



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Tuesday, September 29, 2009



*Office of the United States Attorney
District of Arizona*

For Information Contact Public Affairs
SANDY RAYNOR
Telephone: (602) 514-7625
Cell: (602) 525-2681

5 YEAR PRISON SENTENCE FOR DRUG TRAFFICKER WHO POSSESSED GUN

PHOENIX – Jesus Maria Mercado-Miranda, 31, of Sinaloa, Mexico, was sentenced yesterday by U.S. District Judge Paul G. Rosenblatt to five years in federal prison. Mercado-Miranda pleaded guilty on July 13, 2009, to Possession of a Firearm in Furtherance of a Drug Trafficking Crime.

On February 19, 2009, Mercado-Miranda was the only occupant of apartment on North 23rd Avenue in Phoenix when law enforcement officials seized a loaded Glock 9mm handgun, a Marlin, model 336, .30-30 caliber rifle, and a loaded .22 caliber long rifle revolver; 71 grams cocaine base, 2.2 grams methamphetamine; 74 grams cocaine, 1.1 grams heroin, 580 miligrams marijuana, four digital scales, cutting agent, four plastic bags containing white powder residue, four cell phones and \$4,565 in U.S. currency during the execution of a search warrant.

Mercado-Miranda possessed the Glock and the long rifle revolver in furtherance of the trafficking of drugs in violation of federal law. He was previously removed from the U.S. on October 29, 2008 at Nogales, Ariz. and did not receive permission to return. In addition to his sentence, he was ordered to forfeit \$4,565 currency and the firearms located in the homes.

This case is a result of Project Safe Neighborhoods, an illegal firearms enforcement program. The effectiveness of Project Safe Neighborhoods in the District of Arizona is based on the ability of federal, state, and local agencies to cooperate in a unified offensive led by U.S. Attorney Dennis K. Burke. Through ongoing partnerships among federal, state, and local law enforcement and prosecutorial agencies, like the one in this case, U.S. Attorney Burke is implementing a series of strategies that are contoured to fit the specific firearms crime problems throughout Arizona.

The investigation in this case was conducted by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the Phoenix Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. The prosecution was handled by Theresa Cole Rassas, Assistant U.S. Attorney, District of Arizona, Phoenix.

CASE NUMBER: CR-09-295-PHX-PGR
RELEASE NUMBER: 2009-310(Mercado-Miranda)

###

For more information on the U.S. Attorney's Office, District of Arizona, visit <http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/az/>