An Abkhaz soldier in the Kodori Gorge, separating Abkhazia from Georgia (© Reuters/Stringer).

Dangerous Supply:
SMALL ARMS AND CONFLICT IN THE REPUBLIC OF GEORGIA

6

INTRODUCTION

The armed conflicts that followed Georgian independence were not the longest or most deadly of the internal wars of the early 1990s, but they were deeply affected by the uncontrolled proliferation and availability of small arms. Like many of the conflicts that brought a halt to the euphoria at the end of the Cold War, what happened in Georgia was not a single war but a series of overlapping ethnic and political catastrophes. Weapons were moved and warriors shifted loyalties in ways seemingly calculated to defy outside understanding. Only now, more than ten years after fighting began, it is possible to appreciate the role that small arms and subsequent collection efforts played.

Georgia did not suffer a single war, but a series of overlapping ethnic and political catastrophes.

Field research undertaken for the Small Arms Survey reveals the complex role of small arms in both the conflict and the post-conflict periods.[1] While the Georgian case is far from simple, it would be mistaken to assume that it was unique or even extreme. Other regions of warfare in recent years—from west Africa to South and Southeast Asia—are even more difficult to understand. Despite the complexity of such situations, however, it is possible to isolate the importance of key variables, such as small arms.

Georgia's quest for independence led to multiple conflicts during the period 1989–93, including the Georgian civil war, the South Ossetian conflict, and the Abkhaz conflict. These conflicts were related in complex ways. Uniting them were common origins in the collapse of the Soviet Union, their exacerbation by small arms flows, an emphasis on post-conflict weapons collection to reduce risks of renewed fighting, and lingering impacts on human welfare and security.

Georgia illustrates not only the dynamics of small arms in conflict and post-conflict situations, but also the impacts of small arms proliferation, availability, and misuse. During the course of these conflicts, the availability of small arms changed dramatically. In the early conflict period from 1989 to mid-1991, very few small arms were available and sources of supply were mainly non-military. From mid-1991 onwards, however, public institutions disintegrated, including the Russian armed forces. Small arms suddenly became widely available through massive leakages from Russian military bases and a thriving regional trade involving Azerbaijan and Armenia. The resulting increased availability of small arms has changed and aggravated conflict in Georgia.

In 1993–95, President Eduard Shevardnadze restored a degree of order in parts of Georgian territory. However, despite numerous attempts to reduce the sheer numbers of weapons spread throughout the country, little progress was made. Weapons collection made little difference. Former combatants and a suspicious public hesitated to participate, offering mostly weapons that were old, obsolete, or inoperable. The greatest contribution of the collection programmes was to build confidence in the political structures of the re-emerging Georgian state. But the fact remains that most of the small arms, the seeds of future fighting, were unaffected and remained in circulation. According to recent research conducted by Saferworld, the total number of registered small arms in the country may be as high as 200,000, while the number of unregistered weapons in the hands of paramilitaries and organized crime appears to be about 40,000 (Darchiashvili, 2003, pp. 26–27). This confirms the figure of 40,000 weapons left from the conflict estimated to be in

Map 6.1 Republic of Georgia

circulation before the implementation of post-conflict collections programmes, while noting important fluctuations since.

In the post-conflict period 1993–2001,[2] this stockpile and the continued availability of additional weapons has had a number of direct and indirect effects, notably in Abkhazia. Weapons availability combined with a lack of state structures and widespread poverty has facilitated the formation and growth of criminal groups. These have made a minor industry of violent, criminal activity, including ambushes, killings, theft, abduction, and hijacking. This legacy has had a dramatic impact on economic activity, especially agricultural production, foreign investment, and even the ability of humanitarian and relief organizations to provide assistance to affected communities.

This case study attempts to assess the role of small arms in both the conflict and post-conflict periods in Georgia. The first section provides an overview of the three conflicts that occurred during 1989–93. The second section provides a detailed description of the evolution of small arms availability during the conflict (1989–93) and post-conflict (1993–2001) periods. The third section analyses the effects of small arms proliferation in the conflict and post-conflict periods, with a particular focus on the demilitarized zone between Georgia and Abkhazia established by the Moscow Accords of May 1994.

THE 1989-1993 CONFLICTS OF INDEPENDENCE

The Soviet legacy

Georgia is home to an ethnically diverse population nestling between the two mountain ranges of the Caucasus. When it became part of the Soviet Union in 1921, two of its nationalities—the Abkhaz and the Ossetians—were granted autonomous status. Although this arrangement permitted these groups national development and limited self-administration, in practice power was held by the Georgian Communist Party (GCP).

Policies of forced Georgianization and discrimination, culminating in forced migration and population displacement during the Stalinist era, resulted in mass suffering and impoverishment. Widespread resentment of Georgian rule resulted. By the mid-1980s, when Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev introduced *perestroika* and *glasnost*, these grievances already threatened the integrity of the Georgian Republic (Anchabadze, 1999; Saroyan, 1997, pp. 135–143).

In addition to its ethnic and political problems, Georgia had to contend with a significant Soviet military presence on its territory, a consequence of its geo-strategic proximity to Turkey and hence North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) forces. These military structures were organized during the Soviet period as the Transcaucasian Military District. At the height of the Cold War, an estimated 100,000 Soviet troops were based in Georgia (Darchiashvili, 1997b). These were primarily motorized infantry and air defence divisions in bases across Georgia from Akhalkalaki, Babushera, Batumi, Gadauta, Kirovabad, and Kutaisi, to Lagodeki and Tskhinvali.

Soviet military deployment throughout Georgia corresponded with political–administrative divisions, with key bases located in autonomous regions or regions with mostly non-Georgian populations, like the Armenian region of Akhalkalaki. During most of the Cold War, conscripts were recruited from these regions (Feinberg, 1999). Soviet forces, in other words, were not intended purely for external purposes; they also assisted Moscow's nationalities policy. As Soviet rule deteriorated and strong nationalist movements arose in 1986–91, its heavily stocked arsenals became time bombs of instability.

Armed violence arose from the progressive militarization of politics and the decision by former Soviet military officers to intervene in local political rivalries.

The conflicts of independence

Increased freedom of expression and political organization in the late 1980s led to massive nationalist demonstrations for greater autonomy, and eventually for outright independence. Georgian demands for independence were countered by Abkhaz and South Ossetian demands for greater autonomy within the Soviet system. In this context, armed violence arose from two interrelated factors: the progressive militarization of politics and the decision by former Soviet military officers to intervene in local political rivalries.

The South Ossetian conflict

The first outbreak of armed conflict in Georgia occurred in South Ossetia, a region whose population of approximately 100,000 people was 66 per cent ethnic Ossetian and 29 per cent ethnic Georgian (Zverev, 1996). In 1989, increasing cries by Georgian nationalists for independence led South Ossetian officials to call for greater autonomy within the Soviet Union. Mass rallies of nationalist Georgians and South Ossetians confronted each other outside Tskhinvali, the capital of South Ossetia, late that year. This led to the first wave of clashes between irregular armed formations from both sides.

Although this armed violence quickly subsided, the South Ossetian leadership made further attempts to separate from Georgian control, and the Georgian Supreme Soviet abolished the region's autonomous status on 11 December 1990. This event polarized relations, and widespread fighting soon erupted between Ossetian and Georgian militias and paramilitary groups (Zverev, 1996). Fighting lasted several months. The lack of discipline and organization of the combatants illustrated the social nature of the conflict—with erstwhile neighbours joining 'self-defence' groups against each other—and the inability of Georgian and Soviet authorities to impose any control (Cvetkovski, n.d., pp. 51–52).

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union in December 1991, South Ossetia's political possibilities changed radically. In response to the South Ossetian referendum of 19 January 1992 on unification with North Ossetia (located in the Russian Federation), the Georgian leadership renewed the fighting (*Moskovskiye Novosti*, 21 June 1992).

Using newly obtained weapons, Georgian National Guard and Mkhedrioni forces began a siege of Tskhinvali and outlying villages that lasted until mid-1992 (see Box 6.1). During this time, the Ossetian National Guard, fitted out with anti-tank weapons and armoured vehicles, responded in kind. A military stalemate ensued, and widespread

Box 6.1 Main armed groups in Georgia, 1991–1994

The Georgian National Guard. The National Guard absorbed most of the smaller Georgian 'political' militias after 1991 and launched a nationwide conscription programme. By the end of 1991, some observers estimated that it contained approximately 8,000 men-in-arms, organized in the form of regionally-based 'guard battalions' that often represented the interests and power of local strongmen turned warlords. During the opposition to President Zviad Gamsakhurdia and the resulting civil war, the National Guard split into two factions. One remained loyal to Gamsakhurdia, numbered at an estimated 2,500 men, and established its base in western Georgia. The other became the armed force of the Supreme Military Council which took power in January 1992 (Urigashvili, 1991). Despite their numerical superiority in Georgia, the lack of cohesion within and between Guard battalions, along with poor infrastructure, brought about their military defeat in Abkhazia in 1993 (Billingsley, 1999). By 1994, the National Guard lost any semblance of organized structure, as most combatants were dead, dispersed, or roving in criminal bands.

