



# Department of Justice

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## **MS-13 MEMBER SENTENCED TO MORE THAN 19 YEARS IN PRISON FOR INVOLVEMENT IN A RACKETEERING CONSPIRACY**

WASHINGTON – A member of La Mara Salvatrucha, or MS-13, has been sentenced to 235 months in prison for his participation in a racketeering enterprise, Assistant Attorney General Alice S. Fisher of the Criminal Division and U.S. Attorney Edward M. Yarbrough of the Middle District of Tennessee announced today.

Geovanni Pena, a.k.a. Rata, was sentenced today by Chief U.S. District Judge Todd J. Campbell of the Middle District of Tennessee in Nashville. Judge Campbell also ordered Pena to serve three years of supervised release.

At his plea hearing on Sept. 6, 2007, Pena admitted that he and others involved in the MS-13 gang conspired to participate in a pattern of racketeering activity in the Nashville metropolitan area, which included murder and attempted murder. In addition, Pena admitted that on September 3, 2006, as part of his membership in MS-13, he fired a handgun into a crowd of people outside Club Coco Loco in metropolitan Nashville and shot and wounded two men. Pena had believed that people in the crowd were members of the rival street gang Brown Pride. Pena also admitted that on Sept. 4, 2006, at Percy Priest Lake in Nashville, he shot a man several times in the back because he believed the man to be a member of the rival street gang 18th Street.

Pena is the first defendant to be sentenced on the RICO indictment returned by a federal grand jury on Jan. 10, 2007. That indictment charges 14 members of MS-13 with conspiring to participate in the affairs of a racketeering enterprise and related charges including murder, attempted murder, assault, weapons charges, and obstruction of justice. Of the 14 defendants originally charged in the indictment, seven have pleaded guilty to racketeering offenses. Trial for the remaining seven defendants is currently scheduled for April 8, 2008.

The MS-13 street gang is a violent international criminal organization composed primarily of immigrants or descendants of immigrants from El Salvador. The purpose of the racketeering enterprise was to preserve and protect the power, territory, and profits of the MS-13 enterprise through violent assault, murder, threats of violence, and intimidation.

This case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Jimmie Lynn Ramsaur of the Middle District of Tennessee and Department of Justice Trial Attorneys David Jaffe and John Han from the Criminal Division's Gang Squad.

This case was investigated by the Nashville Metropolitan Police Department's Gang Suppression Unit, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) at the Department of Homeland Security, the Davidson County District Attorney General's Office, the U.S. Attorney's Office in the Middle District of Tennessee, and the Gang Squad at the Department of Justice.

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