



U.S. Department of Justice

*Kenneth J. Gonzales
United States Attorney
District of New Mexico
201 3rd Street NW
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87103*

CONTACT: *Norman Cairns, Assistant U.S. Attorney, PAO
505-224-1521*

PRESS RELEASE

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THIRTY-SIX COUNT FEDERAL INDICTMENT PROMPTS ARRESTS OF LOCAL DRUG TRAFFICKERS

On June 8 and 9, 2010, as a result of a two-year Drug Enforcement Administration (“DEA”) investigation, a 36-count indictment was unsealed charging 39 alleged members of a family-based cocaine trafficking organization operating in Southern New Mexico and El Paso, Texas with federal drug trafficking and money laundering offenses. The investigation was designated as an Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (“OCDETF”) case. OCDETF is a nationwide program that combines the resources and unique expertise of federal agencies, along with their local counterparts, in a coordinated attack against major drug trafficking and money laundering organizations. This investigation also was part of Project Deliverance, a national coordinated strike against Mexican-based drug trafficking organizations. This DEA initiative focused on disrupting the transportation infrastructure of these drug organizations in the United States.

Yesterday, several hundred members of law enforcement, from numerous federal, state and local agencies, participated in executing the court ordered arrests of many of the defendants named in the Indictment, as well as the execution of fifteen early morning court ordered search warrants at various locations in Chaparral, Carlsbad, and Albuquerque, New Mexico, and in El Paso, Texas. Additional arrest and search warrants stemming from this investigation also were executed in Denver, Colorado, El Paso, Texas and Atlanta, Georgia.

The 36-count indictment alleges that the defendants engaged in a conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute cocaine, methamphetamine and marijuana beginning in or about March 2009 through May 26, 2010. The indictment also includes counts alleging distribution and possession with intent to distribute cocaine, use of a minor to commit drug trafficking offenses, maintaining a residence for the purpose of storing a controlled substance, and money laundering.

INFORMATION REGARDING DEFENDANTS

NAME	ADDRESS	YEAR OF BIRTH
Hortencia Lozano de Beltran	El Paso, TX	1966
Salvador Darwich	Chaparral, NM	1965
Veronica R. Cortez-Cruz	Mexico	1963
Pedro Palma-Rios	Mexico	1973
Cesar Lujan	Loving, NM	1976
Adrian Cazares	El Paso, TX	1970
Servando Beltran	El Paso, TX	1965
Guadalupe Beltran	El Paso, TX	1987
Eunice Beltran	El Paso, TX	1990
Juan Ramirez	El Paso, TX	1986
Anabel Alvarado-Calvillo	El Paso, TX	1965
Juana Moreno	Mexico	1955
Guillermo Munoz-Aragon	Mexico	1956
Lorenza Ramirez	Chaparral, NM	1970
Edwin Sanchez	Albuquerque, NM	1984
Adriana Amaya	Albuquerque, NM	1979
Jonadab Cardenas	Veguita, NM	1982
Martina Lopez de Briseno	Mexico	1966
Luis Angel Briseno-Lopez	Mexico	1987
Sylvia Lozano	Mexico	
Elizabeth Medina	El Paso, TX	1960
Horacio Fierro-Morales	Denver, CO	1980
Jesus Alan Ramirez-Fierro	Denver, CO	1988
Juan Carlos Garcia-Holguin	Thorton, CO	1972
Hipolito Melendez	Kanas City, KS	1967

Samuel Ontiveros	Topeka, KS	1989
Carlos Giraldo-Doria	Duluth, GA	1982
Victor Gloria	Socorro, TX	1951
Martin Delgado	Loving, NM	1965
Ramon Lujan	Mexico	1968
Efrain Santos Onsurez	Loving, NM	1961
Adam Licon	Carlsbad, NM	1975
Jairo Eduardo Cortez	Mexico	1981
Victor Hernandez-Nunez	El Paso, TX	1976
Elizabeth Minner	Carlsbad, NM	1969
Matthew Castillo Olivo	Loving, NM	1978
Dorothy Cortez	El Paso, TX	1988
Patricia Cortez	El Paso, TX	
Juan Chairez	El Paso, TX	

Those defendants charged with conspiracy face a mandatory minimum sentence of ten years imprisonment and could face up to life imprisonment. They also are subject to a \$4,000,000 fine, and five years of supervised release.

This case was investigated primarily by the DEA, but also with substantial assistance from Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the Dona Ana County Sheriff's Office, the Pecos Valley Drug Task Force, Lea County Drug Task Force, Middle Rio Grande Task Force, Bernalillo County Sheriff's Office Street Crimes Unit, Las Cruces Metro Narcotics Task Force, New Mexico State University Police Department, Hudspeth County, Texas Sheriff's Office, Denver, Colorado Police Department, Kansas City Police Department, Midland, Texas Police Department, and other federal, state and local agencies.

United States Attorney Kenneth J. Gonzales praised the coordinated efforts of investigators and prosecutors:

This indictment is designed to disrupt the Mexican drug cartels importation of narcotics into this country. For approximately fifteen months, as alleged in the indictment, this drug trafficking organization imported into the United States millions of dollars of cocaine as well as significant amounts of marijuana and methamphetamine. The indictment is the culmination of an intensive investigation by the Drug Enforcement Administration working

closely with federal, state and local law enforcement under the OCDETF program. The drugs that these organizations push into this country end up in our neighborhoods and our schools, and, unfortunately, many times in our homes. Today's effort will make a difference, but we have a long way to go. The United States Attorney's Office, along with our law enforcement partners, remains committed to bringing to justice those who import illegal narcotics into this country and to safeguarding our neighborhoods and our children.

DEA Special Agent in Charge Joseph M. Arabit said:

Today, DEA and our federal, state and local law enforcement partners have severely disrupted a transportation cell operating in Southern New Mexico and West Texas. In addition to numerous arrests, we have seized large amounts of cash, drugs and miscellaneous assets. Through multi-agency law enforcement actions such as this, we are working to enhance the quality of life in this region.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Renee Camacho and Special Assistant United States Attorney Michael Nammar.

An indictment is only an accusation. All criminal defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.