



*United States Attorney  
Southern District of New York*

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U.S. ARRESTS FOUR, SEIZES STOCKPILE OF  
COCAINE AND FIREARMS

MICHAEL J. GARCIA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York and JOHN P. GILBRIDE, the Special Agent in Charge of the New York Division of the United States Drug Enforcement Administration ("DEA"), announced today the arrests of DAVID GONZALEZ, FERNANDO PULIDO-AVILA, JOSE HERNANDEZ, and ROBERTO DIAZ, four members of a cross-country drug trafficking organization, and the seizure of millions of dollars worth of cocaine and a cache of weapons.

According to an Indictment filed today in Manhattan federal court, two of the defendants, FERNANDO PULIDO-AVILA and JOSE HERNANDEZ, were arrested after they drove a cocaine-laden tractor-trailer from California to a public storage unit in the town of Effort, Pennsylvania. Prior to the delivery, the storage unit had been rented by a third defendant, DAVID GONZALEZ, under a false name. DAVID GONZALEZ met FERNANDO PULIDO-AVILA and JOSE HERNANDEZ at the storage unit, where they unloaded several boxes containing a total of approximately 200 kilograms of cocaine from the tractor-trailer, and then loaded the cocaine into the storage unit. Two days later, the fourth defendant, ROBERTO DIAZ, drove from New York City to Pennsylvania in an effort to pick up the cocaine. In connection with the arrests, federal agents seized the 200 kilograms of cocaine, worth approximately \$5 million.

While searching DAVID GONZALEZ's residence after his arrest, federal agents found an arsenal of weapons, including a .223 caliber Colt rifle with a grenade launcher; an Uzi .45 caliber handgun; two AK-47 rifles; a Bushmaster .223 caliber rifle; and two 12-gauge Mossberg shotguns. A total of 33

firearms were seized. The Indictment charges that GONZALEZ possessed these weapons in furtherance of the cocaine trafficking crime.

If convicted of the charges, each defendant faces a maximum sentence of life imprisonment.

Mr. GARCIA thanked the United States Attorney's Office for the Middle District of Pennsylvania for its assistance in the investigation. Mr. GARCIA praised the efforts of the DEA and the Pennsylvania State Police, and said that the investigation is continuing.

Assistant United States Attorney ELIE HONIG is 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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