

Department of Justice

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BUFFALO MAN SENTENCED FOR ROLE IN HEROIN DISTRIBUTION ORGANIZATION

BUFFALO, N.Y.-- United States Attorney Kathleen M. Mehlretter announced that Carmelo Mercado, 42, of Buffalo, New York, who was convicted of conspiracy to distribute, and possess with intent to distribute, 1 kilograms or more of cocaine on July 29, 2009, was sentenced to 10 years in prison and 5 years supervised release by U.S. District Judge William M. Skretny.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Timothy C. Lynch, who handled the case, stated that the defendant has been in custody since his arrest on August 11, 2007, by Special Agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The investigation leading to the defendant's conviction was aided significantly through the use of court-authorized interception orders which permitted federal agents to intercept telephone calls between several of the defendant's co-conspirators, including the alleged leader of the organization, Pedro Antonetty. According to AUSA Lynch, the investigation revealed that since early 2006 and continuing to August 2007, the defendant was involved in the distribution of heroin. At a later time, the defendant attained a significant role within the Antonetty organization which distributed heroin out of several houses located in the City of Buffalo.

The sentencing in federal court resulted from an investigation on the part of the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Safe Streets Task Force, under the direction of James H. Robertson; the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, under the direction of Acting Special Agent in Charge Frank Christiano; New York State Police, under the direction of Major Matthew S. Renneman; New York State Parole, under the direction of Regional Director Eugenio Russi and Area Supervisor Donald Snyder; and the Buffalo Police Department, under the direction of H. McCarthy Gibson.