The Mkhedrioni. Outlawed by Gamsakhurdia in January 1991, the Mkhedrioni resurfaced with his downfall in December 1991. Within a month, Jaba Ioseliani managed to reconstitute the Mkhedrioni as a force of 2,000–5,000 members, organized into the Mengrelian and Kakhetian divisions representing the western and eastern halves of Georgia. Allied to the 'winning' faction of the National Guard, the Mkhedrioni actively participated in the South Ossetian, Abkhaz, and intra-Georgian conflicts between 1992 and 1993, and attained a level of cohesion and military organization unmatched in Georgia. This was primarily because the Mkhedrioni was a large criminal syndicate with international links. Although formally linked to the government, and (by 1994 at least) integrated in political clientistic networks, the Mkhedrioni was in principle opposed to the objectives of the state because of its dependence on radical uncertainty and social chaos for survival (Aves, 1996).

South Ossetian and Abkhaz armed formations. Little information exists on the organization, structure, and cohesion of either Abkhaz or South Ossetian armed formations between late 1991 and 1993. Manpower estimates place the Abkhaz National Guard at between 4,000 and 5,000 (Jane's Information Group, 1999; MacFarlane, 2000) and the South Ossetian National Guard at between 2,000 and 2,500 men (Jane's Information Group, 1999; Cvetkovski, n.d.). Existing information does indicate, however, that the armed groups in South Ossetia resembled those of the Georgian political militias in the 1989–91 period: inherently fractious, mutually antagonistic, and organized on the basis of neighbourhood or family clans or 'brotherhoods' (*Izvestia*, 12 June 1992). In contrast to Georgian armed formations, Abkhaz armed groups received important reinforcements from outside the country. In response to the alleged Georgian 'invasion' of Abkhazia in August 1992, volunteer forces from most of the north Caucasian republics were organized and deployed in Abkhazia by the Confederation of Mountain Peoples of the Caucasus (KGNK, later KNK), an umbrella organization and unofficial parliament created in November 1992 and consisting of movements and associations from the region (Zverev, 1996). Altogether, these external sources were reported to number between 4,000 and 5,000 men (Jane's Information Group, 1999).

destruction and instability spilled across the border into North Ossetia (Bowers, 1994). Following a period of intense fighting in which Russian troops were also involved against Georgian forces (Urigashvili, 1992b), Shevardnadze and Russian President Boris Yeltsin on 24 June 1992 signed an agreement which, initialled by North and South Ossetian leaders, established a cease-fire, a mixed peacekeeping force of North Ossetian, Georgian, and Russian troops, and principles for the resolution of the conflict. The cease-fire came into effect on 14 July 1992 (Zverev, 1996). South Ossetia thereupon passed beyond the control of the Georgian state, at a cost of approximately 1,000 people killed, 115 villages destroyed, and over 30,000 Georgians and Ossetians displaced (Cvetkovski, n.d., p. 48; Greene, 1998, p. 289).

The Abkhaz conflict

The second major conflict in Georgia occurred in Abkhazia, a region with 537,000 people, of whom 17 per cent were ethnic Abkhaz, 44 per cent ethnic Georgians, 14 per cent ethnic Russians, and 14 per cent ethnic Armenians. Despite serious incidences of violence, Georgian–Abkhaz relations between 1989 and 1992 were characterized by negotiations on the federal or confederated status of Abkhazia within Georgia (Otyrba, 1994, pp. 286–287). Despite declaring

independence from Georgia on 25 August 1990 and voting to remain within the Soviet Union on 17 March 1991, Abkhazia's leaders decided not to press for independence following the collapse of the Soviet Union in late 1991.[3] In the turmoil of the period, the Abkhaz parliament eventually decided to reinstate the Abkhazian constitution of 1925 while still requesting negotiations with Georgia (*Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 25 July 1992).

The Georgian response was to deploy troops in Abkhazia, ostensibly to defeat the forces of the recently deposed Gamsakhurdia, still active in neighbouring areas. Seen as an invasion by Abkhaz authorities, this led to all-out war. Georgia invaded the Abkhaz capital of Sukhumi on 18 August 1992 (Zverev, 1996). Despite the initial preponderance of the Georgian armed formations, the Abkhaz managed to turn the tide with mercenaries, volunteer troops, and, eventually, Russian military assistance (Anchabadze, 1999, pp. 139–143). Helped by the undisciplined nature of the Georgian armed formations, the Abkhaz managed to reoccupy all of their original territory after a year of fighting.

The occupation of Abkhazia by Georgian paramilitary groups in August 1992 was due in large part to their acquisition of thousands of small arms and light weapons in the preceding months. Although at first unable to stem the Georgian advance, Abkhaz forces were rapidly organized into a defensive posture owing to their own weapons acquisitions. In sharp contrast to the earlier fighting, armed confrontations now involved large numbers of organized and equipped troops whose sheer numbers facilitated acquisition and control of territory. Casualty estimates in the Abkhazian conflict stand at 3,000 Abkhaz and 5,000 Georgian combatants killed and up to 20,000 civilians killed (Aves, 1996, p. 27; Slider, 1997, p. 172). In the process, approximately 250,000 Georgians were displaced (Billingsley, 1999, pp. 149–56). Following the defeat of the Georgian forces in Abkhazia in September 1993, a series of agreements were signed between the belligerents, Russia, and the UN. These Moscow Accords, signed in May 1994, provided for the creation of a demilitarized zone on the border between Georgia and Abkhazia, and the deployment of a CIS peace-keeping force (CISPKF) and a United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG) (Zverev, 1996). Like South Ossetia, Abkhazia was lost to the Georgian state.

The Georgian civil war

The conflicts in South Ossetia and Abkhazia took place in a context of civil war in Georgia itself. Free elections in 1990 plunged Georgia into a protracted political crisis, which turned into armed violence by late 1991. The victory of the opposition leader, Zviad Gamsakhurdia, over Communist Party incumbents alienated other segments of the fragmented opposition, especially as Gamsakhurdia denied them access to power. In a climate of increasing instability, Gamsakhurdia's policies were widely believed to be worsening the troubles of an already beleaguered transition. The failed August 1991 coup in Moscow, and Gamsakhurdia's alleged support for the military putschists, led his opponents to demand his resignation.

Georgians gather together on the day of Georgia's independence.

Between September and December 1991, massive street demonstrations escalated into violence, and the parliament was seized by armed paramilitary groups. As in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, in the Georgian civil war (the last stage of which unfolded between September and October 1992) small arms were used to achieve political objectives. Driven from political institutions in Tbilisi through the use of force, Zviadist forces resorted to the use of arms to occupy territory in western Georgia. Taking advantage of the military weakness of pro-government paramilitary groups following their defeat in Abkhazia, Zviadist forces managed to occupy most of western Georgia. Weapons were critical factors both in reducing government opposition to their advance and, more importantly, in establishing, through coercion, the structures and administrations needed to sustain their campaign. Following their defeat by elements of the National Guard and Mkhedrioni, the former simply supplanted the structures established by the Zviadists and installed their own coercion-backed economies.

Following the route of Gamsakhurdia, his followers (including a faction of the National Guard, one of the main paramilitary groups that did not defect to the opposition) redeployed to western Georgia. There they waged an insurgency that lasted until late 1993. This fighting, which overlapped with the conflict in Abkhazia, led the new Georgian head of state, Shevardnadze, to seek Russian military assistance. In addition to thousands of casualties, the Georgian civil war also resulted in the political and economic supremacy of Georgian paramilitary groups—completing the militarization of politics—which lasted at least until 1995.

SMALL ARMS AVAILABILITY IN GEORGIA

Pre-1991 scarcity

Before 1991, small arms—in particular assault rifles, machine guns, and rocket-propelled systems—were extremely scarce and expensive. Armed groups were poorly and inconsistently armed. The Soviet military remained passive for the most part. Despite several incidents in which Soviet military or Ministry of Interior troops intervened violently to suppress civil agitation, they largely heeded Gorbachev's injunctions not to offend international opinion and to allow events to unfold naturally. Security was strict in military installations and the armed forces remained cohesive.

Before 1991, armed groups acquired weapons mainly from a variety of non-military sources.

Very few weapons leaked from Soviet military forces into the hands of civilians in the areas where civil disturbances occurred during this period. Instead, groups in Georgia acquired weapons mainly through non-military sources.

