



*United States Attorney
Southern District of New York*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 22, 2009

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**TWO MEN FOUND GUILTY IN 'STING' SALE
OF 10 KILOS OF COCAINE FOR \$145,000**

LEV L. DASSIN, the Acting United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, announced today that JOSE JIMENEZ and OMAR GONZALEZ were each found guilty late yesterday following a six-day trial before United States District Judge CATHY SEIBEL of conspiracy to distribute 5 kilograms and more of cocaine.

As established by the evidence at trial, cohorts of JIMENEZ and GONZALEZ had arranged, via numerous phone calls and meetings during the summer of 2008 with a broker in Newburgh, to purchase 10 kilograms of cocaine. However, the anticipated seller of the cocaine was in fact a confidential informant working with the Drug Enforcement Administration's Westchester County Drug Enforcement Task Force. JIMENEZ and GONZALEZ were arrested on September 12, 2008, the day of the deal, while they and other cohorts were on the way from Yonkers to Newburgh with \$145,000 in cash to make the purchase. JIMENEZ in particular was driving a Jeep Cherokee with a secret compartment, or "trap," in which the bulk of the cash, as well as a loaded .357 Magnum handgun, were found.

JIMENEZ and GONZALEZ were each found guilty of one count of conspiracy to distribute 5 kilograms or more of cocaine. GONZALEZ was found not guilty on a separate charge of carrying a firearm during and in relation to the cocaine conspiracy. (The broker, Ignacio Balbuena, pleaded guilty on April 1, 2009, to conspiracy to distribute 5 kilograms or more of cocaine, and to illegally re-entering the United States; and Hugo Ventura, one of the purchasers, pleaded guilty on April 3, 2009, to one count of conspiracy to distribute 5 kilograms or more of cocaine, and one count of carrying a firearm during and in furtherance of the cocaine conspiracy.)

Ventura is scheduled to be sentenced by Judge SEIBEL on

July 1, 2009, at 10:30 a.m. Balbuena is scheduled to be sentenced by Judge SEIBEL on July 15, 2009, at 9:15 a.m. JIMENEZ and GONZALEZ are scheduled to be sentenced by Judge SEIBEL on July 29, 2009, at 10:30 a.m.

Mr. DASSIN praised the efforts of the Drug Enforcement Administration's Westchester County Drug Enforcement Task Force.

Assistant United States Attorneys BENJAMIN ALLEE and DANIEL W. LEVY are in charge of the prosecution.

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