



U.S. Department of Justice

*United States Attorney
Northern District of Illinois*

*Patrick J. Fitzgerald
United States Attorney*

*Federal Building
219 South Dearborn Street, 5th Floor
Chicago, Illinois 60604
(312) 353-5300*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
TUESDAY JANUARY 31, 2012
www.justice.gov/usao.iln

PRESS CONTACTS:
AUSA Terra Reynolds (312) 353-3148
AUSA Steven Block (312) 886-7647
AUSA Tiffany Tracy (312) 353-1412
Randall Samborn (312) 353-5318

**RETIRED CHICAGO POLICE OFFICER AND FOUR OTHERS CONVICTED OF
DRUG DISTRIBUTION CONSPIRACY AFTER TWO-MONTH TRIAL ALLEGING
MURDERS, KIDNAPPINGS, ROBBERIES AND OBSTRUCTION OF JUSTICE**

CHICAGO — A retired Chicago police officer was taken into federal custody today immediately after a jury convicted him and four co-defendants of conspiracy to distribute multiple kilograms of cocaine, following a two-month trial in U.S. District Court. **Glenn Lewellen**, a Chicago police officer from 1986 to 2002, was released on bond after he was arrested in November 2010 and now faces a maximum sentence of life in prison. The jury did not reach a verdict on whether Lewellen also participated in a racketeering (RICO) conspiracy that included kidnappings, robberies, and drug-trafficking spanning a decade from 1998 to 2009.

The partial verdicts against Lewellen, 55, formerly of Chicago and Las Vegas and most recently of south suburban Frankfort, and five trial co-defendants were rendered after two weeks of deliberations, following a two-month trial that began in November in Federal Court. U.S. District Judge Joan Gottschall also ordered co-defendants **Tony Sparkman**, 25, and **Robert Cardena**, 32, both of Chicago, who were also free on bond, taken into federal custody after they were also convicted of conspiracy to distribute cocaine and related charges. Sparkman and brothers **Hector Uriarte**, 33, formerly of Bur Ridge, and **Jorge Uriarte**, 31, formerly of Oak Forest, both of whom

remain in custody, were each convicted of the RICO conspiracy count and other charges. The jury was also deadlocked on the RICO conspiracy count against another brother, **Manuel Uriarte**, 34, formerly of Chicago and Watsonville, Calif., but found him not guilty of two counts of murder in aid of racketeering. Manuel Uriarte also remains in custody pending further proceedings.

A status hearing was scheduled for Feb. 15.

Lewellen, together with Hector and Jorge Uriarte, Sparkman, and Cardena, were convicted of participating in the drug conspiracy with certain members and associates of a criminal organization directed by **Saul Rodriguez**, 36, formerly of Countryside. Lewellen provided information to his cohorts about ongoing federal criminal investigations into their activities. Rodriguez and three co-defendants pleaded guilty and testified as government witnesses at the trial. The case began when Rodriguez and others were arrested in April 2009 after they conspired to steal hundreds of kilograms of purported cocaine from a warehouse in southwest suburban Channahon as part of an undercover sting operation. A total of 11 defendants were eventually indicted in the case.

“We are pleased with the guilty verdicts that were returned today in a very significant case,” said Patrick J. Fitzgerald, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois. He was joined by Jack Riley, Special Agent-in-Charge of the Chicago Field Division of the Drug Enforcement Administration, and Alvin Patton, Special Agent-in-Charge of the Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation Division in Chicago. The officials had no immediate comment on the whether the deadlocked counts would be re-tried. The investigation was conducted under the umbrella of the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF).

In addition to Rodriguez, other co-defendants who pleaded guilty and testified were **Fares Umar**, 38; **Andres Flores**, 29; and **Jorge Lopez**, 37, all of Chicago. Rodriguez is facing a sentence of 40 years in prison under the terms of his plea agreement.

The narcotics distribution conspiracy count against Lewellen, Hector and Jorge Uriarte, Sparkman, and Cardena carries a mandatory minimum penalty of 10 years and a maximum of life in prison and a \$4 million fine. As a result of also being convicted of kidnapping and firearms offenses, Hector and Jorge Uriarte and Sparkman each face mandatory minimum sentences totaling 42 years. The Court must impose a reasonable sentence under federal statutes and the advisory United States Sentencing Guidelines.

The government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Terra Reynolds, Steven Block and Tiffany Tracy.

###