- Police and postal guards (subordinate to local authorities) were raided on several occasions. During the ethnic riots in Abkhazia in July 1989 (prompted by attempts to open a separate Georgian branch of the university in Sukhumi), demonstrators used weapons stolen from police stations. According to a local commander of Soviet troops during these riots, which involved 250–300 people on each side, 56 Kalashnikov assault rifles, 40 pistols, and three sub-machine guns were looted or distributed from local police stations. Of greater significance, he reports, eight police stations and two hunting-equipment stores were robbed of another 1,441 firearms in western Georgia during this time (Arsenyev, 1989). The importance of police and postal guard weapons in the inventories of armed formations is evident from the large numbers of older revolvers procured.[4]

- The Voluntary Society of Supporters for the Air Force and Navy (DOSAAF) was another significant source of weapons before the Soviet Union collapsed. Under the supervision of the Ministry of Defence, DOSAAF was designed for the military training of civilians. It consisted of a large network of bases, warehouses, and airfields throughout Soviet territory. Georgia alone had 52 installations located in each of its administrative regions. Because of its proximity and the ease with which weapons could be purchased or 'lost', DOSAAF was one of the main sources of weapons (albeit training models such as Kalashnikovs which fired only in semi-automatic mode) for armed formations during this period, and especially during the conflict in South Ossetia.[5]
- During the Soviet period, local Komsomol and other Communist youth organizations stocked weapons in secondary schools and universities for youth military training. Consisting largely of replicas or training models, these also proved easy to obtain.[6]
- Other sources of weapons during this period consisted of personal weapons, usually hunting rifles and Second World War-era bolt-action Mosin rifles. The latter reportedly were the predominant weapon at this stage of the fighting. About 10,000 of them had originally been handed out to Caucasian mountain villages for self-protection against invading German forces.[7] Because of the rural Caucasian tradition of keeping weapons as prestige symbols and as means of protection, the quantity of these weapons was not negligible.

Although evidence is sketchy, existing reports provide three key insights into the nature of early small arms procurement. First, because armed formations were forced to obtain weapons from a variety of illegal sources, overall quantities were not large. Second, not all armed formations carried weapons. This is reflected in information on known weapons inventories for the National Guard and White Eagle forces (see Table 6.1). This appears to be fairly standard for all irregular

Table 6.1 Initial weapons inventories for selected Georgian armed groups, 1990–91

Armed formation	Weapons inventory (pre-August 1991)	Manpower	% armed
National Guard	25 AKM (replicas) 57 AKM (training) 15 AKM (fully-functional) 3 AK74 1 AKS 35 pistols (various models) 15 rifles (hunting and Mosin) Unspecified quantity of other weapons, including sawn-off shotguns	250	60
White Eagle	50 AK47 3 AKS74 20 AKS-U Unspecified quantity of hunting rifles Unspecified quantity of police revolvers 50 cases of grenades	120	61

Source: GDF archival documents for period 1990–91

armed formations in Georgia at the time. Finally, because the weapons inventories of the police, the DOSAAF, and other official units were limited to pistols, rifles, and Kalashnikov assault rifles, armed formations were unable to obtain other and heavier weapons types, such as RPGs or medium machine guns. This restricted the scope of military action and reduced the potential for heavy casualties.

© Reuters/Stringer

A Russian soldier guards Russian equipment in the Georgian village of Vaziani.

The 1991 turning point

Following an attempted coup in Moscow in August 1991, Russian military assistance commenced and large amounts and types of weapons became available to Georgian factions. Officially, Russian military authorities denied that they had provided weapons. Evidence from the period 1991–93 reveals, however, that the vast majority of weapons originated in Red Army stockpiles on Georgian territory, where they were distributed by Russian military officers. Information on known weapons acquisitions reveals four types of transfers from Russian military stockpiles: seizure or theft, free distribution, sales, and regional trading. In addition, there was some external procurement (see Table 6.2).

Table 6.2 Weapons procurement modalities and sources in Georgia

Period	Modality/source	Weapon types	Average quantities obtained
Pre-1991	Police and postal guards	Primarily revolvers, some assault rifles	Small (tens)
	DOSAAF and Komsomol structures	Training assault rifles	Small (tens)
	Schools and universities	Replica assault rifles	Small (tens)
	Personal weapons	Hunting and Mosin rifles	Small (tens)
1991-94	Seizure from Russian military installations	Assault rifles, RPGs, grenades	Small (tens) to medium (hundreds)
	Free distribution from Russian stockpiles	Assault rifles, RPGs, machine guns, grenades	Large (thousands)
	Sale from Russian military stockpiles	All small arms types	Unknown
	Regional trade in surplus Soviet weaponry	All small arms types	Small (tens)
	International procurement from central and eastern European states	Assault rifles	Medium (hundreds)

- *Seizure of weapons stockpiles.* Beginning in late 1991 and intensifying in 1992, assaults against Russian Red Army forces and installations and the theft of weapons became commonplace. Most occurred with impunity, reflecting the widespread belief that such actions had official sanction through a decree issued by Gamsakhurdia in November 1991. This decree nationalized all Soviet weapons, ammunition, equipment, and other property (Litoykin, 1991). The chaos of the times was demonstrated by over 600 incidents of assault and the deaths of an estimated 100 Russian servicemen during this period (Darchiashvili, 1997b; Zverev, 1996).
- *Free distribution by Soviet and Russian forces.* An unknown proportion of incidents formally identified as theft or assault were in fact unauthorized sales or free distribution of weapons (Aladashvili, 2001; Darchiashvili, 1997b). For instance, Georgian Defence Foundation records show that during two weeks from December 1991 to January 1992, the National Guard received 200 AK-74 rifles, 50 RPG-7 grenade launchers, two Dragunov sniper rifles, and 200 Makarov pistols by order of Russian forces Deputy Commander Lieutenant General Sufiyan Beppayev.
- *Sales from Russian military stockpiles.* Following the initial phase of covert distribution to Georgian armed forces, Russian military officers sold weapons to belligerents. A Georgian Defence Foundation procurement report and price lists acquired from Russian military bases in 1993 show that the weapons available for sale ranged from Kalashnikov assault rifles to mortars and, reportedly, even heavy artillery and T-62 tanks (see Table 6.3).

In 1991–1993, most weapons originated from Red Army stockpiles on Georgian territory.

Table 6.3 Stated prices for weapons from GRVZ stockpiles in early 1993

Weapon type	Price (Roubles)	Price (USD)*
PM Makarov pistol	125,820	135
AKM, AK-74 rifle	27,000	295
AKMS, AKS-74U rifle	350,000	376
PK 7.62mm, RPK 7.62mm, medium machine gun	650,000	697
SVD 'Dragunov' sniper rifle	1,281,500	1,375
DShk 12.7mm heavy machine gun	1,686,920	1,810
SPG 9 recoilless gun	2,446,500	2,625
RPG-7 grenade launcher	325,000	349
120mm mortar	2,069,040	2,220

Note: *based on the 1993 exchange rate of 932 roubles per US dollar.

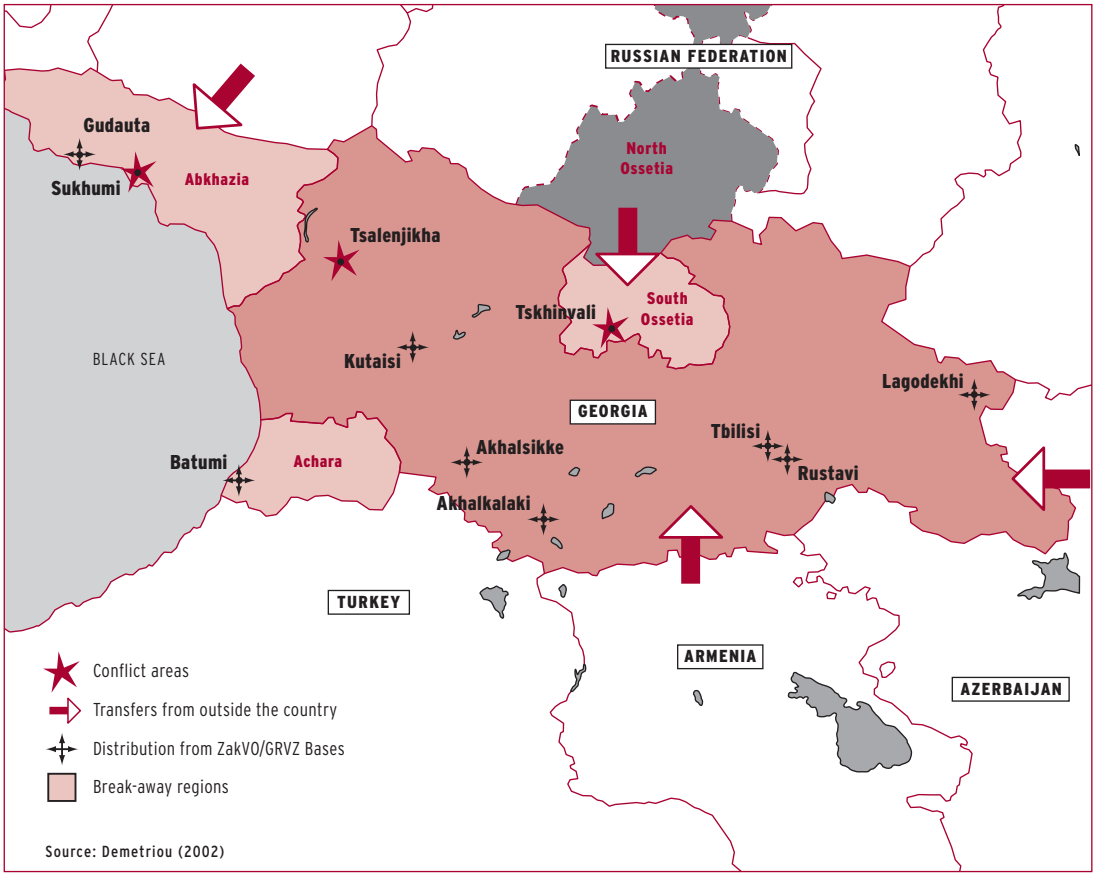
Sources: Russian weapons price list (1993) (document in the possession of the Small Arms Survey); GDF (1993)

