



*United States Attorney  
Southern District of New York*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
DECEMBER 9, 2008**

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**MEXICO-BASED DRUG KINGPIN PLEADS GUILTY  
IN MANHATTAN FEDERAL COURT**

LEV L. DASSIN, Acting United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, announced that GILBERTO SALINAS DORIA, a Mexico-based drug kingpin accused of importing at least 200 tons of cocaine into the United States, pleaded guilty today to narcotics conspiracy charges in Manhattan Federal Court before United States District Judge GERARD E. LYCH. SALINAS DORIA was extradited from Mexico to face the charges in March 2007. According to the Indictment and other documents filed in Manhattan federal court, as well as statements made during SALINAS DORIA's guilty plea proceeding:

From about 1994 through 1999, SALINAS DORIA, 50, received at least 200 tons of cocaine from co-defendants ALCIDES RAMON MAGANA and JESUS ALBINO QUINTERO MERAZ, in the areas of Playa del Carmen, Quintano Roo, Mexico and Reynosa, Tamaulipas, Mexico. As a part of a larger narcotics trafficking conspiracy, SALINAS DORIA arranged for the transportation and delivery of the cocaine to co-conspirators in Manhattan and other cities in the United States. Approximately 4.4 tons of the organization's cocaine was seized by United States law enforcement agents in New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania between 1997 and 1999.

In furtherance of the cocaine-trafficking conspiracy, RAMON MAGANA and QUINTERO MERAZ arranged to make payments to a third co-defendant, MARIO ERNESTO VILLANUEVA MADRID, who was then the Governor of the State of Quintana Roo. Specifically, during the period from about 1994 through at least December 1996, RAMON MAGANA arranged to pay VILLANUEVA MADRID approximately \$500,000 in United States currency for each shipment of cocaine that RAMON MAGANA transported through Quintana Roo.

SALINAS DORIA was initially arrested in Mexico in October 1998, but escaped from Mexican authorities; he was re-arrested in Venezuela and returned to Mexican custody in early 1999. He was prosecuted by Mexican authorities on local charges,

and subsequently extradited to the United States in 2007.

SALINAS DORIA pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy to import cocaine into the United States, and one count of conspiracy to distribute cocaine and possess cocaine with intent to distribute. Each charge carries a maximum sentence of 40 years in prison, and a mandatory minimum sentence of five years in prison.

SALINAS DORIA is scheduled to be sentenced on March 13 by Judge LYNCH. VILLANUEVA MADRID is in Mexican custody pending a Mexican court's decision on a formal request for extradition submitted by the United States. RAMON MAGANA and QUINTERO MERAZ are in custody in Mexico on local charges; the case against them is still pending in the United States.

Mr. DASSIN praised the investigative work of the Drug Enforcement Administration's New York Drug Enforcement Task Force, which includes agents and officers of the Drug Enforcement Administration ("DEA"), New York City Police Department, New York State Police, and the DEA's Mexico City Country Office and Merida Regional Office. Mr. DASSIN thanked the United States Marshal's Service for its work in effectuating the extradition, and expressed his gratitude to the Mexican Attorney General's Office for its cooperation in the investigation.

Assistant United States Attorneys JOCELYN E. STRAUBER, GLEN KOPP and ANIRUDH BANSAL are in charge of the prosecution, which is being handled by the Office's International Narcotics Trafficking Unit.

The charges and allegations contained in the Indictment against the defendants with pending cases are merely accusations and those defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

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