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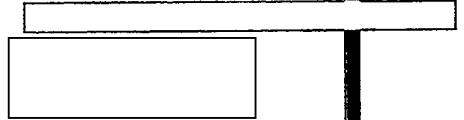
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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY



DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE

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5 December 2001

FARC Arms Procurement: A Current Assessment



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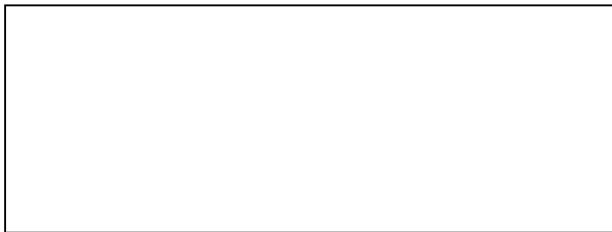
**FARC Arms Procurement: A
Current Assessment** [redacted]

Robust, Varied, and Flexible Networks [redacted]

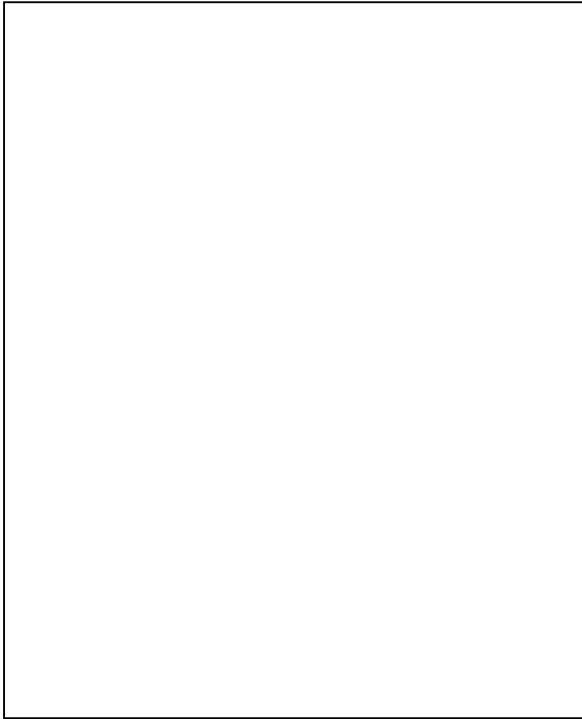
The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) obtains weapons and ammunition from a variety of sources, including regional black market dealers, capture or theft from government troops, and—in at least one case in 1999—the international gray arms market. The local black market offers the FARC a relatively low-risk and convenient source of small arms and ammunition and probably will prove difficult to interdict—a problem compounded by the FARC's use of redundant supply channels. [redacted]

Largely Dependent on Regional Sources [redacted]

The FARC during the past two decades has procured military weapons and ammunition in the countries surrounding Colombia and from Central America, where surplus weapons from Cold War-era insurgencies are available on the black market and smuggling routes and networks are well established. Many regional black market arms traffickers also are involved in the narcotics trade and are willing to take drugs in exchange for weapons.



- [redacted] press reports indicate that security forces in Colombia and neighboring countries regularly seize small shipments of arms and ammunition— [redacted]—concealed in vehicles for cross border smuggling to insurgents.



- [redacted] FARC elements in the past year routinely bartered narcotics for arms— [redacted]



The International Gray Market [redacted]



This assessment was prepared by the Office of Terrorism Analysis in response to a USSOUTHCOM request. Comments and queries are welcome and may be directed to the [redacted]



[redacted]

The group's MPiKM acquisition has enabled it to largely rearm its front line elements with a simple, rugged, and reliable standard rifle—thus simplifying the group's logistic and training requirements—and to expand its total number of personnel under arms by transferring older weapons of mixed types to militia groups and coca-cultivating peasants.

[redacted]

and generally small size of the shipments—along with Colombia's lengthy and porous borders—make these deliveries particularly hard for security forces to detect. The FARC's use of multiple, independent arms sources will also limit the impact of seizures or efforts to dismantle trafficking organizations. [redacted]

While the FARC is generally able to satisfy its logistical requirements without resorting to high profile gray market deals, its successful purchase of assault rifles in 1999 may encourage the group to use international arms dealers to procure specialized materiel or large quantities of weapons not readily available from its normal sources.