- *Regional trade in surplus Soviet weapons.* In addition to weapons procured within Georgia, Georgian paramilitary groups benefited also from Russian-abetted small arms proliferation in neighbouring Azerbaijan and Armenia. For the most part, these weapons were sold to Georgian armed groups through intermediaries such as the Georgian Defense Foundation and ethnic Azeri and Armenian residents in Georgia. Georgians also bartered weapons with Armenian and Azeri traders, leading to redistribution of weapons between the three sides. Georgian forces were thereby able to obtain sniper rifles for approximately USD 400 cheaper by providing Azeri forces with close combat weapons and Armenian forces with long-range weapons.[8]

Georgian paramilitary groups also benefited from Russian-abetted small arms proliferation in neighbouring Azerbaijan and Armenia.

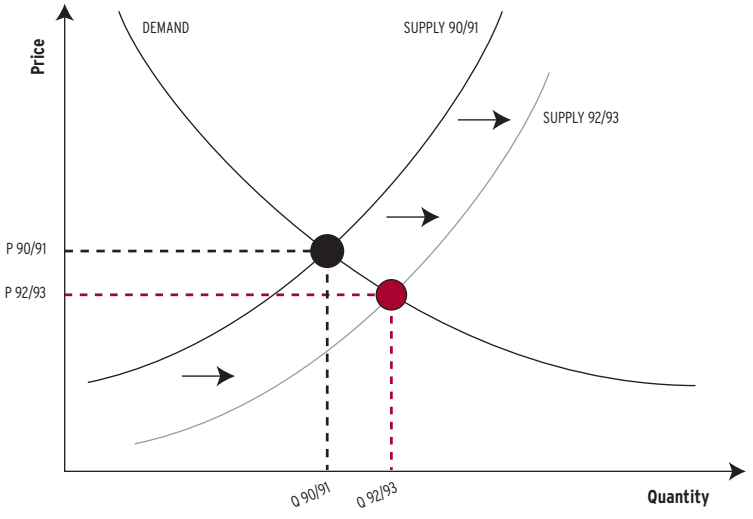
- *External procurement.* Although most weapons used in the Georgian conflicts came from Russian stockpiles in the Caucasus, some were purchased from outside the region. In late 1991, then President Gamsakhurdia reportedly bought 1,000 AK-47 rifles for roughly USD 150 each from Romania (Aladashvili, 1998). Under Defence Minister Nikusha Kekelidze, small quantities of assault rifles and pistols were imported from the Czech Republic in early 1993 (Aladashvili, 1998).

Map 6.2 Sources and distribution patterns of weapons within Georgia



A market price analysis of selected weapon types illustrates this shift in weapons availability. Prices for Kalashnikov assault rifles dropped drastically after 1991. During 1990–91, the price of a typical Kalashnikov rifle ranged from USD 250 to USD 300. In 1992–93, the cost of the same weapon fell to USD 120–150 (see Table 6.6). Figure 6.1 illustrates this shift, showing how an increase in supply made prices drop.

Figure 6.1 Shift in supply of weapons, 1990–1993



Source: Demetriou (2002)

The drastic price difference points to the Soviet collapse as a turning point in weapons availability. Weapons that were scarce before December 1991 suddenly became plentiful following the start of distribution from Russian stockpiles. The price list in Table 6.6 also shows how the range of weapons available shifted over time. Between 1990 and 1991, the only weapons available for sale were AK-74 rifles and Makarov pistols. Following the Soviet collapse, almost the entire range of Soviet infantry weapons (e.g. rifles, machine guns, grenade launchers, and mortars) became available for sale throughout the country.

Prices for Kalashnikov assault rifles dropped drastically, from USD 250–300 in 1991 to USD 120–150 in 1992–93.

A rough estimate of the total weapons available in 1992–93 can be calculated on the basis of the estimated ratio of weapons-to-men for each armed faction (see Table 6.4). Abkhaz external forces, mercenary and volunteer, are assumed to have brought little gear with them and needed to be equipped on arrival. For this reason, a multiplier of a single weapon per man has been applied to them. For the Abkhaz and Georgian National guard, a multiplier of 1.5 has been applied to account for reserves and surplus. The Mkhedrioni, as a commercial and criminal organization, had large stocks of weapons not directly destined for military use. South Ossetian paramilitary groups appear to have possessed few or no reserves due to the absence of Russian military installations and their dependence on weapons arriving from North Ossetia.

The figure of 40,000 weapons in all, while not high in comparison with other conflicts such as those in Mozambique and El Salvador, remains considerable given how quickly the weapons were acquired (in less than a year, as opposed to decades for the other countries mentioned). Moreover, the actual quantity of weapons in circulation during the conflict period is most probably higher due to the diversion of significant weapons stocks to non-military (i.e. criminal) elements. In the absence of additional data, there is no way to measure the extent or magnitude of the latter.

Table 6.4 Estimate of weapons availability in Georgia, 1992–1993

Militias/paramilitary groups	Troops (average)*	Ratio	Weapons
Abkhaz Secessionist National Guard Regiment	4,500	1.5	6,750
Abkhaz volunteers (Russian/Cossack mercenaries, KNK volunteer contingents)	4,500	1	4,500
South Ossetian Secessionist National Guard	2,200	1	2,200
Zviadist forces (National Guard faction)	2,167	1	2,167
Mkhedrioni	2,500	2.5	6,250
Ukrainian Self-Defence Organization (UNSO) volunteers	1,500	1	1,500
National Guard	12,000	1.5	18,000
Total	**29,367**		**41,367**

Note: * Average of figures cited in multiple sources.

Sources: Aladashvili (2001); Army and Society (January 1998 and September 1999); Cvetkovski (n.d.); Feinberg (1999); GDF (2001); Georgian Chronicle (May–July 1993); Gogotishvili (2001); Izvestia (19 August 1992); Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment (1999); MacFarlane (2000)

Continued weapons availability in the post-conflict period: 1993–2001

The immediate post-conflict period of 1993–95 was marked by widespread lawlessness and impoverishment, and the inability of state institutions to carry out their basic functions. By 1995, however, the process of political and institutional consolidation initiated by Shevardnadze began to bear fruit. By imprisoning the leaders of the main armed formations and beginning disarmament, Shevardnadze successfully reduced the warlords' influence. Simultaneously, crackdowns on smaller criminal groups significantly reduced crime. By 1996, Georgia was recovering from conflict and slowly rebuilding its economic and administrative infrastructure.

Post-conflict measures and weapons availability

The decision in October 1993 by the Shevardnadze-led government to enter the Russian-led Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), deploy Russian soldiers, and retain Russian military bases contributed to the final defeat of the Zviadist insurgency. In addition, the threat of direct Russian military intervention and Russian control of key transport junctions, border posts, and military installations reduced the influence of the military warlords in politics (Zverev, 1996). With these guarantees, Shevardnadze imposed a state of emergency between September 1993 and February 1994 and launched a full-scale attack against petty criminals and the local mafias (*Georgian Chronicle*, December 1993). This marked the end of rampant lawlessness. Reported criminal offences dropped from 3,638 in December 1993 (reportedly an all-time high for Georgia) to approximately 1,000 cases one year later in December 1994 (*Georgian Chronicle*, December 1993–December 1994).

