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**November 14, 2008**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**MS-13 MEMBER CONVICTED OF RACKETEERING CONSPIRACY, ARMED  
ROBBERY AND FIREARM VIOLATION**

*Participated in Murders of Rival Gang Members*

**Greenbelt**, Maryland - A jury convicted Victor Ramirez, age 30, a native of El Salvador residing in Hyattsville, Maryland, today on charges of conspiracy to conduct and participate in racketeering enterprise activities of MS-13, including three murders and an attempted murder; armed robbery of a commercial establishment; and using and carrying a firearm in furtherance of a crime of violence, announced United States Attorney for the District of Maryland Rod J. Rosenstein and Acting Assistant Attorney General Matthew Friedrich of the Department of Justice Criminal Division.

According to testimony presented during the four week trial, La Mara Salvatrucha, also known as MS-13, is a gang composed primarily of immigrants or descendants of immigrants from El Salvador, with members operating throughout Prince George's County and Montgomery County, Maryland, and elsewhere. MS-13 is a national and international criminal organization with approximately 10,000 members. Members of MS-13 frequently engage in criminal activity, including murders, assaults, robberies, kidnappings, and threatening and intimidating of witnesses.

MS-13 is organized in "cliques," including, the Sailors Locos Salvatruchos Westside ("SLSW" or "Sailors"), the Teclas Locos Salvatruchos ("TLS"), and the Langley Park Salvatruchos ("LPS"). Witnesses testified at trial that Ramirez was sent by MS-13 leaders from El Salvador to Maryland to strengthen MS-13 in the area and enforce the rules of the gang as established by the gang leaders in El Salvador.

Witnesses testified that on October 9, 2005, Ramirez and other MS-13 members, including co-defendant Eris Marchante-Rivas attended a meeting of the TLS clique in Prince George's County. During that meeting, one of the international leaders of the TLS clique of MS-13 spoke to the gang members by cellular telephone from a jail in El Salvador. After the meeting, Ramirez and fellow gang members drove to meet a number of gang members from other MS-13 cliques. At the meeting, the gang members discussed their plans to shoot rival gang members that day. Ramirez, Marchante-Rivas and other gang members went to the 5600 block of Quintana Street in Riverdale, Maryland with the intent of killing rival gang members. Once they arrived, Ramirez and other gang members left their vehicles and approached Jose Cerda,

Edward Trujillo and another person, who were standing in front of a house on Quintana Street. Cerda and Trujillo were shot and killed by MS-13 gang members and the third individual was wounded by a gunshot.

On November 14, 2005, Ramirez, co-defendants Juan Jiminez-Hernandez, and three other MS-13 gang members from the TLS clique drove to an apartment in Wheaton, Maryland, intending to rob a prostitution business that was being conducted there. The gang members entered the apartment and brandished a .38 caliber revolver as they robbed the doorman and the prostitute working at the brothel. Two other men who arrived at the brothel were also robbed by the gang members. The hands and feet of all of the robbery victims were bound by the gang members. Jiminez-Hernandez and another MS-13 member raped the prostitute working at the brothel. When Montgomery County police arrived at the scene, Ramirez, Jiminez-Hernandez and two other gang members were found in the apartment. A fifth gang member, who had remained in the car, attempted to warn the other gang members about the arrival of the police, but was unsuccessful. He fled in the car, but was later apprehended by police.

Ramirez faces a maximum penalty of life in prison. U.S. District Judge Deborah K. Chasanow has scheduled sentencing for February 9, 2009 at 10:00 a.m.

Eris Marchante-Rivas, also known as Strayboy, age 24, of Hyattsville, Maryland, faces a maximum sentence of life in prison and a \$250,000 fine at his sentencing on January 12, 2009. Juan Jiminez-Hernandez, also known as Snirron, age 23, of Beltsville, Maryland, was sentenced on November 10, 2008, to 150 months in prison, followed by five years of supervised release.

All of the defendants remain in federal custody.

United States Attorney Rod J. Rosenstein and Acting Assistant Attorney General Matthew Friedrich commended the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives; the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Prince George's County Police Department; U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement; the Montgomery County Police Department; the Howard County Police Department; the Maryland National Capital Park Police; the Maryland State Police; and Prince George's County State's Attorney Glenn F. Ivey and Montgomery County State's Attorney John McCarthy and their offices, for their work in this investigation and prosecution. Mr. Rosenstein thanked Assistant U.S. Attorneys Chan Park and Robert K. Hur, and Special Assistant U.S. Attorney David Jaffe, a Trial Attorney from the Justice Department's Gang Squad, who are prosecuting the case.