



*United States Attorney
Southern District of New York*

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**12 ARRESTED IN CONSPIRACY TO HIJACK FEDEX
TRACTOR-TRAILER TRUCK BELIEVED TO CONTAIN
MILLIONS OF DOLLARS OF DIAMONDS**

LEV L. DASSIN, the Acting United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, MARK J. MERSHON, the Assistant Director-in-Charge of the New York Field Division of the Federal Bureau of Investigation ("FBI"), and RAYMOND W. KELLY, the Police Commissioner of the City of New York, announced the arrests of twelve persons for conspiracy to hijack Federal Express ("FedEx") tractor-trailer trucks which they believed contained high-value items, including millions of dollars worth of diamonds. According to the allegations set forth in the Complaint filed in Manhattan federal court:

On the night of December 20, 2007, two men displaying firearms and police badges approached the driver of a FedEx tractor-trailer in Manhattan believed to contain several million dollars worth of diamonds. The driver was removed from the FedEx truck at gunpoint, handcuffed, and kidnaped. The FedEx truck was driven to a loading dock in Brooklyn. When the defendants were unable to unload the contents of the truck, it was driven to a different location where it was abandoned. The driver, after being held for more than four hours, was then released. When the NYPD recovered the stolen FedEx truck, none of the containers were missing or opened.

The December 2007 hijacking was planned by diamond district jeweler BRIAN GREENWALD, his associate RONI AMRUSSI, and HECTOR RIVERA, the head of a violent group of armed robbers who committed other robberies involving FedEx.

Through the use of surveillance, consensually-recorded telephone conversations and in-person meetings between HECTOR RIVERA and a cooperating witness (the "CW"), and Court-authorized wiretaps on two cellular telephones, law enforcement officials learned that a second hijacking was scheduled to take place on December 4, 2008, and that it was being planned by HECTOR RIVERA, RONI AMRUSSI, BRIAN GREENWALD, HECTOR MATHEWS, among others. For example, during the lead-up to December 4, 2008, FBI agents observed, among other things, HECTOR RIVERA and RONI AMRUSSI driving past a warehouse on Long Island, which the CW had previously shown to HECTOR RIVERA as a possible place to off-load the contents of the hijacked FedEx tractor-trailer. Intercepted wire and electronic communications between HECTOR RIVERA, BRIAN GREENWALD, RONI AMRUSSI, HECTOR MATHEWS, and others revealed, among other things, that HECTOR RIVERA, RONI AMRUSSI, and HECTOR MATHEWS were involved in recruiting people to participate in the robbery, and that HECTOR MATHEWS eventually found three men in Puerto Rico to act as armed gunmen during the robbery.

On December 4, 2008, law enforcement officers observed members of the robbery crew gathering in the area of 11th Avenue, in Manhattan, in advance of the planned robbery. That night, the officers arrested HECTOR RIVERA, RONI AMRUSSI, BRIAN GREENWALD, ROMAN ZADIRIYEV, ARKADIY ISRAILOV, HECTOR MATHEWS, MARIO TORRES, JOSE AMEZQUITA-CASTILLO, JOSE TORRES-RIVERA, EDUARDO CARTAGENA-DELGADO, CARLOS QUILES, and LUIS RAMIREZ-MIRABEL. All but ZADIRIYEV were presented on the charges and ordered detained in Manhattan federal court this evening. ZADIRIYEV is expected to be presented in Manhattan federal court tomorrow.

If convicted, the defendants face the following maximum penalties:

Ct	Defendant(s)	Charge	Potential Penalty
1	HECTOR RIVERA, RONI AMRUSSI, BRIAN GREENWALD, ROMAN ZADIRIYEV, ARKADIY ISRAILOV, HECTOR MATHEWS, MARIO TORRES, JOSE AMEZQUITA-CASTILLO, a/k/a "Quique," JOSE TORRES-RIVERA, EDUARDO CARTAGENA-DELGADO, CARLOS QUILES, and LUIS RAMIREZ-MIRABEL	Conspiracy to commit Hobbs Act robbery	20 years in prison

2	HECTOR RIVERA, BRIAN GREENWALD, ROMAN ZADIRIYEV, ARKADIY ISRAILOV, and MARIO TORRES	Hobbs Act robbery	20 years in prison
3	HECTOR RIVERA, ROMAN ZADIRIYEV, ARKADIY ISRAILOV, and MARIO TORRES	Brandishing a firearm in furtherance of Hobbs Act robbery	Life in prison; and a mandatory minimum sentence of 7 years in prison (must be served consecutively to any other sentence)
4	HECTOR RIVERA, RONI AMRUSSI, BRIAN GREENWALD, HECTOR MATHEWS, MARIO TORRES, JOSE AMEZQUITA-CASTILLO, JOSE TORRES-RIVERA, EDUARDO CARTAGENA-DELGADO, CARLOS QUILES, and LUIS RAMIREZ-MIRABEL	Attempted Hobbs Act robbery	20 years in prison
5	HECTOR RIVERA, RONI AMRUSSI, HECTOR MATHEWS, MARIO TORRES, JOSE AMEZQUITA-CASTILLO, JOSE TORRES-RIVERA, EDUARDO CARTAGENA-DELGADO, CARLOS QUILES, and LUIS RAMIREZ-MIRABEL	Possessing a firearm in furtherance of Hobbs Act robbery	Life in prison; and a mandatory minimum sentence of 5 years (must be served consecutively to any other sentence)

Mr. DASSIN praised the investigative work of the FBI and the NYPD. Mr. DASSIN added the investigation is continuing.

Assistant United States Attorneys MICHAEL Q. ENGLISH, CHRISTIAN R. EVERDELL, and MARGARET M. GARNETT are in charge of the prosecution.

The charges and allegations contained in the Complaint are merely accusations and the defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.