



Department of Justice

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

06/11/10

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**ALLEGED DRUG KINGPIN EDGAR VALDEZ-VILLARREAL, KNOWN AS
“LA BARBIE,” INDICTED BY GRAND JURY IN ATLANTA**

Indictment Charges Mexican Cartel Members as Cocaine Suppliers to Eastern U. S.

ATLANTA, GA - A federal indictment, now unsealed in federal court, charges EDGAR VALDEZ-VILLARREAL, a.k.a. “La Barbie,” of Laredo, Texas and five other defendants with importing and distributing thousands of kilograms of cocaine from Mexico into the eastern United States from 2004 until 2006. The U.S. State Department has identified VALDEZ-VILLARREAL as a high-ranking member of the “Arturo Beltran-Leyva” cocaine cartel and has offered a reward of up to \$2 million for information leading to his capture.

United States Attorney Sally Quillian Yates said, “This indictment shows that we are not content simply to arrest and prosecute those in our district who work on behalf of the Mexican cartels to bring cocaine into the United States. We are committed to tracing the drugs back to the cartel leaders themselves, and we look forward to the opportunity to prosecute the sources of this cocaine in federal court in Atlanta.”

Rodney G. Benson, Special Agent in Charge of the DEA Atlanta Field Division said, “This case strikes directly at the core of Mexican drug cartel leadership. DEA targets the highest level of drug trafficking organizations in an effort to dismantle their criminal networks. These indictments are a great example of what can be achieved when DEA works hand-in-hand with its law enforcement counterparts.”

According to United States Attorney Yates and information presented in court: The indictment, unsealed late yesterday, charges EDGAR VALDEZ-VILLARREAL, 36; CARLOS MONTEMAYOR, 37; JUAN MONTEMAYOR, 45; RUBEN HERNANDEZ, 38; and ROBERTO LOPEZ, 31; with conspiring to import and distribute cocaine, as well as conspiring to launder money by transporting drug money from the United States into Mexico. Another defendant in the case, JESUS RAMOS, has been arrested and arraigned before a United States Magistrate in Atlanta, and his charges are pending.

According to the State Department, VALDEZ-VILLARREAL belonged to the “Sinaloa” cocaine cartel in Mexico before one of its principals, Arturo Beltran-Leyva, split and established his own cartel in 2008. Beltran-Leyva, however, was killed on December 17, 2009, in a shoot-out with Mexican authorities.

VALDEZ-VILLARREAL, RUBEN HERNANDEZ, and ROBERTO LOPEZ were born in Laredo, Texas, and are United States citizens. CARLOS and JUAN MONTEMAYOR are citizens of Mexico.

All the charged defendants are believed to be in Mexico. Anyone with information about their whereabouts should contact the Drug Enforcement Administration at **404-893-7000**.

Evidence presented during a federal wiretap trial of a related case in Atlanta in January 2008 identified VALDEZ-VILLARREAL as the source of thousands of kilograms of cocaine that was imported into the United States from 2004 until 2006. The trial showed that the cartel sent approximately 100 kilograms of cocaine on a weekly basis during the summer and fall of 2005, all of which traveled on tractor trailer trucks to Atlanta after crossing the border at Laredo, Texas. Witnesses testified that some truckloads carried as much as 300 kilograms of cocaine. In addition, the evidence also showed that the workers sent truckloads of money, typically containing several million dollars in cash, back to Mexico in tractor trailer trucks.

The trial and related proceedings, held before United States District Judge William S. Duffey, Jr., resulted in the conviction and sentencing of 10 defendants to prison terms between 5 to 40 years.

The U.S. Attorney's Office in Atlanta recommends parents and children learn about the dangers of drugs at the following web site: www.justthinktwice.com.

This case is being investigated by Special Agents of the Drug Enforcement Administration, as well as officers of the Gwinnett County Drug Task Force and the Gwinnett County District Attorney’s Office, Clayton County Police Department, Georgia State Police, Fulton County Police Department, DeKalb County Sheriff’s Office, Forsyth County Sheriff’s Office, and the Bureau of Immigrations and Customs Enforcement.

Assistant United States Attorneys John Horn and Elizabeth Hathaway are prosecuting the case.

For further information please contact Sally Quillian Yates, United States Attorney, or Charysse L. Alexander, Executive Assistant United States Attorney, through Patrick Crosby, Public Affairs Officer, U.S. Attorney's Office, at (404) 581-6016. The Internet address for the HomePage for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Georgia is www.usdoj.gov/usao/gan.