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Military Intelligence Digest
MID-130-02
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Colombia: Paramilitaries Increasing Gray Arms Purchases

~~(S//NF)~~ Using false end-user certificates, front companies, and corrupt military officials, the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC) paramilitary organization has arranged several gray market arms shipments since 1996. Gray arms deals are becoming routine for the group and have replaced the regional black market as its main source of arms.

Bulgarian Arms

~~(S//NF)~~ In late 1999, the AUC received a gray arms purchase of 7,640 Bulgarian (b)(1),1.4 (c) assault rifles produced in 1998 and 1999. The AUC worked with (b)(1),1.4 (c), a legal representative of the legitimate military hardware import company Equipment and Spare Parts Ltd (Equipos Y Repuestos Ltda), which brokered the deal and had the weapons delivered by ship to Buenaventura, Colombia's main Pacific port. (b)(1),1.4 (c)



(b)(3):10 USC 424

(b)(1),1.4 (c)



AUC Ties to Equipos Y Repuestos

~~(S)~~ Colombian authorities arrested Jorge Ernesto Rojas Galindo,

the manager of Equipos Y Repuestos, in February 2001 for allegedly taking part in the assassination attempt on Wilson Borjas, the leader of the Federation of State Workers union. The AUC took credit for the assassination attempt, accusing Borjas of sympathizing with the National Liberation Army guerrilla group. Rojas is a former Army captain who was discharged in 1993.

(b)(1),1.4 (c)

Gray Arms From Nicaragua

~~(C)~~ Last November, the AUC coordinated the delivery of a gray arms shipment from Nicaragua containing 3,117 AK assault rifles and 5 million rounds of 7.62x39-mm ammunition. A Guatemala-based Israeli-owned firm, Grupo Internacional de Representaciones, S.A., obtained the arms from Nicaraguan Army and police sources using a false Panamanian National Police end-user certificate. The arms were loaded onto the Panamanian-flagged ship *Otterloo* in El Rama, Nicaragua, and illicitly delivered to the AUC in the Colombian port of Turbo, in the Gulf of Uraba.

~~(C)~~

(b)(1),1.4 (c)

Historically, Nicaragua is the main source of black market arms destined for Colombia. This shipment by the *Otterloo* marks the first known instance in which a Colombian armed group used gray market methods to procure arms from Nicaragua.

(b)(1),1.4 (c)

Romanian Arms

(b)(1),1.4 (a),1.4 (c)