Rooting out the criminals and warlords at the heart of Georgia's political institutions was far more difficult, requiring several stages. Taking advantage of the loss of Mkhedrioni and National Guard matériel and morale in Abkhazia, Shevardnadze began a process which first achieved the disbanding of smaller paramilitary formations. After the attempted assassination of Shevardnadze in 1995, Mkhedrioni leader Jaba Ioseliani and Tengiz Kitovani of the National Guard were arrested. Finally, both Mkhedrioni and National Guard were disbanded and disarmed (Darchiashvili, 1997a, pp. 16–17).

© Reuters/David Mdzinarishvili

Georgian soldiers train outside Tbilisi.

The crackdown was accompanied by compulsory weapons collection. Between late 1995 and early 1996, the Georgian Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) implemented 25 rounds of weapons collection throughout Georgian territory, with the exception of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. G. Kviraia, then Minister of Internal Affairs, claimed that 60 per cent of weapons were collected from Mkhedrioni forces, 28 per cent from National Guard members, and 12 per cent were voluntarily turned in by civilians. A total of 9,717 small arms and light weapons were collected, as well as nearly 28,000 grenades, missiles, and mines (see Table 6.5).

Table 6.5 Weapons collected by the MIA, 1995–1996

Small arms and light weapons	
Rifles	**4,770**
AK-47/74 Kalashnikov rifles	1,655
SVD Dragunov sniper rifles	12
SVT Tokarov bolt-action rifles	5
Mosin bolt-action rifles	29
Mosin colt-action carbines	57
Foreign rifles	6
Hunting rifles	3,006
Pistols and revolvers	**2,344**
Makarov and Nagano	2,344
Machine guns	**348**
PPS-PPSH sub-machine guns	67
K6-92 'Karabagh'	201
RPK-74 light machine guns	46
PK medium machine guns	25
DshK (12.7mm) heavy	6
RPD light machine guns	3
Grenade launchers	**2,253**
RPG-7	320
RPG-18	1,872
PG-7	58
AGS-17 'Plamya'	3
Missile launchers	**2**
SA-7 Strela launcher	2
Total	**9,717**

Explosives	
Hand grenades (approx.)	**10,700**
RG-43	2,000
RG-D5	3,500
F1 'Limonka' fragmentation	5,000
RGD-7 Anti-tank	200
Grenades and missiles	**12,726**
RPG-7 grenades	2,006
PG-7 grenades (AP, AT, fragmentation, etc.)	9,873
SA-7 Strela missiles	27
Anti-tank missiles (PTURS & NURS)	820
Explosives (kg)	**9,150**
Dynamite	5,000
TROTIL	3,500
Plastic explosive	650
Mines	**4,172**
Anti-personnel mines	1,022
Anti-tank mines	400
Timed and trip-wired mines	2,750
Total units (grenades, missiles, and mines)	**27,598**
Total kg (explosives)	**9,150**

Source: M. Kveria, Georgian Minister of the Interior 1995–96.

Other weapons were taken from the Mkhedrioni before they disbanded, as were weapons in the possession of Georgian MIA special forces in South Ossetia and Abkhazia (also disbanded and disarmed) and the weapons of several army infantry units implicated in the plot to assassinate Shevardnadze. Of the weapons collected, 25 per cent (mainly assault rifles and pistols) were destroyed, while the remainder were redistributed to the MIA, border guard services, and the Ministry of State Security. Hunting rifles were for the most part sold to shops in Tbilisi.

While weapons collection weakened paramilitary groups, it did not result in the comprehensive disarmament of Georgian society.

Table 6.6 Black market weapons prices in Georgia, 1990–2001

Model	Prices (USD)*			
	1990–91	1992–93	1994–95	2001
Continuous price decline				
AKM automatic rifle	250-300	120-150	100-150	100
AK-74 automatic rifle	250-300	120-150	100-120	100
AK-74S automatic rifle	350-400	200-250	150	100-150
RPG-7 rocket launcher	Not available	150-200	100	100
Makarov pistol	500-1,000	500-800	300-400	250-350
Price rise, then decline				
AKMS automatic rile	500	300-500	400-500	Not known
SVD Dragunov sniper rifle	Not available	900-1,200	1,500-2,000	1,200-1,500
AK-74SU automatic rifle	Not available	500	700-1,000	500
RPG-18 anti-tank rocket	Not available	80-100	150-200	100-150
Continuous price increase				
PSM pistol	Not available	1,500	2,000-2,500	3,000
OZ-14 Groza rifle system	Not available	2,000-2,500	3,500-4,000	4,000
PG under-barrel grenade launcher	Not available	1,000-1,500	2,000	Not known
RPK (5.45) machine gun	Not available	200-300	150-200	300-400
RPKM (7.62) machine gun	Not available	200-300	200-300	300-400
PKM (7.62) machine gun	Not available	300-350	400-500	1,200-1,700
SKS rifle	Not available	400-500	500-700	700
SVT sniper rifle	Not available	1,000-1,200	1,000-1,200	1,500

Note: * Average of figures cited in multiple sources.

Sources: Aladashvili (2001); Army and Society (January 1998 and September 1999); Cvetkovski (n.d.); Feinberg (1999); GDF (2001); Georgian Chronicle (May–July 1993); Gogotishvili (2001); Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment (1999); Izvestia (19 August 1992); MacFarlane (2000)

These figures reveal that the disarmament of Georgian paramilitary groups and civilians was not complete. The total of approximately 10,000 small arms represents only between one-quarter and one-third of the estimated total. Of almost 5,000 rifles collected, only about 1,700 were modern automatic and sniper rifles. Most were single-shot hunting rifles. Modern machine guns were collected in negligible quantities, in contrast to the Armenian-produced K6-92, an inferior weapon. Finally, it is questionable whether the collection of 1,800 RPG-18s is a significant result, since many were just empty canisters, surrendered with the projectile already fired.

Only a fraction of available weaponry was recovered, and most of the collected weapons were not destroyed but redistributed to internal troops and police. While weapons collection weakened the capacity of paramilitary groups, it certainly did not result in the comprehensive disarmament of Georgian society. This is clearly revealed by an analysis of black-market price data for the period in question (see Table 6.6). Although prices of some weapon types increased after the conflict, reflecting decreased availability, prices for Kalashnikov rifles, the RPG-7, and Makarov pistols dropped continuously between 1990 and 2001. This suggests that supplies for these weapons remained steady despite the disarmament campaign.

Weapons, therefore, remained available in the post-conflict period, if not to the groups which possessed them during the conflict. Throughout the post-conflict period, the strongest source of demand for these weapons was neighbouring Chechnya. Although there is little information on the types and quantities of weapons involved, it appears that Chechen insurgents procured high-quality weapons from Georgia. According to one source, there is especially great demand for modified Russian sniper rifles. In April 2001, Chechen commanders were attempting to buy these for USD 5,000 each via the Roki pass that connects Georgia to Russia.[9]

EFFECTS OF SMALL ARMS PROLIFERATION IN GEORGIA

1989–93: The transformation of conflict

The weapons obtained from Russian military stockpiles had four main consequences for the conflict period (1989–93) in Georgia: the militarization of politics; the aggravation of conflict; the facilitation of Russian intervention; and human impacts.

The militarization of politics

Although armed groups existed in Georgia prior to the Soviet collapse, they were marginal political actors. The largest typically were the armed security appendages of political organizations. Prior to 1991, most militias in Georgia were organized by neighbourhood self-defence or vigilante groups. They consisted of small numbers of relatives or friends linked in 'brotherhoods', who took up arms to protect their families, community, or leaders.[10]

Following the violent ouster of Gamsakhurdia soon after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, however, armed groups—and especially the large paramilitary formations—were catapulted to positions of political prominence. This was partially the legacy of the visible success of violence as a means to secure political ends. It also reflected the massive quantities of weapons that began to leak from Russian stockpiles. The possibilities for force resulting from the widespread availability of weapons seemed to offer a more effective way to resolve basic questions of power and control. Here was the promise of a final solution, permitting the Georgian government and paramilitary groups to unify the country, and enabling Abkhaz and South Ossetian authorities to make a last stand when no further dialogue seemed feasible.

From gangs of 50 or so to quasi-military formations of several thousand, the irregular armed formations took the form of either *irregular private militias* (groups forming the armed wings of political organizations) or *paramilitary groups* (armed units loosely affiliated to, but possessing considerable autonomy from, state structures). As products of the power vacuum created by the collapse of Soviet authority and institutions, and in the absence of any viable post-Soviet state army, these groups rapidly evolved from political 'appendages' to become dominant institutions. The result was the militarization of politics. Overall, armed formations totalled approximately 30,000 combatants during the period 1991–93.

The aggravation of conflict: From social violence to full-scale war

Comparing the fighting before and after 1991 reveals a shift from predominantly 'social' violence (skirmishes between unorganized bands of poorly-armed men) to full-scale warfare, involving large military formations and heavy weaponry with air support. Although the sudden availability of weapons following 1991 was not the sole factor in explaining the transformation in conflict dynamics, it must be considered a dominant element alongside other political, military, and social factors.

