

For Immediate Release
August 10, 2011

**ARMED CAREER CRIMINAL RECEIVES FIFTEEN YEAR PRISON
SENTENCE FOR VIOLATING FEDERAL FIREARMS LAWS**

ALBUQUERQUE – United States Attorney Kenneth J. Gonzales announced that, on August 9, 2011, in federal court in Albuquerque, Albuquerque resident **Joe Maldonado**, 33, was sentenced to a 15-year term of imprisonment to be followed by three years supervised release for his federal firearms convictions.

Maldonado was indicted on April 22, 2009, and charged with (1) being a felon in possession of a firearm on July 29, 2008 in Bernalillo County; (2) possession of an unregistered firearm on July 29, 2008; and (3) being a felon in possession of a firearm on December 31, 2008 in Bernalillo County. According to the indictment, Maldonado was prohibited from possessing firearms because he previously had been convicted of three felony offenses, namely, two residential burglaries and possession of cocaine. Maldonado was adjudged a career criminal based on those three felony convictions.

According to court records, on December 31, 2008, Bernalillo County Sheriff's deputies, who were looking for Maldonado in connection with an unrelated matter, approached Maldonado in the vicinity of Coors and Central in Albuquerque. When they attempted to make contact with Maldonado as he stood by his vehicle, Maldonado fled on foot and eventually was apprehended. When Maldonado fled, he left the vehicle's front door open and the deputies saw a firearm on the floorboard in front of the driver's seat. The deputies obtained a search warrant for the vehicle and found a black High-Point, model C, 9 mm pistol with two cartridges of ammunition in Maldonado's vehicle.

Maldonado was arrested on January 26, 2010 and has been in federal custody since that

time. On October 21, 2010, Maldonado entered a guilty plea to Count 3 of the indictment under a plea agreement with the United States Attorney's Office. The Court dismissed Counts 1 and 2 after Maldonado was sentenced.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Louis E. Valencia, and was investigated by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and the Bernalillo County Sheriff's Office.

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