

# **PRESS RELEASE**

**BILL NETTLES**

**UNITED STATES ATTORNEY**

**DISTRICT OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **MEXICAN NATIONAL PLEADS TO DRUG CONSPIRACY**

**Columbia, South Carolina**---- United States Attorney Bill Nettles stated today that Adrian Cienfuegos-Aguirre, age 32, of Guerrero, Mexico, plead guilty today in federal court in Columbia, South Carolina, to conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute 500 grams or more of cocaine, in violation of Title 21, United States Code, Section 846.

United States District Judge Joseph F. Anderson, Jr., of Columbia accepted the plea and will impose his sentence after he has reviewed the presentence report, which will be prepared by the U.S. Probation Office. Cienfuegos-Aguirre faces a mandatory minimum of five (5) years and a maximum of forty (40) years imprisonment, along with four (4) years of supervised release to follow the term of imprisonment and a fine of \$2,000,000.00.

Adrian Cienfuegos-Aguirre was one of over 116 defendants initially

charged in 2009 following a series of court-authorized, FBI-monitored wiretaps over multiple telephones in the Columbia/Lexington area. Cienfuegos-Aguirre was a fugitive on the federal charge until his arrest at the Texas/Mexico border in September 2011. The evidence in the case indicated that Cienfuegos-Aguirre, a resident alien, was involved in the delivery of kilogram quantities of cocaine to the Lexington County area and in the transportation of drug proceeds after the sale of the cocaine. Evidence presented in court showed that on January 21, 2009, following a multi-kilogram deal, which was under surveillance by agents, Cienfuegos-Aguirre was stopped in a vehicle with another co-defendant, and found in possession of \$153,640.00, which was seized by law enforcement. All co-defendants have been convicted and sentenced, with the exception of one remaining fugitive in the indictment.

The case was investigated by agents and officers from the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) special agents, the State Law Enforcement Division (SLED), the Richland County Sheriff's Department and the Columbia Police Department. Assistant United States Attorney Stacey D. Haynes of the Columbia office prosecuted the case.

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