

NEWS RELEASE



OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

San Diego, California

***United States Attorney
Laura E. Duffy***

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For Immediate Release

NEWS RELEASE SUMMARY - May 25, 2012

United States Attorney Laura E. Duffy announced that today Carlos Cosme, a former police officer with the Baja California State Attorney General's Office, entered a guilty plea to federal racketeering (RICO) and narcotics trafficking conspiracy charges before United States District Judge William Q. Hayes. In his plea agreement, Cosme admitted that he hired codefendant Jose Ortega Nuno to run a "hit squad" on behalf of a multinational criminal enterprise controlled by Fernando Sanchez-Arellano (the "FSO").

Due to the establishment of that "hit squad," Cosme admitted to participating in a conspiracy to commit murder on behalf of the FSO. At the time that he agreed to run Cosme's "hit squad," Jose Ortega Nuno was employed as a police officer with the Baja California State Attorney General's Office, and was responsible for supervising that office's sex crimes unit. Another official from the Baja California State Attorney General's Office, the former Director of International Liaison, Jesus Quinonez Marquez, plead guilty to federal RICO charges earlier this week. Jose Ortega Nuno, who was extradited to the United States from Mexico to face charges in this case, plead guilty to the RICO conspiracy on December 13, 2011.

During his guilty plea today, Cosme also admitted to selling and importing several pounds of methamphetamine on behalf of the FSO.

Today's guilty plea marks the thirty-ninth conviction in this case, which resulted from a long-term investigation conducted by the multi-agency San Diego Cross Border Violence Task Force (CBVTF). The CBVTF was formulated to target those individuals involved in organized crime-related violent activities affecting both the United States and Mexico. Law enforcement personnel assigned to the CBVTF made extensive use of court-authorized wiretaps and other sophisticated investigative techniques to develop the significant evidence which led to the charges in this case. The lead defendant in the case, Armando Villareal-Heredia, was extradited to the United States on May 23, 2012.

United States Attorney Duffy praised the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF) for the coordinated team effort in the culmination of this investigation, "Operation Luz Verde." Agents and officers from the Federal Bureau of Investigation, San Diego Police Department, Drug Enforcement Administration, San Diego County Sheriff's Office, Chula Vista Police Department, U.S. Marshals Service, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, San Diego District Attorney's Office, and California Department of Justice participated in this OCDETF investigation. The OCDETF program was created to consolidate and utilize all law enforcement resources in this country's battle against organized crime and major drug trafficking organizations.

Judge Hayes set a sentencing hearing on August 27, 2012 at 9:00 a.m.

DEFENDANT

Case Number 10CR3044-WQH

Carlos Cosme

SUMMARY OF CHARGES

Title 18, United States Code, Section 1962(d) - Conspiracy to Conduct Enterprise Affairs Through a Pattern of Racketeering Activity; Maximum penalties: Life in prison, \$250,000 fine, 5 years of supervised release

Title 21, United States Code, Sections 846 and 841(a)(1) - Conspiracy to Distribute Controlled Substances
Maximum penalties: Life in prison, \$10,000,000 fine, 5 years of supervised release

AGENCIES

Federal Bureau of Investigation
San Diego Police Department
Drug Enforcement Administration

San Diego County Sheriff's Office
Chula Vista Police Department
U.S. Marshals Service
Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms
California Department of Justice
San Diego District Attorney's Office