



Department of Justice

United States Attorney David E. Nahmias
Northern District of Georgia

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CONTACT: Patrick Crosby

(404)581-6016

FAX (404)581-6160

CAPTORS SENTENCED TO DECADES IN PRISON FOR KIDNAPPING & ABUSING DRUG DEALER OVER DRUG DEBT

*Victim Was Chained to Wall in Basement of Gwinnett County Residence
for Nearly A Week For Alleged \$300,000 Drug Debt*

Atlanta, GA - VICTOR ABILES GOMEZ, 20, OMAR MENDOZA-VILLEGAS, 19, and GERARDO SOLORIO REYES, a/k/a "Gera," 23, all illegal immigrants from Mexico, have been sentenced to federal prison on hostage-taking and related charges, arising from the week-long kidnapping and abuse of a drug dealer.

United States Attorney David E. Nahmias said of the case, "This case demonstrates the danger inherent in the illegal business of drug-dealing. All of these drug dealers -- captors and victim -- have now been sentenced to federal prison. Fortunately this violent episode did not spill over to innocent members of our community."

DEA Atlanta Field Division Special Agent in Charge Rodney G. Benson said, "Drug trafficking and violence go hand-in-hand. Traffickers will take extreme measures in order to protect their drugs and money. The capture and eventual prosecution of these individuals was possible because of the concerted efforts of our federal, state and local law enforcement counterparts. These defendants will now spend well deserved time in prison."

Both GOMEZ and MENDOZA-VILLEGAS were sentenced to 24 years, 6 months in federal prison, to be followed by 5 years of supervised release. REYES was sentenced to 26 years, 7 months in federal prison, to be followed by 5 years of supervised release. The defendants pleaded guilty to the charges on March 21, 2009.

According to United States Attorney Nahmias and the information presented in court: On the afternoon of July 11, 2008, acting on information about a possible hostage taking, federal and local authorities established surveillance of a house located at 755 East Fork Shady Drive, Lilburn, Georgia. Three individuals inside the house apparently saw the police presence and began to flee. DEA Strike Force and FBI SWAT agents, working in

conjunction with Gwinnett County authorities, quickly and successfully rescued the victim, later identified as Oscar Reynoso, 31, who is originally from the Dominican Republic but more recently from Rhode Island. At the time agents rescued Reynoso, he appeared to be severely de-hydrated and badly beaten. Agents found him bound and gagged, chained to a mattress in the unfinished basement of the home, which is described as a middle-class neighborhood residence in Gwinnett County. Also found in the basement were flex cuffs and firearms, including an assault rifle. When authorities found Reynoso inside the basement, he appeared to be hyperventilating. Agents immediately removed his gag and provided him with fluids and medical attention. VICTOR ABILES GOMEZ, OMAR MENDOZA-VILLEGAS, and GERARDO SOLORIO REYES, each took part in the capture and the beating of the victim, as well as playing roles in keeping him from escaping and threatening him verbally as well as with a weapon.

In speaking to Reynoso, as well as one of his captors, agents learned that Reynoso had been lured to Atlanta from Rhode Island, purportedly to complete a vehicle purchase transaction with an individual identified as "Tio." Reynoso had met Tio at a nearby fast food restaurant, from where the two then rode to the 755 East Shady Fork Drive residence. Upon entering the garage, Reynoso was ambushed and assaulted by eight men carrying firearms. After being beaten, he was imprisoned in the basement where the agents ultimately found him. While holding Reynoso, his captors, including Tio, contacted Reynoso's friends and relatives in Rhode Island in an effort to collect the drug debt of \$300,000. Reynoso was constantly threatened and beaten during the ordeal. Tio is considered to be a fugitive.

Reynoso pleaded guilty to conspiring to possess with the intent to distribute at least 5 kilograms of cocaine and was sentenced to serve 3 years, 10 months in federal prison.

This case was investigated by Special Agents of the DEA-Atlanta, with assistance from the FBI's SWAT Team, the Gwinnett County Police Department, and the Fayette County Sheriff's Department.

Assistant United States Attorneys Scott Hulsey and Cassandra Schansman prosecuted the case.

For further information, please contact David E. Nahmias (pronounced NAH-me-us), United States Attorney, or Charysse L. Alexander, Executive Assistant United States Attorney, through Patrick Crosby, Public Affairs Officer, U.S. Attorney's Office, at (404) 581-6016. The Internet address for the HomePage for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Georgia is www.usdoj.gov/usao/gan.