of information concerning the large number of SALW in the country, and to appropriate measures to deal with the challenges cause by the circulation of SALW. Although, the NCPTAW has had limited impact in the fight against weapons circulation in Nigeria but it served some purposes at the point of its conception. In July 2001, the NCPTAW publicly destroy 428 riffles, 492 imported pistols, 287 locally made pistols, and 48 dame guns seized by security agencies. This exercise was repeated in 2002, and in the late 2004 there were particular efforts to reclaim and destroy weapons in the Niger Delta region.

In recent times, the federal government of Nigeria has taken several measures in its fight against SALW circulations in the country. One of the most recent measures was the establishment of the National Centre for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (NCCSALW) domiciled in the office of the National Security Adviser (NSA) by President Muhammadu Buhari. The mandate of the NCCSALW is to provide policy guidance, research and monitoring of all aspects of SALW circulation in Nigeria. It also has the mandate to maintain international cooperation against the trafficking of SALW within and outside the country. For the Centre to conduct efficient services and ensure quick responses, it is mandated to operate offices in the six geopolitical zones in Nigeria (Premium Times, Channels Television) [55,56]. On 20 September 2017, Mr. Geoffrey Onyeama, the Honorable Minister of Foreign Affairs on behalf of the Nigeria and under the Foreign Affair Ministry signed the Treaty of the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) alongside 50 others. Nigeria also became the 41st state to have ratify the TPNW (International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, ICAN [57].

In spite of federal government fight against arms trafficking and counterterrorism efforts in the northeast, and by extension, the other geopolitical zones of the country not much have changed. The current administration led by President Bola Ahmed Tinubu like its predecessors is confronted with more serious national issues including the now traditional security challenges of insurgency and terrorism, and food security challenges that now constitutes a serious challenge to Nigerian citizens across all regions [58-66].

## Summary and Conclusion

The findings of this study revealed that globalization which is of a critical important to human development has its benefits and consequences in contemporary African societies, including Nigeria northeast region. One of these consequences is man's anxiety to explore the benefits of globalization for several motives. Unfortunately, the sinister motives behind the adoption of the benefits of globalization by some state and non-state actors created the most critical challenges to human existence in recent times. The transfer of weapons from the industrialized economies of the West to the global South, particularly Africa, and the extent to which these weapons have intercalated the arsenals of some recalcitrant and dissident state and non-state actors in Africa, including Nigeria's northeast has been adjudged a consequence.

Essentially, the adversaries of the Cold War protagonists (the defunct USSR and USA) and their allied nations in the Middle East and Africa has been adjudged as one the precursors or forces behind weapons proliferations in recent times. This narrative changed because of the motive, patterns and trends behind the easy circulation of SALW by some state and non-state actors in Africa. The easy circulation of SALW permitted by globalization and the porous nature of national boundaries in Africa ensure that wars and conflicts were prolonged in the continent and in Nigeria in particular. Terrorist organizations and other criminal gangs in Nigeria's northeast region enjoy this circumstance and utilize same to perpetrate mayhems against the civilian population. Despite government's effort to ameliorate the challenges enthrone by globalization and circulation of small arms and light weapons in the country not much changes have been noticed in northern part of the country, especially in the northeast region.

## Recommendation

1. To ameliorate the security challenges in Nigeria, the federal government should take immediate steps in disarming the violent armed groups in northern region,

especially members of Boko Haram, ISWAP and bandits, and the ethnic militias commonly refers to as Fulani herdsmen. This can only be achieved if their sources of weapon supplies, logistics and finances are traced and blocked by the federal government.

2. Since the farmer-herder conflict in particular has taken a dangerous religious and ethnic dimension, the federal government should prioritize arrest and prosecution of suspected radical Islamic scholars and members of the different ethnic and religious militias and criminal gangs often refers to as Fulani herdsmen in the northern and other regions of the country. This will go a long way to ameliorate the level of impunity exhibited by the nihilist group of the Fulani marauders.
3. The leadership of the Miyetti Allah Kauta Hore (i.e. Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria, MACNAN) should be thoroughly investigated and if found culpable should be arrested, prosecuted and sentenced. This no doubt will check the obvious impunity and support they render to the herders, sources of supply of SALW and finances to these criminal groups in the northern part of the country.
4. Boko Haram, ISWAP, and bandits and Fulani marauders should be declared terrorist organization and be treated as such by the federal government of Nigeria. If this is done, it will reduce the menace and bloodshed perpetrated by these insurgent groups which have constituted the greatest threat to life and property than terrorist groups in the northern region.
5. The ongoing peace process initiated by the federal government should also be sustained and repented terrorists should be reintegrated into the society as quickly as possible.
6. Most significantly, the national borders security networks should be equip with devices with modern sophistication to enable them detect criminal activities along the national borders. Above all, the ongoing National Identification Number (NIN) and National Identification Card (NIC) registration exercise in the country should be prioritized by the federal government. Every adult citizens as well as minors should be made available for registration. For this to be effective, the government should prioritize evidences of registration as compulsory requirement in participation in national services and enrolment exercise in tertiary institutions or places of higher learning.
7. Again, immigrants should be made to have their entry into the country documented through functional and effective data base system, i.e., fingerprint and DNA data base system containing trace biometrics of potential immigrants. Automated Field Reporting Systems (AFRS) devices including computers should be utilized in the country's borders. This will no doubt check the movement of people as well as goods (legitimate and

illegitimate) across the borders. Above, all it will render proliferation and trafficking in SALW useless and Nigeria northern region no longer safe haven for arms circulation and terrorist networks.

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