Facilitating Russian intervention

Weapons distribution from Russian military installations influenced the balance of power between belligerents as well as how they perceived political solutions, and led to the entrenchment of the Russian military in Georgia in the post-conflict period. Military assistance was clearly decisive in providing Abkhaz forces with the capacity to first resist, and then defeat the occupation of Abkhazia in 1992. Similarly, assistance accorded to South Ossetian armed groups enabled them to create a military stalemate in the region. The arming of Georgian militia groups facilitated the use of violence in ousting Gamsakhurdia, ensured a violent civil war, and provided the means to impose a military solution to the Abkhaz and South Ossetian conflicts. This benefited Russia in its attempts to consolidate its hold on what was now its 'near abroad'.

Human costs

Although small arms were not directly responsible for causing all the casualties or material destruction in the three Georgian conflicts, they served as a key factor in determining its scope. In this manner, small arms indirectly contributed to the deaths of tens of thousands of civilians and combatants, the destruction of hundreds of villages and towns, and the forced displacement of more than 300,000 people.

© Reuters/Stringer

Georgian refugees mourn lives lost in the Georgia–Abkhazia war.

In addition, widespread small arms availability provided favourable conditions for the criminalization of society and the economy. Armed formations and organized crime—which were sometimes linked—disrupted and took control of local administrations and economic life in the areas in which they were active. The economy became dominated by large-scale protection rackets.

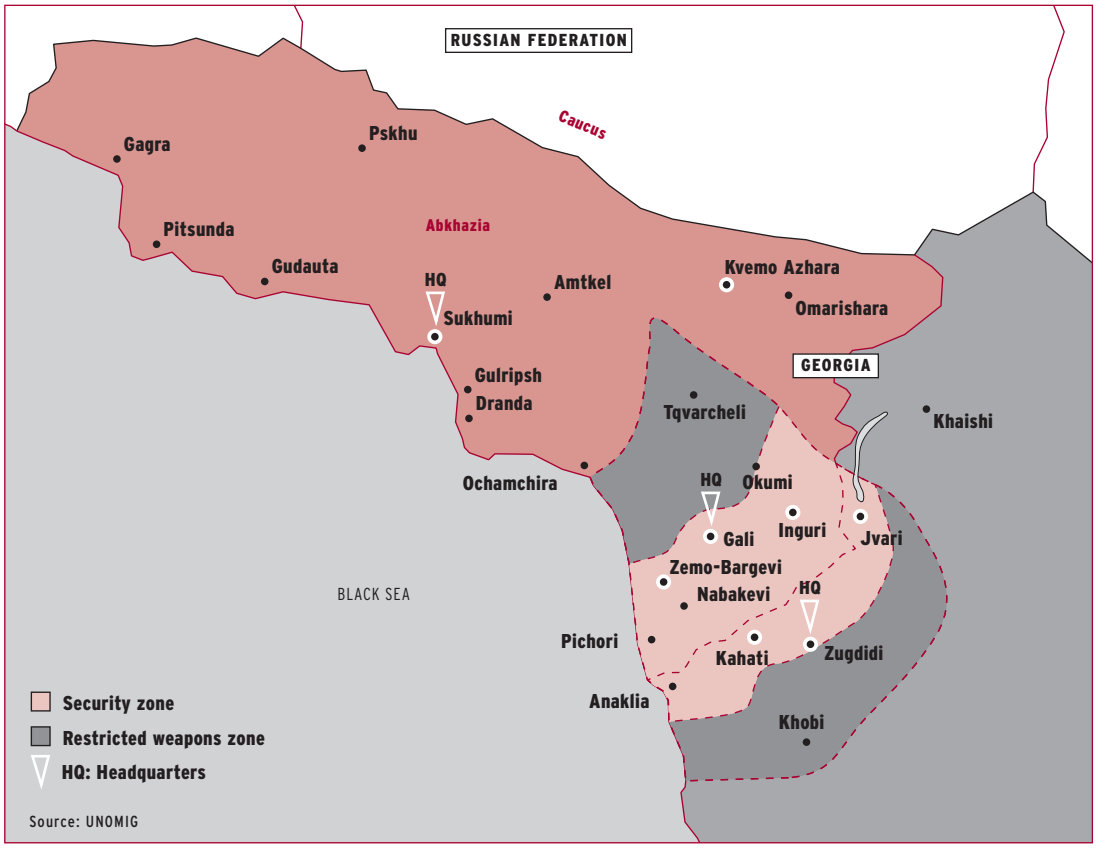
Economic and social activity, in other words, reverted to a quasi-feudal system wherein

weapons and conquest constituted primary organizing principles. Conflict also benefited smaller organized criminal groups and individuals who could commit robberies and assaults and engage in illegal trade with impunity. The criminalization of society contributed to the extreme poverty of the population, not to mention the ineffectiveness of state regulatory institutions, and lasted until Shevardnadze was able to impose a certain degree of order in late 1995.

1993–2001: Consequences in the post-conflict period: The case of Abkhazia

The direct and indirect effects associated with widespread small arms availability are most pronounced in the regions bordering the Abkhaz–Georgian cease-fire line and demilitarized zone, which were created by the Moscow Accords of 1994. This region was originally home to a majority ethnic Georgian population. In these areas, small arms catalyse and perpetuate instability and a range of interlocking threats to social, political, and economic security (DEVELOPMENT).

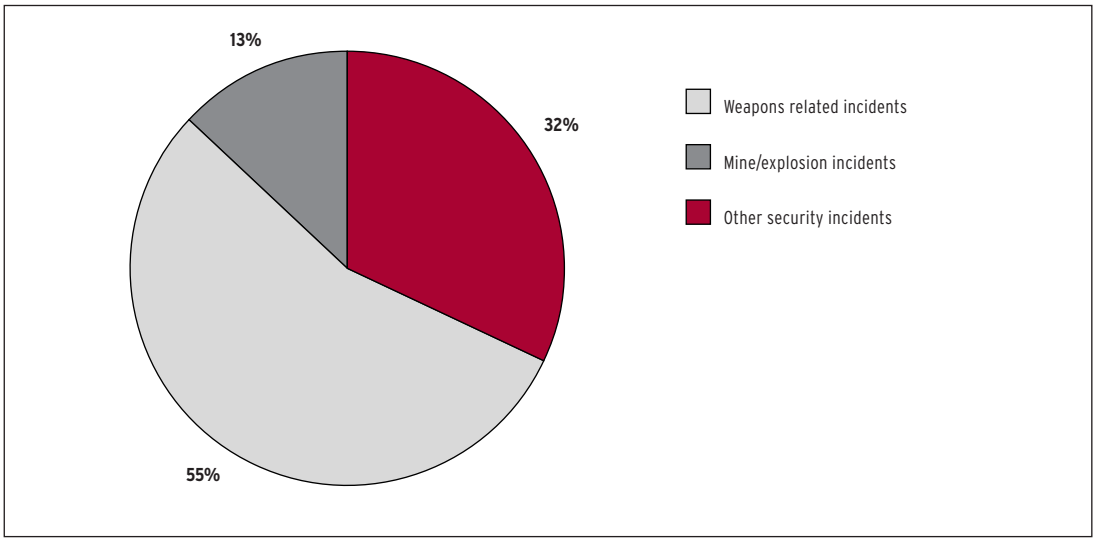
Map 6.3 Abkhazia: Demilitarized zone and UNOMIG Sector headquarters



The direct effects of small arms availability and use in the demilitarized zone

Between May 1997 and April 2001, the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG) recorded a total of 1,640 security incidents in the zone bordering the cease-fire line. Of these, 906 (or 55 per cent) involved small arms, 213 (or 13 per cent) involved mines or other explosives, while 521 (or 32 per cent) did not involve weapons (see Figure 6.2). Moreover, they had different impacts on different target groups.