[redacted]

The AUC and ELN [redacted]

[redacted] both the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC) and the National Liberation Army (ELN) make use of black market arms procurement networks and suppliers similar—or, in some cases, identical—to those employed by the FARC. The AUC also made use of the international gray market for major arms purchases on at least two occasions in 1999. [redacted]

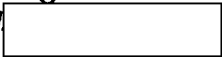
Outlook [redacted]

The black market shipments sustaining the FARC will be difficult to interdict. The methods and routes used by arms traffickers mirror those used to smuggle narcotics, and the murky nature of the black market

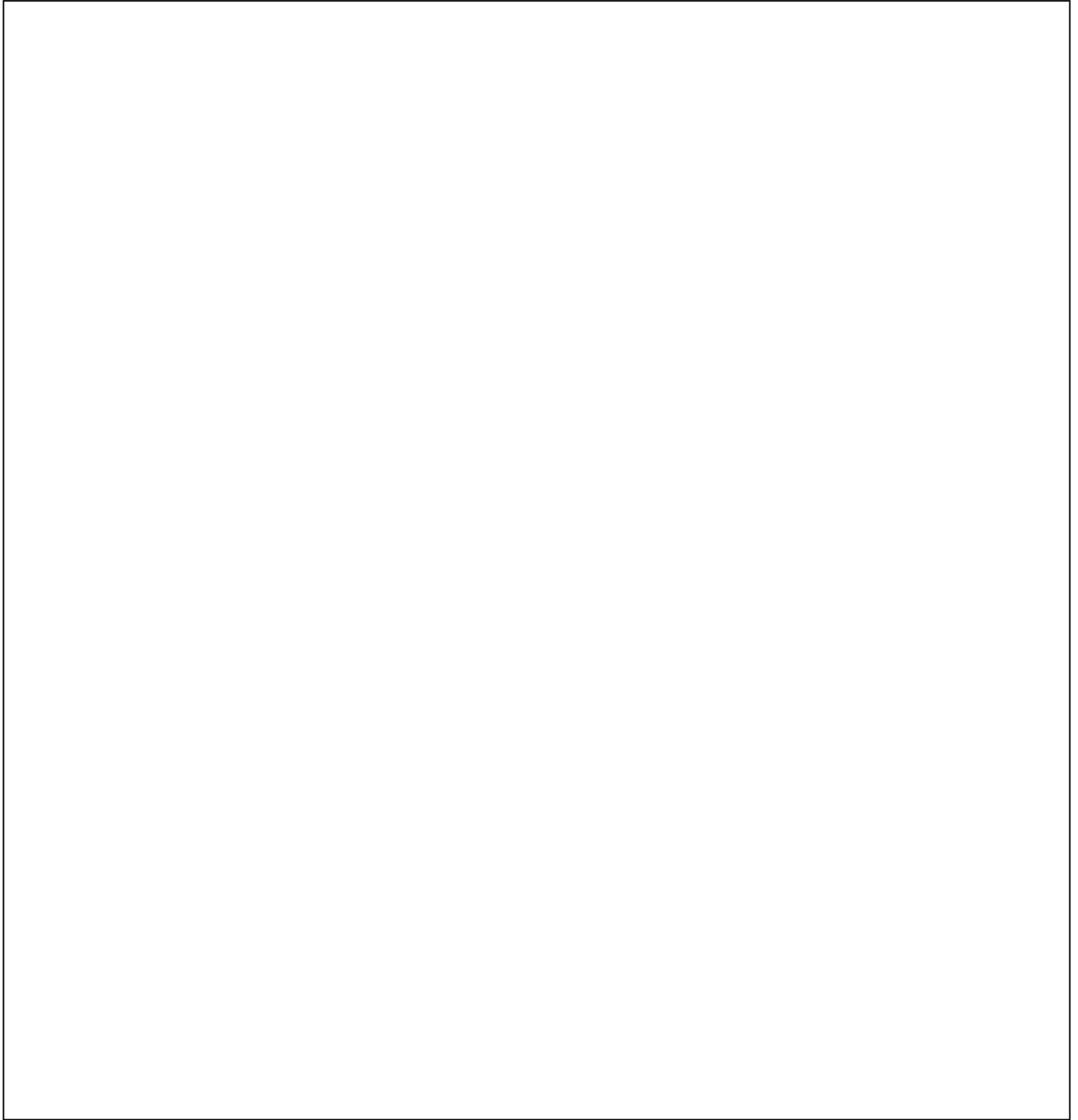
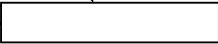
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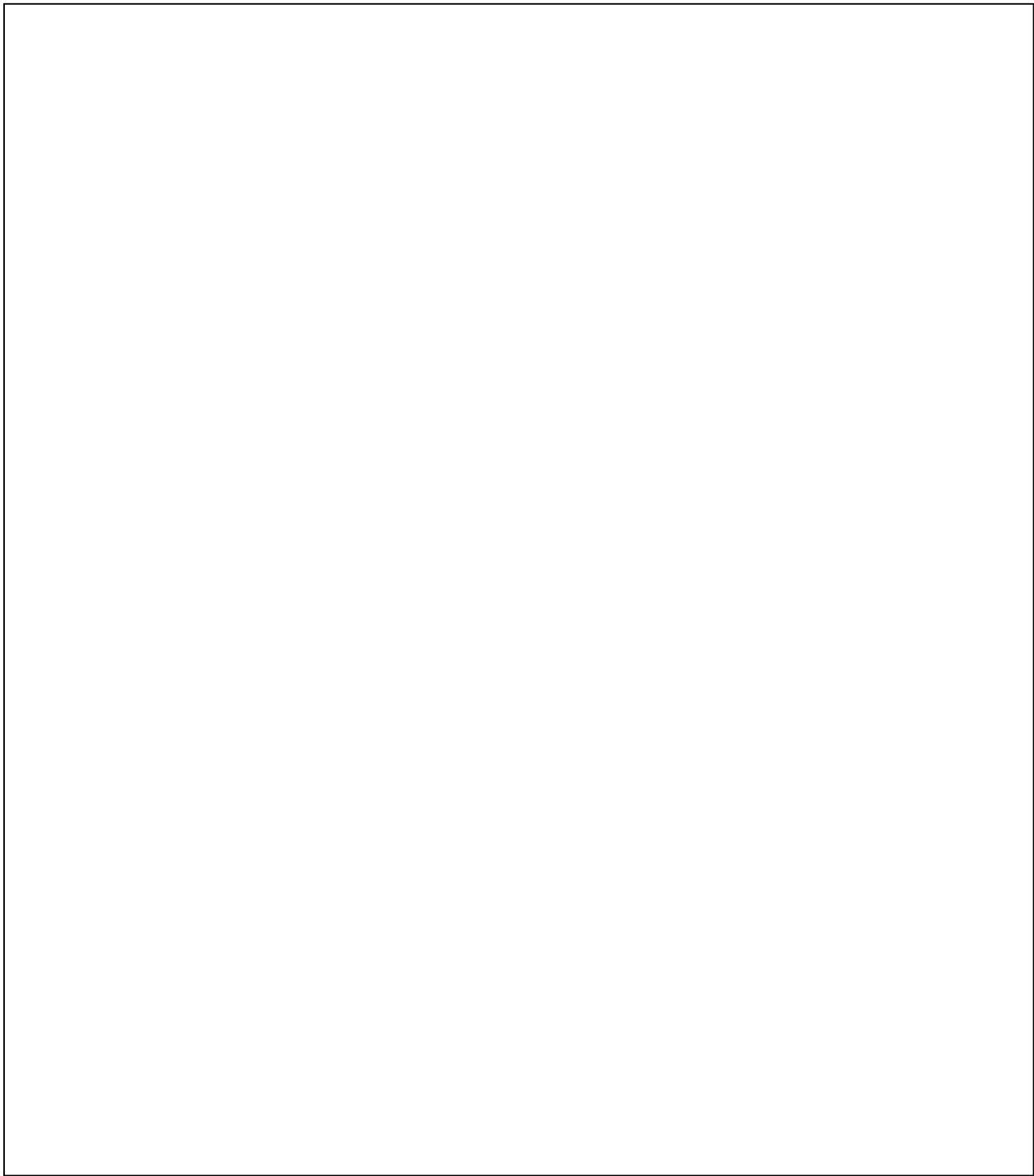


