

NEWS RELEASE



OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

San Diego, California

*United States Attorney
Karen P. Hewitt*

For Further Information, Contact: Assistant U. S. Attorney Christopher P. Tenorio (619) 557-7843

For Immediate Release

FEDERAL JURY CONVICTS DEFENDANT ON SEX TRAFFICKING CHARGES

NEWS RELEASE SUMMARY - January 8, 2010

United States Attorney Karen P. Hewitt announced today that Adrian Zitlalpopoca-Hernandez was convicted yesterday after a jury trial before District Court Judge Roger T. Benitez. A federal jury returned verdicts Thursday afternoon, convicting Zitlalpopoca-Hernandez on ten counts which included two counts of Sex Trafficking by Force, Fraud of Coercion; two counts of Persuasion or Coercion to Travel to Engage in Prostitution; two counts of Harboring Aliens for Purposes of Prostitution; two counts of Bringing Illegal Aliens into the United States for Financial Gain; and two counts of harboring illegal aliens. The verdict follows a three-day trial.

According to evidence presented at trial, two women held at residences in the Vista area for purposes of prostitution had been trafficked into the United States by Zitlalpopoca and that force, fraud, or coercion was used to cause the women to engage in commercial sex acts. Zitlalpopoca was arrested on November 20,

2008, after Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents and San Diego County Sheriff's deputies conducted a joint investigation into an anonymous report of forced prostitution in the Vista.

United States Attorney Hewitt stated, "We are gratified that the jury accepted the difficult testimony of two trafficking victims and acknowledged the conduct of the defendant to force and coerce their prostitution activities. This result is a testament to the hard work by the ICE Human Trafficking Unit and our continuing cooperation with the Sheriff's Department. Our Office will continue to investigate and prosecute these criminal cases of human exploitation to the full extent of the law."

The defendant is scheduled to be sentenced on April 12, 2010, at 9:00 a.m., before District Court Judge Roger T. Benitez. Assistant U.S. Attorney Christopher P. Tenorio prosecuted the case.

DEFENDANT

Case Number: 08CR4304-BEN

Adrian Zitlalpopoca-Hernandez

SUMMARY OF CHARGES

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| Counts 1, 2 | Title 18, United States Code, Sections 1591, and 2 (sex trafficking by force, fraud, or coercion); Minimum penalty: 15 years of custody; Maximum penalty: life in custody; \$250,000 Fine |
| Counts 3, 4 | Title 18, United States Code, Sections 2422, and 2 (persuasion or coercion to travel to engage in prostitution) Maximum penalty: 20 years of custody; \$250,000 Fine |
| Counts 5, 6 | Title 8, United States Code, Section 1328, and Title 18, United States Code, Section 2 (harboring aliens for prostitution) Maximum penalty: 10 years of custody; \$250,000 Fine |
| Counts 7, 8 | Title 8, United States Code, Section 1324(a)(2)(B)(ii), and Title 18, United States Code, Section 2 (bringing illegal aliens into the U.S. for financial gain) Minimum penalty: Three years of custody Maximum penalty: 10 years of custody; \$250,000 Fine |
| Counts 9, 10 | Title 8, United States Code, Sections 1324(a)(1)(A)(iii), and (v)(II) (harboring illegal aliens); Maximum penalty: 10 years of custody; \$250,000 Fine |

AGENCIES

Department of Homeland Security, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Human Trafficking Unit
San Diego County Sheriff's Department