



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

John E. Murphy, Acting U.S. Attorney

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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EL PASO MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO COMMITTING ARMED ROBBERIES

John E. Murphy, Acting U.S. Attorney, announced that in El Paso today, 45-year-old Ismael Serna Moreno pleaded guilty to committing several bank and retail store robberies as well as brandishing a firearm during two of the retail store robberies.

Appearing before United States District Judge David Briones, Moreno pleaded guilty to two counts of bank robbery, two counts of violating the Hobbs Act (robbery affecting interstate commerce) and two counts of using a firearm during a crime of violence.

By pleading guilty, Moreno admitted that between April 2009 and June 2009, he robbed four financial institutions including First Federal Bank, BBVA Compass Bank and two Bank of America branches. Moreno also admitted that between February 2007 and March 2009, he stole jewelry from five El Paso businesses including two Cash America Pawn shops, Benny's Pawn Shop and two First Cash Pawn shops. Finally, Moreno admitting that he used a Lorcin .380 pistol during the March 9, 2007, robbery of First Cash Pawn located on Alameda Drive and that he used a Glock 9mm pistol during the March 3, 2009, robbery of Cash America Pawn on North Lee Trevino.

As a result of his guilty plea, Moreno faces up to 20 years imprisonment per bank robbery and Hobbs Act charge plus a mandatory 32 years to life imprisonment on the firearms charges to be served consecutively to sentences imposed for the other four charges. Moreno has also agreed to pay over \$44,000 restitution. Moreno remains in federal custody pending sentencing scheduled for December 4, 2009.

This case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation together with the El Paso Police Department. Assistant United States Attorney J. Brandy Gardes is prosecuting this case on behalf of the government.

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