

# ***NEWS RELEASE***

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SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA  
San Diego, California***

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***For Immediate Release***

**LARGE-SCALE NARCOTICS SMUGGLER  
SENTENCED TO 235 MONTHS IN FEDERAL CUSTODY**

**NEWS RELEASE SUMMARY** - September 14, 2011

United States Attorney Laura E. Duffy announced that Efren Ochoa-Gembe, of Tijuana, Mexico, was sentenced today to serve 235 months in federal custody by United States District Court Judge Janis L. Sammartino. Ochoa-Gembe was sentenced based on his November 10, 2009 guilty plea to conspiracy to import cocaine, methamphetamine, and precursor chemicals, in violation of Title 21, United States Sections, 952, 960, and 963.

As part of his guilty plea, and according to court documents, Ochoa-Gembe admitted he was the manager and transportation broker for two Mexican drug organizations that imported hundreds of pounds of methamphetamine and cocaine through the San Ysidro and Otay Mesa Ports of Entry during a two-year period. The cocaine and methamphetamine were destined for Los Angeles, Riverside, and San Bernardino Counties. The precursor chemicals, involving over 100 pounds of iodine and over 50 gallons of

hypophosphorous acid, was to be used to manufacture methamphetamine.

According to United States Attorney Duffy, the conspiracy charge stemmed from “Operation Frontera,” a multi-agency investigation that was part of the Organized Crime and Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF). OCDETF Operation Frontera involved the investigation of several couriers who were arrested transporting large quantities of methamphetamine and cocaine at the San Ysidro and Otay Mesa Ports of Entry. Special Agents with Immigration and Customs Enforcement’s Homeland Security Investigations (ICE) seized approximately 906 pounds of methamphetamine, approximately 334 pounds of cocaine, and approximately 1.5 million dollars during the investigation. United States Attorney Duffy praised the investigative work by Special Agents of ICE’s Homeland Security Investigations.

**DEFENDANT**

**Case Number: 09CR2916JLS**

Efren Ochoa-Gembe

In Custody

**SUMMARY OF CHARGE AS TO OCHOA-GEMBE**

Conspiracy to Import Methamphetamine, Cocaine, and Precursor Chemicals  
Title 21, United States Code, Sections 952, 960, and 963

**PARTICIPATING AGENCIES**

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement’s Homeland Security Investigations  
U.S. Customs and Border Protection