



**U.S. Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Western District of Texas**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**FIVE ARRESTED IN DALLAS AREA CHARGED IN FEDERAL
COCAINE/METHAMPHETAMINE DISTRIBUTION AND MONEY LAUNDERING CONSPIRACY**

United States Attorney Johnny Sutton announced that Luis Eduardo Rendon and his wife Monica Trevino Cervantes of Forney, Texas, Clayton Sharpless of Dallas, Mark Ellis Johnson and Orlando King, of DeSoto remain in federal custody this afternoon charged in a cocaine/methamphetamine distribution and money laundering conspiracy stemming from an investigation centered in the Waco area.

All five were named in a two-count federal grand jury indictment returned last week in Waco and unsealed this afternoon. Rendon, Sharpless, Johnson and King are charged with one count of conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute at least 500 grams of methamphetamine as well as more than 5 kilograms of cocaine. All five are charged with one count of conspiracy to commit money laundering.

The indictment alleges that from December 2003 to the present, the defendants conspired to transport and distribute methamphetamine and cocaine, as well as the proceeds from the sale of the controlled substances, in both the Western and Northern Districts of Texas.

The indictment also seeks the criminal forfeiture of Rendon and Trevino's residence in Forney and Johnson's residence in DeSoto as well as a monetary judgement in the amount of \$16.38 million which represents the proceeds of the entire criminal activity.

The defendants, who had their initial appearances in U.S. District Court in Dallas this afternoon, remain in federal custody pending transfer to the Western District of Texas. Federal and local authorities arrested Johnson and King at their residences this morning. Rendon, Cervantes and Sharpless were arrested while in their homes on Wednesday morning.

Upon conviction, Rendon, Sharpless, Johnson and King face between 10 years and life in federal prison on the drug conspiracy charge. All defendants face up to 20 years in federal prison on the money laundering conspiracy charge.

This investigation, being conducted by agents with the Internal Revenue Service - Criminal Investigation Division, Drug Enforcement Administration, the Irving Police Department and the McLennan County Sheriff's Office, continues. Assistant United States Attorney Mark Frazier is prosecuting this case on behalf of the government. **A indictment is a formal accusation of criminal conduct, not evidence of guilt. The defendants are presumed innocent unless and until convicted through due process of law.**

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