



*United States Attorney
Southern District of New York*

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NEW YORK CITY POLICE OFFICER AND
ASSOCIATE WITH DRUG AND
EXTORTION OFFENSES

PREET BHARARA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, JOSEPH DEMAREST, JR., the Assistant Director-in-Charge of the New York Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation ("FBI"), and RAYMOND W. KELLY, the Police Commissioner of the City of New York, announced today the arrests of JUAN ACOSTA, a police officer with the New York City Police Department ("NYPD"), and YORICK RAFAEL CORNIEL-PEREZ, on charges stemming from their participation in cocaine distribution and extortion crimes. ACOSTA additionally was charged with unlawfully possessing a firearm in furtherance of the narcotics and extortion offenses. CORNIEL-PEREZ was presented in Manhattan federal court yesterday and ordered detained. ACOSTA is expected to be presented in Manhattan federal court later today.

According to the Indictment unsealed today in Manhattan federal court:

ACOSTA has been employed as an NYPD police officer since March 2000. ACOSTA's most recent assignment was to patrol

duty in the 43rd Precinct in the Bronx, New York. CORNIEL-PEREZ is a long-time friend and associate of ACOSTA.

From about 2005 through November of 2009, ACOSTA and CORNIEL-PEREZ have conspired together and with others to distribute in multiple kilograms of cocaine in and around New York City. In addition, ACOSTA has abused his authority as a police officer to facilitate his and CORNIEL-PEREZ's illegal cocaine trafficking activities. In mid-2005, for example, ACOSTA used an NYPD car to rob a drug courier of several hundred thousand dollars in cash derived from a drug deal with CORNIEL-PEREZ, making it appear as if the money had been seized by law enforcement when, in truth and in fact, ACOSTA and CORNIEL-PEREZ took the cash.

More recently, in October of 2009, ACOSTA and CORNIEL-PEREZ met on several occasions with a person whom they believed to be a high-level narcotics trafficker from Colombia, but who was in fact a cooperating witness with the Government. ACOSTA and CORNIEL-PEREZ agreed to provide protection for a 10-kilogram shipment of cocaine which was to be transported from Long Island to the Bronx. ACOSTA boasted of his status as a police officer and how it would help facilitate the transaction, and also identified the location of police precincts and the local routes that would be less likely patrolled by the police during the transportation of the narcotics to the Bronx. Ultimately, on November 12, 2009, ACOSTA personally transported what he believed to be the 10-kilogram cocaine shipment from Long Island to the Bronx, where he received payment of \$15,000 from the cooperating witness.

ACOSTA and CORNIEL-PEREZ both were charged with their participation in a cocaine distribution conspiracy, which carries a maximum sentence of life in prison and a mandatory minimum sentence of 10 years in prison. ACOSTA and CORNIEL-PEREZ were also charged with conspiring to commit extortion under color of official right in connection with ACOSTA's improper use of his authority as an NYPD police officer, which carries a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison. ACOSTA additionally was charged with possession of a firearm in furtherance of the other charged crimes, which carries a maximum sentence of life in prison and a mandatory minimum sentence of 5 years in prison.

Mr. BHARARA praised the outstanding investigative work of the FBI and the NYPD's Internal Affairs Bureau.

This case is being handled by the Office's Public Corruption Unit and Violent Crimes Unit. Assistant United States

Attorneys RUA KELLY, MARISSA MOLÉ, and PAUL KRIEGER are in charge of the prosecution.

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

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