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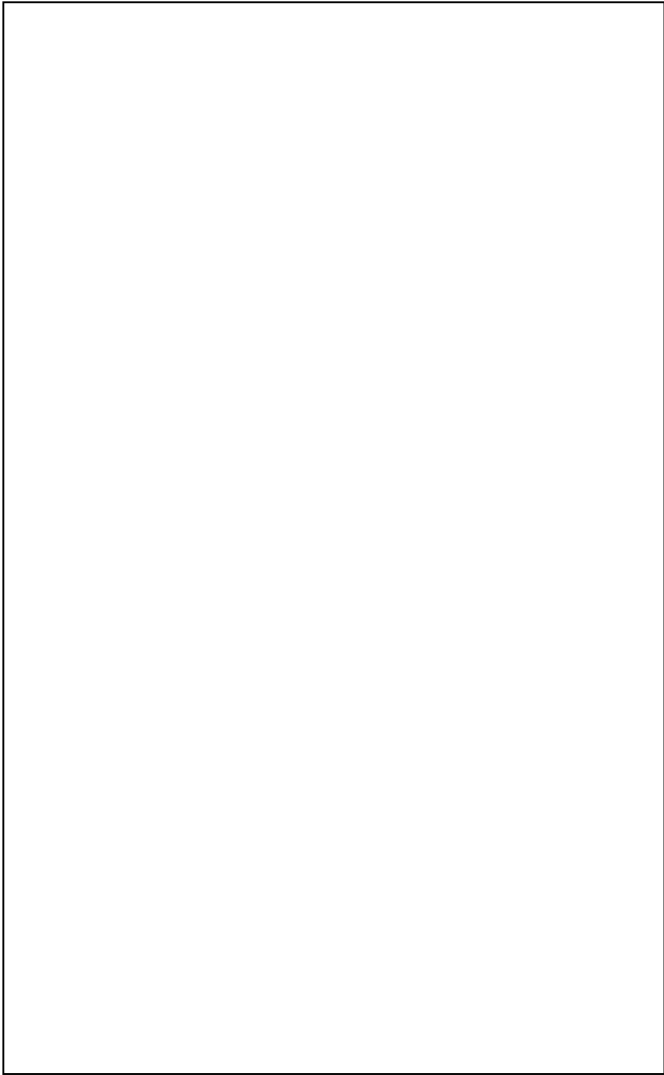


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