



Department of Justice

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GULF CARTEL MEMBER SENTENCED

Former Close Associate of Osiel Cárdenas Guillén Receives 22 Years in Prison

ATLANTA, GA - JOSE BARRIENTOS-RODRIGUEZ, a/k/a "Pepe," 36, of Mexico, was sentenced today in federal district court in Atlanta by Senior United States District Court Judge Clarence Cooper for participation in a conspiracy to possession with intent to distribute cocaine. BARRIENTOS-RODRIGUEZ was sentenced to 22 years in federal prison, to be followed by 5 years of supervised release. BARRIENTOS-RODRIGUEZ was convicted of these charges on March 17, 2010, upon his plea of guilty.

United States Attorney Sally Quillian Yates said of today's sentencing, "This case strikes a significant hit against the influx of cocaine to the United States from the Mexican cartels, and shows how effective our intervention can be when we cooperate closely with Mexican law enforcement to bring drug traffickers here from Mexico to be prosecuted."

"Barrientos-Rodriguez attempted to harm law enforcement officers in his distribution of drugs in Atlanta and avoid justice by fleeing to Mexico," said Rodney G. Benson, Special Agent in Charge of the Atlanta Field Division of the Drug Enforcement Administration. "Today's sentencing shows the extent the DEA and United States Attorney's Office will go to bring justice to those who endanger the public."

According to United States Attorney Yates, the plea agreement, indictment and information presented in court: In 2001, agents of the Drug Enforcement Administration ("DEA") were conducting an investigation of a drug organization operating in the Atlanta, Georgia area that was being managed by BARRIENTOS-RODRIGUEZ and associated with the multi-million dollar Mexican cocaine trafficking organization known as the "Gulf Cartel," the head of which at the time was Osiel Cárdenas Guillén. On June 7, 2001, based upon information from a court-authorized wiretap of a telephone used by BARRIENTOS-RODRIGUEZ, DEA learned that a delivery of a large shipment of cocaine was expected from south Texas to the Atlanta, Georgia area. DEA conducted surveillance of BARRIENTOS-RODRIGUEZ and others, following them to Montgomery Motors where DEA observed the unloading of approximately 247.5 kilograms of cocaine

from a tractor-trailer into a white van. After the unloading, the van traveled toward Interstate 20 with BARRIENTOS-RODRIGUEZ following directly behind in a green Chevy.

In concert with DEA, Georgia State Patrol officers riding in marked police cars moved into position to make a traffic stop of the white van. As the Georgia State Patrol attempted to pull over the van, BARRIENTOS-RODRIGUEZ made a telephone call to the driver of the white van and instructed the driver to move over to the left lane so that BARRIENTOS-RODRIGUEZ could crash the police car and "send them to hell." Thereafter, BARRIENTOS-RODRIGUEZ positioned his vehicle between the police car and the white van and began swerving, successfully causing the marked police car, which had attempted to stop the van, to crash. Eventually, the van was stopped and approximately 247.5 kilograms of cocaine was discovered inside watermelon boxes, with an estimated wholesale street-value of approximately \$3.9 million. Officers pursued the green Chevy driven by BARRIENTOS-RODRIGUEZ, but when it was located, BARRIENTOS-RODRIGUEZ and the passenger had abandoned the vehicle and escaped. A search of an apartment at in the vicinity of the 2700 block of Pine Tree Drive in Atlanta, a location known to be used by the organization, resulted in the seizure of approximately \$3,107,686. BARRIENTOS-RODRIGUEZ was not apprehended at the time.

In January 2002, BARRIENTOS-RODRIGUEZ was arrested in Mexico and charged with violations of Mexico's organized crime laws for which he was sentenced on February 15, 2007. BARRIENTOS-RODRIGUEZ was later extradited from Mexico to the United States on December 31, 2008, to face charges here.

This case was investigated by Special Agents of the Drug Enforcement Administration.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Bret R. Williams prosecuted the case.

For further information please contact Sally Quillian Yates, United States Attorney, or John Horn, First Assistant U.S. Attorney, at (404) 581-6118. The Internet address for the HomePage for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Georgia is www.justice.gov/usao/gan.