

conflict environments. For example, in the Hatillo area of San José, a community policing initiative in 1997 resulted in a 9.5 percent decline in crime, which is a good figure considering that 38 percent of Hatillo residents estimated that crime had actually increased during the period. Moreover, police visibility increased, with only 7.5 percent of residents saying they had never seen police in their neighbourhood, versus 35.2 percent from a year earlier.²

For such reasons, urban-tailored SSR programs have the potential to positively influence human security outcomes. Even so, security agencies cannot solve entrenched social problems on their own, even if they wanted to. While order can be achieved by repressive means — witness Saddam Hussein's Baghdad — civil society partnerships are necessary for cities to achieve participatory and accountable forms of public security. ●

Major criminal organizations, such as the Triads in Hong Kong and the Japanese Yakuza, profit from forging alliances with other criminal networks to expand their reach and profits.¹⁵¹ There are also demonstrated linkages between arms and drug trafficking and terrorism, with profits from illicit trade used to support terrorist networks.¹⁵²

The transnational dimensions of the gun trade are well documented and the linkages to urban armed violence are frequently just as clear. The lethality of urban armed violence is often enabled by illegal arms trafficking. For example, many of Brazil's guns are smuggled illegally from Paraguay,¹⁵³ and many of West Africa's guns are imported through Warri, a port town in southern Nigeria.¹⁵⁴ The high rates of firearm violence in South African cities today are assessed to be the result of the influx of guns from the civil war in Mozambique. The limited success of disarmament efforts following Angola's conflict also resulted in many guns being illegally smuggled across the border into South Africa.¹⁵⁵

The links between actors that perpetrate violence — from members of international organized criminal networks, to armed insurgents waging combat against states, to paramilitary groups controlling regions within states, to violent gangs controlling

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city slums — support the argument that international actors have an important role to play in helping to combat urban violence. They suggest an explanation for why efforts by local and national level governments to combat urban armed violence may have limited success: international issues are most effectively addressed by international actors and regimes.

Existing international norms and laws offer a platform upon which states can build to address the transnational dimensions of urban violence. The *UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime* is one such example that recognizes the significant roles played by international drug cartels, human trafficking networks and illicit arms traffickers in perpetuating armed violence in urban areas. The Convention has three protocols: one on human trafficking, one on the smuggling of migrants, and one on illicit small arms trafficking.

1 "Residents flee East Timor capital," BBC News, 5 May 2006, 15 August 2006, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/4975722.stm>.

2 Rachel Neild, *Themes And Debates In Public Security Reform: A Manual for Civil Society Community Policing*, Washington Office on Latin America, 1998, August 2006, http://www.wola.org/publications/pub_security_themesdebates_communitypolicing.pdf.