



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

John E. Murphy, Acting U.S. Attorney

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Shana Jones, Special Assistant
Daryl Fields, Public Information Officer
(210) 384-7440

May 21, 2009

CONVICTED COCAINE DEALER PLEADS GUILTY TO WITNESS RETALIATION

John E. Murphy, Acting United States Attorney, announced that this afternoon in Midland, Jose Ambrocio Vasquez, 25, of Andrews, pleaded guilty to making retaliatory threats against a witness who had testified adversely to him in his March 2009 federal trial on cocaine distribution charges.

Vasquez was found guilty of distributing cocaine by a jury on March 12, 2009, and was allowed to remain on bond pending sentencing. In his plea before United States Magistrate Judge B. Dwight Goains, Vasquez admitted that just four days later on March 16, he and two other men repeatedly drove by the Andrews home of an individual who had testified at his trial and made hand gestures to the individual pantomiming the firing of a gun. When police responded to a distress call from the witness, Vasquez led officers on a high speed chase through a residential neighborhood. Vasquez was apprehended trying to flee his vehicle on foot.

Vasquez, who already faced up to 20 years imprisonment on the cocaine charges, now faces an additional prison term of up to 20 years because of the retaliation. Vasquez's bond was revoked and he is now in custody. Sentencing on both cases will occur in approximately 90 days.

"We have zero tolerance for witness intimidation," stated John E. Murphy, Acting U.S. Attorney. "Those who seek to avoid punishment for their crimes by intimidating witnesses, or by retaliating against witnesses who have testified against them will be vigorously prosecuted for their attempts to interfere with the administration of justice."

The case was investigated by the Drug Enforcement Administration and the Andrews Police Department. Assistant United States Attorney Kerry A. Fleck is prosecuting the matter for the Government.

#####