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MS-13 GANG MEMBER PLEADS TO RACKETEERING CONSPIRACY

Participated in a Murder and Other Acts of Violence

Greenbelt, Maryland - Jorge Rigoberto Amador, also known as Santo Diablo, age 33, of Hyattsville, Maryland, pleaded guilty today to conspiracy to conduct and participate in the racketeering enterprise activities of MS-13, announced United States Attorney for the District of Maryland Rod J. Rosenstein and Assistant Attorney General Lanny A. Breuer of the Criminal Division.

According to the plea agreement, 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.

MS-13 is organized in "cliques," including the Sailors Locos Salvatruchos Westside, the Teclas Locos Salvatruchos and the Langley Park Salvatruchos. At some point prior to 2005, Amador joined the Hollywood Locos Salvatruchas clique of MS-13. Amador's gang name, or street name, was "Santo Diablo." During 2004 and 2005, Amador associated with the Langley Park Salvatruchos clique of MS-13.

According to court documents, on March 26, 2005, Juan "Diabolico" Lopez and other MS-13 members were involved in a confrontation with rival gang members outside a strip mall in Prince George's County, Maryland. The gang members contacted Carlos Martinez, who arrived on the scene with Amador. Amador and Martinez searched for the rival gang members and, upon identifying a car containing some of the young men, Amador admitted that he took out a .38 caliber revolver, wrapped in a dark colored bandana, and fired several shots from the driver's seat of his car, killing a 15 year old named Jose Arias. A bullet also struck the clothing of another young man. Amador drove the vehicle away from the scene and met up with the participants in the initial verbal confrontation, where they discussed disposing of the evidence of the crime, including the gun and the car.

Prior to the shooting, Amador engaged in a number of other acts of violence. Amador admitted that on September 17, 2004, he went to a nightclub in Langley Park, Maryland to help fellow MS-13 members fight against a rival gang. Amador hit a member of the rival gang, and at

least one MS-13 member cut that individual with a weapon or broken beer bottle. Two days later, Amador was one of a large group of MS-13 members who attended the Hispanic Heritage Festival in Hyattsville, Maryland. During the day's outdoor events, MS-13 members observed a young man wearing a number 18 jersey, which appeared to the MS-13 members to be an acknowledgment of membership in a rival gang, the 18th Street gang. Amador admitted that he and a number of MS-13 members took part in a running street fight with the young man and his family members. Police were able to break up the melee after two of the MS-13 members were injured by the father of the young man with the "18" jersey.

Amador faces a maximum penalty of life in prison. U.S. District Judge Deborah K. Chasanow has scheduled sentencing for November 30, 2009 at 2:0 p.m.

Carlos Antonio Martinez, also known as Lobo, age 21, of Hyattsville, Maryland, pleaded guilty to racketeering conspiracy in connection with his gang activities as a juvenile and faces a maximum sentence of life at his sentencing on September 9, 2009. Juan Lopez a/k/a "Diabolico," age 23, of Riverdale, Maryland, was sentenced to 87 months in prison, after pleading guilty to the racketeering conspiracy.

To date, this office has charged 51 MS-13 members with various federal offenses; 24 members have been convicted at trial or pled guilty to RICO charges and 19 have pleaded guilty to other charges, primarily immigration or gun violations. The remainder are awaiting trial.

United States Attorney Rod J. Rosenstein and Assistant Attorney General Lanny A. Breuer praised the RAGE Task Force, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives; the Prince George's County Police Department; the Federal Bureau of Investigation; U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement; the Montgomery County Department of Police; the Howard County Police Department; the Maryland National Capital Park Police; the Maryland State Police; and the Fairfax County, Virginia Police Department.

Mr. Rosenstein thanked the Prince George's County State's Attorney Glenn F. Ivey and Montgomery County State's Attorney John McCarthy for the assistance that they and their offices provided.

Mr. Rosenstein and Mr. Breuer commended Assistant U.S. Attorney Robert K. Hur, Assistant U.S. Attorney James M. Trusty, currently on detail as Deputy Chief of the Criminal Division's Gang Unit, and Trial Attorney Laura J. Gwinn of the Criminal Division's Gang Unit, who are prosecuting the case.