



Department of Justice

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CUBAN NATIONAL PLEADS GUILTY TO FEDERAL NARCOTICS AND FIREARMS CHARGES

Orlando, Florida - United States Attorney A. Brian Albritton announces that Jose Antonio Avila-Almira (age 62, of Orlando) today pleaded guilty to possessing a firearm after having been convicted of a felony, possessing cocaine and heroin with the intent to distribute it, and possessing a firearm in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime. Avila-Almira faces a maximum penalty of life in federal prison with a minimum mandatory sentence of twenty years. A sentencing hearing has not yet been scheduled.

According to the plea agreement, on December 25, 2008, members of the Orange County Sheriff's Office confronted Avila-Almira after learning that he might be in possession of a firearm and narcotics. Avila-Almira consented to a search, and deputies located on his person a loaded semi-automatic pistol, 82 baggies of cocaine and heroin, and \$1,288. Agents from U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement subsequently determined that Avila-Almira was a convicted felon and a Cuban national without the legal right to remain in the United States. Additionally, Avila-Almira's felony record qualifies him as an Armed Career Criminal under federal sentencing statutes.

This case was investigated by the Orange County Sheriff's Office, Florida Department of Law Enforcement, and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. It is being prosecuted by Special Assistant United States Attorney Stephanie Gorman and Assistant United States Attorney Robert Bodnar.