



U.S. Department of Justice

*United States Attorney
Northern District of Illinois
Western Division*

Monica V. Mallory
Assistant U.S. Attorney
www.usdoj.gov/usao/iln

308 West State Street - Room 300
Rockford, Illinois 61101

PH: (815) 987-4444
FAX: (815) 987-4236

May 13, 2009

ROCKFORD MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO CONSPIRACY TO DISTRIBUTE CRACK

ROCKFORD – PATRICK J. FITZGERALD, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois; GARY G. OLENKIEWICZ, Special Agent-in-Charge of the Chicago Office of the Drug Enforcement Administration; and RICHARD MEYERS, Winnebago County Sheriff, today made the following announcement:

CRISTOBAL PEREZ, 33, of Rockford, Illinois, pleaded guilty in federal court in Rockford yesterday to conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute and to distribute cocaine. Also charged in the conspiracy are Raul Raygoza, 39, Cesar N. Sanchez, 34, Juan Espinoza, 26, and Abigail Berrones, 29, all of Rockford.

In pleading guilty, Perez admitted that from about November 14, 2008 through November 19, 2008, Perez and his co-defendants conspired with each other to distribute cocaine. According to the plea agreement, Perez and Sanchez met Espinoza near a furniture store located on Charles Street in Rockford and then went together to the furniture store where Espinoza escorted the two into the store and they met with Raygoza. The plea agreement further states that Raygoza directed everyone to go upstairs where Sanchez showed Espinoza the kilogram of cocaine. Raygoza then called the buyer who was a cooperating source ("CS") and told the CS to come to the store. The CS arrived at the store, went upstairs, and was given the kilogram of cocaine in a grey and yellow plastic wrapped rectangular shaped package. After the CS left, Perez left the store and was arrested outside.

Sentencing for Perez will be conducted on August 27, 2009, at 9:00 a.m. Perez faces a possible maximum penalty of 40 years in prison, with a mandatory minimum of 5 years, a fine of up to \$2,000,000, and a term of supervised release following imprisonment of at least 4 years and up to life. The actual sentence will be determined by the United States District Court, guided by the United States Sentencing Guidelines.

Members of the public are reminded that a criminal indictment is only a charge and is not evidence of guilt. The remaining defendants are entitled to a fair trial at which time the government has the burden of proving each of those defendant's guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

The case was investigated by the Rockford Office of the DEA and the Winnebago County Sheriff's Department. The case is being prosecuted in federal court by Assistant United States Attorney Monica V. Mallory.

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