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**MANHATTAN U.S. ATTORNEY ANNOUNCES CAPTURE OF THREE  
MEMBERS OF COLOMBIAN TERRORIST GROUP CHARGED WITH  
HOSTAGE-TAKING OF U.S. CITIZEN**

PREET BHARARA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, JOHN V. GILLIES, the Special Agent-in-Charge of the Miami Division of the Federal Bureau of Investigation ("FBI") and MICHELE M. LEONHART, the Acting Administrator of the Drug Enforcement Administration ("DEA"), announced today the arrest of EDILBERTO BERRIO ORTIZ, a/k/a "El Gavilan," ALEJANDRO PALACIOS RENGIFO, a/k/a "El Gato," a/k/a "Yimi," and ANDERSON CHAMAPURO DOGIRAMA, a/k/a "El Tigre," a/k/a "Dairon," three members of the 57<sup>th</sup> Front of the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia ("FARC"), a Colombian terrorist group, who are charged with holding a U.S. citizen hostage for over 10 months.

ORTIZ, RENGIFO, and DOGIRAMA were arrested on these charges yesterday by Colombian authorities at different locations by representatives of the Colombian Department of Administrative Security in the Municipality of Medellín, Antioquia, Colombia.

ORTIZ, RENGIFO, and DOGIRAMA are charged along with six others for their roles in the kidnapping of an American citizen for ransom in April 2008. The superseding Indictment containing the charges (the "Hostage Taking Indictment") was unsealed in September 2009. The Government simultaneously unsealed another

Indictment charging five defendants with providing material support to the FARC (the "Material Support Indictment"), two of whom are also charged in the Hostage Taking Indictment.

As alleged in the Indictments:

The FARC was formed in 1964 and is structured as a military organization, with approximately 10,000 armed guerillas organized into seven "blocs," 68 numbered "Fronts" (including the 57<sup>th</sup> Front), nine named "Fronts," and four urban "militias." The FARC is dedicated to the violent overthrow of Colombia's democratically-elected government and has been designated as a foreign terrorist organization by the United States Department of State. The 57<sup>th</sup> Front operates in the territory within Colombia's Choco Department, which borders Panama, and supports the FARC's terrorist activities through narcotics trafficking and kidnapping for ransom, including the kidnapping of Americans and other foreign nationals.

On April 4, 2008, associates of the 57<sup>th</sup> Front kidnapped an American citizen in Panama. ORTIZ, RENGIFO, and DOGIRAMA guarded the victim from approximately April 6, 2008, until approximately February 10, 2009. Other defendants authorized and financed the kidnapping, and demanded ransom from the victim's relatives, informing the relatives that they would never see the victim alive again if the ransom were not paid. The victim was released in February 2009, after a member of the victim's family paid the ransom.

ORTIZ, RENGIFO and DOGIRAMA are each charged with two counts of hostage taking, each of which carries a maximum sentence of life in prison.

The Hostage Taking Indictment has been assigned to United States District Judge JED S. RAKOFF. Of the defendants charged in that Indictment not arrested yesterday, one is in the custody of Colombian authorities, and the rest remain at large.

"The FARC poses a grave threat to the security and stability of the Americas, and these arrests are a further step in our efforts to combat narco-terrorism in this hemisphere. Those who seek to take Americans hostage abroad should know that we will aggressively pursue them wherever in the world they may hide," said United States Attorney PREET BHARARA.

Special Agent-in-Charge JOHN V. GILLIES stated, "The FARC is a terrorist organization that has waged a brutal war on the people of Colombia for 45 years. The FBI is committed to

doing its part to bringing to justice those that kidnap and hold hostage innocent U. S. citizens for their own selfish aims."

"This kidnapping conspiracy shows the world once again that the FARC is a violent, narco-terrorist organization. It is bent on undermining civil society and threatens innocent civilians in Colombia and other countries. Three FARC members allegedly responsible for this kidnapping are now behind bars, and will soon face justice in a U.S. court of law," said DEA Acting Administrator MICHELE M. LEONHART. "DEA and our law enforcement partners will not tolerate hostage-taking, and we remain committed to hunting down narco-related kidnappers and those who assist them in their reprehensible, criminal enterprises."

Mr. BHARARA praised the investigative work of the FBI's Extraterritorial Hostage Taking Squad in Miami, the FBI Attachés in Panama and Colombia, DEA's New York Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Strike Force, the Narco-Terrorism Group of the DEA's Bogota Country Office, the DEA's Panama City Country Office, and the Department of Justice's Office of International Affairs. Mr. BHARARA also thanked the Colombian Department of Administrative Security, the Colombia Attorney General's Office, and the Panamanian National Police for their assistance.

The prosecution is being handled by the Office's International Narcotics Trafficking Unit. Assistant United States Attorneys REBECCA M. RICIGLIANO and JEFFREY A. BROWN are in charge of the prosecution.

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

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