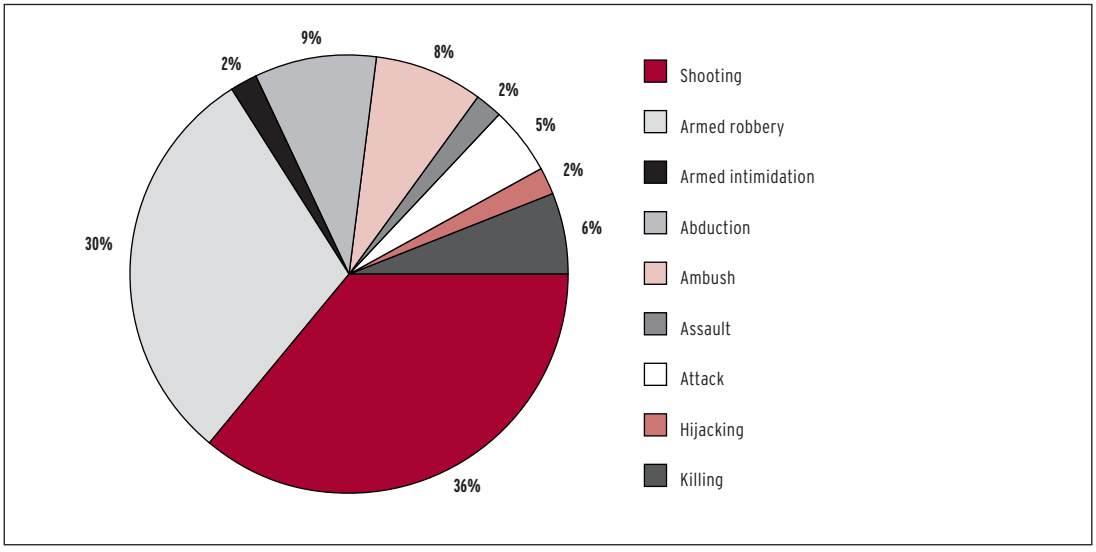
Figure 6.2 Weapons and non-weapons related security incidents, May 1997–April 2001



The most deadly, but not prevalent, category of security incidents involving small arms use is organized ambushes of vehicles or groups of individuals. Victims of such incidents were mostly Abkhaz militia and Russian Ministry of the Interior troops ambushed by Georgian partisan groups. However, a significant proportion involved civilians—32 per cent of all fatalities—in economically motivated ambushes of fruit and nut harvests or attacks motivated by personal animosities.

Killings, deadly attacks perpetrated against individuals but not necessarily organized, resulted in the highest percentage of civilian casualties of all incident types—74 per cent of all fatalities. Such incidents reflected a variety of motives, including political assassinations, robbery attempts, personal animosities, and revenge.

Figure 6.3 Types of weapons-related incidents, by frequency



Shooting incidents constitute by far the most frequent type of security incident, and include all known reports of shooting in the vicinity of Abkhaz, Georgian, and Russian peacekeeping forces checkpoints, whether as part of an organized attack or simply random firing. They also include exchanges of gunfire between Abkhaz and Georgian positions across the cease-fire line. Civilians account for the highest number of injuries, but Russian peacekeeping forces suffer the highest number of fatalities due to attacks on their checkpoints. While shooting across the cease-fire line is politically motivated, other shooting incidents reflect predominantly the same motivations as killings.

Attacks include organized military operations on a small scale against military and civilian targets. The majority of incidents of this type were directed against Abkhaz militia and Russian Interior Ministry forces by Georgian partisans, while the second highest casualty rate was civilian (31 per cent of fatalities), a consequence of Abkhaz militia and Russian retaliatory attacks.

Violent assaults, involving the threat of armed force in order to intimidate, threaten, rape, or coerce, disproportionately affected civilians (67 per cent of all incidents).

Armed intimidation mainly targeted United Nations and Russian peacekeeping officers, to force them to divert their patrols or prevent them from carrying out investigations.

Abductions disproportionately target civilians (78 per cent of all victims) and involve a variety of motives, including political (some are high-ranking officials or powerful figures), economic (ransom), retaliation, or revenge, and forced drafting into the Abkhaz militia. United Nations observers have also been targeted in a series of high-profile abductions.

Armed robberies constitute the second most frequent type of security incident, disproportionately targeting civilians (75 per cent of all cases). Most cases of armed robbery target the hazelnut and mandarin harvests, as well as the transportation of petrol to Georgia. Cases of armed robbery are perpetrated by both organized criminal groups and petty criminals.

Finally, *hijackings*, which predominantly affect civilians, are targeted at the theft of vehicles, most often buses.

In terms of frequency, as illustrated in Figure 6.3, shooting incidents constitute by far the most prevalent type of security incident—36 per cent—with armed robberies a close second—30 per cent. Killings and ambushes, however, despite their relatively low frequency—six per cent and eight per cent, respectively—resulted in a disproportionately high level of casualties. Such figures reveal a highly unstable security environment, in which the majority of casualties are nevertheless caused by organized and targeted operations. Violent security incidents result in an average of 60 deaths per year, a rate of 120 deaths per 100,000 people. This figure is extremely high, many times greater than other societies widely thought of as the most violent on earth, such as Colombia and Brazil.

Violent security incidents result in an average of 60 deaths per year, a rate of 120 deaths per 100,000 people

The indirect effects of small arms availability and use in the demilitarized zone

The civilian population of the region of Gali has experienced the cumulative indirect effects of high rates of violent insecurity, which leads to cycles of displacement and return, lack of access to basic entitlements, obstacles to economic productivity, and lack of humanitarian and development assistance. The people of Gali are unable to permanently resettle due to the continuing low-level conflict waged by Georgian paramilitary forces and the constant risk of Abkhaz and Russian retaliation (Dale, 1997). To date, approximately 40,000 internally displaced people (IDPs) out of an original population of 89,000 are semi-permanently stuck in the southern parts of the region, unable to return to their homes in the north.[11] Some return briefly, mostly for planting and harvest. In addition to the constant risk of abduction, armed intimidation, armed assault, and robbery, they contend with occasional flare-ups in fighting between Abkhaz and Georgian partisans. During the fighting in Gali in May 1998, for instance, 40,000 people once more fled across the Inguri river, and some 1,500 homes were destroyed (UNSG, 1998).

Recurring waves of violence, together with displacement, have drastically reduced access to key rights such as education and health. It has also prevented the reconstruction of key infrastructures destroyed by war and basic services such as electricity, water, and gas. Even the creation of necessary administrative structures for such initiatives is impossible. The need to constantly react to short-term changes in the security environment and remain mobile means that most of the population are unable to undertake their own long-term planning and investment.

Little humanitarian or development assistance has reached Abkhazia in recent years, perpetuating the insecurity and underdevelopment of this region.

The dominance of organized crime in the economic life of the region creates an artificial market system that is highly disadvantageous for the local population. Extortion, in the form of 'taxes' on production and transport, saps the resources of local farmers. Protection rackets, although often accepted by the local populations in the absence of centralized law and order, also divert important resources from economic activity.

Although international organizations and expatriates are rarely targeted in Gali, prevailing security conditions, especially mines and armed violence, restrict the scope for humanitarian action. Because of these dangers, the few organizations that are active in Abkhazia—in particular the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Médecins sans frontières (MSF), and the HALO Trust—do not directly operate in Gali region. The only international presence in this region is UNOMIG, which guards its own security through use of armoured vehicles for patrolling, curfews, armed escorts, and a heavily guarded headquarters. Even so, abductions are a serious problem; UNOMIG alone experienced six between 1997 and 2001. Criminal ambushes and armed robbery are even more chronic. Russian and CIS peacekeeping forces, which are armed and are reported to have become involved in local smuggling activities, are repeatedly targeted by ambushes, assaults, and attacks. They have lost approximately 90 peacekeepers since 1994.[12] Consequently, little humanitarian or development assistance has reached Abkhazia in recent years. Tragically, this neglect perpetuates the current conditions of insecurity and underdevelopment for the people of this region.

CONCLUSION

The proliferation, availability, and misuse of small arms in Georgia from 1989 to 2001 reveal several interesting features. During the conflict period 1989–93, politically-motivated non-state groups were able to acquire significant amounts of small arms through domestic sources, notably from Russian stockpiles that became available following the collapse of the Soviet chain of command. The mass leakage of weapons from military stockpiles transformed the scale and lethality of conflicts in Georgia, including the militarization of politics, and reveals the clear connections between supply, demand, and the nature of conflict.

In the post-conflict period 1993–2001, and despite the government's policy of weapons collection and the dismantling of armed groups, weapons remained available to criminal groups and were channelled through complex pipelines to fuel neighbouring conflicts. The recycling of these weapons reveals the importance of stockpile management and security for preventing small arms from entering the illicit market, aggravating conflict and undermining the transition to peace.

The case of Georgia demonstrates clearly how the restoration of political order does not necessarily bring to an end the wide range of direct and indirect effects associated with the widespread proliferation, availability, and

misuse of small arms. While increased small arms availability aggravated the Georgian conflicts through the militarization of politics and the primacy of armed groups, small arms remained in the hands of criminal groups in the post-conflict period to inflict a number of humanitarian impacts on civilians and to hinder humanitarian and development agencies' willingness, and ability, to operate and intervene. The study of Georgia also shows the complexity and embedded nature of weapons-proliferation dynamics and the negative long-term socio-economic impacts they can inflict on society. Security and development cannot be guaranteed so long as small arms continue to remain an accessible and destabilizing factor in Georgian society.

6. LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CISPKF	CIS Peacekeeping Force
DOSAAF	Voluntary Society of Supporters for the Air Force and Navy
GCP	Georgian Communist Party
GDF	Georgian Defence Foundation
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDP	Internally displaced person
KGNK	Confederation of Mountain Peoples of the Caucasus
KNK	Confederation of Peoples of the Caucasus
Komsomol	All-Union Leninist League of Youth
MIA	Georgian Ministry of Internal Affairs
MSF	Médecins sans frontières
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
RPG	Rocket-propelled grenade (launcher)
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNOMIG	United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia

6. ENDNOTES

[1] This case study is drawn from Demetriou (2002).
[2] The term 'post-conflict' used in this study for the period 1993–2001 does not describe accurately the turbulent post-1993, or current, situation in Georgia, but is useful in distinguishing between two different dynamics and consequences of small arms proliferation, availability, and misuse.
[3] SAS interview with Sergei Shamba, de facto foreign minister of Abkhazia, Sukhumi, 5 May 2001.
[4] SAS interview with GDF Deputy Director, Tbilisi, 17 February 2001.
[5] SAS interview with GDF Deputy Director, Tbilisi, 1 February 2001.
[6] SAS interview with GDF Deputy Director, Tbilisi, 1 April 2001.
[7] SAS interview with GDF Deputy Director, Tbilisi, 10 March 2001.
[8] SAS interview with GDF Deputy Director, Tbilisi, 22 February 2001.
[9] SAS interview with GDF Deputy Director, Tbilisi, 22 February 2001.
[10] Interview with Mkhedrioni ex-combatants, 20 January 2001.
[11] UNHCR IDP statistics by regions of origin, received April 2001.
[12] Interview with Deputy Chief Military Observer, UNOMIG Sukhumi headquarters, 2 May 2001.

6. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Aladashvili, Irakli. 1998. 'Georgia Should Not Rely only on Armament Imports.' *Army and Society*. Tbilisi: Caucasian Institute for Peace, Democracy, and Development. November.

—. 2001. *History of the Creation of Georgian Armed Formations, 1988–1991*. Background report. Geneva: Small Arms Survey.

Allison, Roy. 1993. *Military Forces in the Soviet Successor States*. Adelphi Paper No. 280. London: International Institute for Strategic Studies.

Anchabadze, George. 1999. *History of Georgia*. <http://www.parliament.ge/GENERAL/HISTORY/History.htm>

Arsenyev, V. 1989. 'The Long Road to Peace.' *Izvestia* (Moscow). 22 July.

Aves, J. 1996. *Georgia: From Chaos to Stability?* Former Soviet South Project. London: Royal Institute of International Affairs.

Berryman, John. 2000. 'Russia and the Illicit Arms Trade.' In Mark Phythian, ed. *Under the Counter and Over the Border: Aspects of the Contemporary Trade in Illicit Arms*. London: Kluwer Academic Publishers, pp. 85–104.

Billingsley, D. 1999. 'Military Aspects of the War: The Turning Point.' In G. Hewitt, ed. *The Abkhazians*. Surrey: Curzon Press, pp. 147–156.

Bowers, Stephen. 1994. 'The Ossetian Conflict.' *Jane's Intelligence Review*, Vol. 6, No. 1. January.

Center for Civil–Military Relations and Security Studies/Caucasian Institute for Peace, Democracy, and Development. *The Army and Society in Georgia 1994–2001*. <http://www.cipdd.org/cipdd/prod03.htm>

Cvetkovski, N. n.d. 'The Georgian–South Ossetian Conflict.' Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation. Denmark: Aalborg University. <http://www.caucasus.dk/publication5.htm>

Dale, Catherine. 1997. *The Dynamics and Challenges of Ethnic Cleansing: The Georgia–Abkhazia Case*. Writenet Country Papers. Geneva: UNHCR.

Darchiashvili, David. 1997a. *Georgia–The Search for State Security*. CISAC Caucasus Working Papers. Stanford: Institute for International Studies.

—. 1997b. 'The Russian Military Presence in Georgia: The Parties, Attitudes and Prospects.' *Caucasian Regional Studies*, Vol. 1, Issue 2.

—. 2003. *SALW Proliferation in Georgia: Security Issues and Humanitarian Consequences*. London: Saferworld.

Demetriou, Spyros. 2002. *Politics from the Barrel of a Gun: Small Arms Proliferation and Conflict in the Republic of Georgia (1989–2001)*. Occasional Paper No. 6. Geneva: Small Arms Survey.

Dragadze, Tamara. 1994. 'Conflict in the Transcaucasus and the Value of Inventory Control.' *Jane's Intelligence Review*, Vol. 6, No. 2. 1 February.

Feinberg, Jared. 1999. *The Armed Forces in Georgia*. Washington, DC: Center for Defence Information.

GDF (Georgian Defence Foundation). 1993. 'Report of a Weapons Procurement Mission to Kutaisi, Lagodekhi, and Akhalkalaki.' Private memo. GDF, 11 April.

Georgian Chronicle. Tbilisi: Caucasian Institute for Peace, Democracy, and Development. <http://www.cipdd.org/cipdd/>

Gogotishvili, Tengiz. 2001. 'Newspapers vs Bayonets.' *The Army and Society in Georgia*. Center for Civil–Military Relations and Security Studies/Caucasian Institute for Peace, Democracy, and Development. <http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/Collections/Slavic/army0101.html>

Greene, T. 1998. 'Internal Displacement in the North Caucasus, Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Georgia.' In F. Deng and R. Cohen, eds. *The Forsaken People: Case Studies of the Internally Displaced*. Washington: Brookings Institution, pp. 233–311.

Jane's Information Group. 1999. *Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment: Russia and the CIS: Georgia*. London: Jane's Information Group Limited. 16 July.

Liklikadze, Koba. 1999. 'The National Guards Undergo Reforms But Do Not Turn Swords into Ploughshares.' Army and Society. Tbilisi: Caucasian Institute for Peace, Democracy, and Development. September.

Litoykin, V. 1991. 'Whom do Republic Armies Intend to Fight?' *Izvestia* (Moscow). 14 November.

MacFarlane, S. Neil. 2000. *Arms Control, Conflict and Peace Settlements: The Caucasus*. Geneva Center for Security Police Occasional Paper Series No. 8, Arms Control and Disarmament Cluster, 1999–2000. Geneva: GCSP.

Muggah, Robert and Peter Batchelor. 2001. *Development Held Hostage: Assessing the Effects of Small Arms on Human Development*. New York: UNDP Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery.

Nodia, Ghia. 1996. 'Nationalism and the Crisis of Liberalism.' In R. Caplan and J. Feffer, eds. *Europe's New Nationalism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Otyrba, Guergui. 1994. 'War in Abkhazia.' In Roman Szporluk, ed. *National Identity and Ethnicity in Russia and the New States of Eurasia*. Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, pp. 281–309.

Saroyan, Mark. 1997. *Minorities, Mullahs, and Modernity: Reshaping Community in the Former Soviet Union*. Berkeley: International and Area Studies Press.

Slider, Darrell. 1997. 'Democratization in Georgia.' In Karen Dawisha and Bruce Parrott, eds. *Conflict, Cleavage and Change in Central Asia and the Caucasus*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 156–97.

UNSG (United Nations Secretary-General). 1998. *Report of the Secretary-General Concerning the Situation in Abkhazia, Georgia*. S/1998/647 of 14 July.

Urigashvili, Besik. 1991. 'Tbilisi: Confrontation Continues.' *Izvestia* (Moscow). 23 September.

—. 1992a. 'State of Emergency Declared in Western Georgia.' *Izvestia* (Moscow). 17 January. Translated in *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press*, 19 February.

—. 1992b. 'Shevardnadze Calls on the World Public Not to Allow Aggression Against Georgia.' *Izvestia* (Moscow). 20 June. Translated in *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press*, 15 July.

—. 1992c. 'Georgia and South Ossetia: The Peoples are Paying in Blood for the Politicians' Mistakes.' *Izvestia* (Moscow). 19 August.

—. 1992d. 'Sukhumi is Under the Control of Georgian Troops.' *Izvestia* (Moscow). 19 August.

—. 1992e. 'Attack on Gagra Leaves Dozens of Dead and Wounded.' *Izvestia* (Moscow). 2 October.

Zaikin, V. 1989. 'On Events in Abkhazia.' *Izvestia* (Moscow). 18 July.

Zverev, A. 1996. 'Ethnic Conflicts in the Caucasus, 1988–1994.' In B. Coppieters, ed. *Contested Borders in the Caucasus*. Brussels: VUB Press. <http://www.vub.ac.be/POLI/publi/ContBorders/eng/contents.html>

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Main contributors

The Caucasian Institute for Peace, Democracy, and Development (CIPDD), and Aaron Karp.