



Department of Justice

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GIRLFRIEND OF MS-13 MEMBER CONVICTED OF OBSTRUCTION OF JUSTICE

Greenbelt, Maryland - A federal jury convicted Wendy Garcia, age 25, of Hyattsville, Maryland, today for obstruction of justice, in connection with the murder of an MS-13 gang member by other MS-13 members, announced United States Attorney for the District of Maryland Rod J. Rosenstein and Assistant Attorney General Alice S. Fisher of the Criminal Division.

According to testimony at the five day trial, Garcia lived in an apartment in Hyattsville with MS-13 leader Israel Ramos Cruz and their infant daughter. On November 22, 2003 Cruz and several other alleged MS-13 gang members met inside the apartment to discuss whether to kill gang member Randy Calderon who had participated in a fatal stabbing. They were concerned that Calderon would cooperate with the police if arrested for the murder. Shortly after the discussion, Calderon was fatally shot by one of the individuals present at the discussion.

On January 30, 2006 Garcia testified before a federal grand jury in Maryland investigating whether she had knowledge of the murder of Calderon, and whether she and MS-13 gang members were present at the November 22, 2003 meeting in the apartment. Evidence presented at the trial showed that Garcia falsely testified that she was working at a restaurant during the time of the meeting and that no one was inside her apartment other than her husband and daughter.

Cruz, a/k/a "Taylor," a/k/a "Sastre," age 30, was convicted in March 2008, of conspiracy to participate in a racketeering enterprise known as MS-13, conspiracy to commit murder in aid of racketeering, murder in aid of racketeering, witness tampering murder, using a firearm in relation to a crime of violence, murder resulting from use of a gun, assault with a dangerous weapon in aid of racketeering, being an alien in possession of a gun and ammunition, and use of a gun during a crime of violence. He faces a mandatory sentence of life in prison at his sentencing on June 9, 2008.

Garcia faces a maximum sentence of 10 years in prison followed by three years of supervised release. U.S. District Judge Deborah K. Chasanow ordered Garcia detained pending her sentencing on August 11, 2008 at 10:00 a.m.

United States Attorney Rod J. Rosenstein praised the RAGE Task Force, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives; the Prince George's County Police Department; and the Maryland National Capital Park Police. Mr. Rosenstein thanked Assistant U.S. Attorney James M. Trusty and Trial Attorney David Jaffe, a prosecutor for the Justice Department's Gang Squad, who prosecuted the case.

