



*United States Attorney
Southern District of New York*

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FOUR SENTENCED IN \$200 MILLION SMUGGLING OPERATION

LEV L. DASSIN, the Acting United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, announced that MICHAEL CHU, a/k/a "Michael Choi," a/k/a "Schuching M. Chu," a/k/a "Shu Ching Chu," a/k/a "Michael Shuching Chu," was sentenced yesterday to 97 months in prison for his leadership role in a criminal ring that smuggled massive quantities of counterfeit goods through the Port Newark-Elizabeth Marine Terminal ("Port Newark") in Elizabeth, New Jersey. ROBIN HUFF, formerly a licensed customs broker, was sentenced today to 70 months in prison for helping CHU and other members of the ring evade border and security measures at Port Newark. HSI FENG LI, a/k/a "The General," a/k/a "Xue Feng Li," 62, of Brooklyn, New York, was sentenced today to 33 months in prison for his role in the operation, and DICK ONG, 58, of Bergenfield, New Jersey, who tracked CHU's containers and arranged for their pickup at Port Newark, was sentenced today to one year of probation. All four sentences were imposed by United States District Judge DENNY CHIN.

According to public filings and statements made in Manhattan federal court:

CHU, 72, of Manhattan, HUFF, 47, of Brooklyn, New York, together with eight others, were charged in December 2007 following a long-term investigation into a scheme to smuggle more than one hundred 40-foot-long industrial shipping containers of counterfeit goods through Port Newark. As part of this scheme, CHU and his co-conspirators paid more than \$500,000 in cash bribes to an undercover federal agent posing as a corrupt longshoreman's union official able to clear cargo through federal customs and border security measures. HUFF monitored the status of CHU's incoming containers at Port Newark through an electronic cargo database that border officials make available to customs brokers. The estimated value of the counterfeit merchandise, based on the manufacturer's suggested retail price for the genuine articles, exceeds \$200 million.

Earlier in the case, JUDGE CHIN sentenced co-defendant WING KI LEE, a/k/a "Joe," to 60 months in prison on October 6,

2008; and co-defendants MAN WAI CHENG, a/k/a "Man Wei Chen," a/k/a "Tina Wong," and CHI ONG WONG, a/k/a "Tommy Wong," each to 3 years of probation on December 4, 2008. Sentencing remains pending for codefendants GRACE QUEZON, a/k/a "Charmaine Dabao," YEE KHIONG TING, a/k/a "Mr. Ding," a/k/a "Paul Ding," and TROY KING.

Mr. DASSIN praised the investigative work of the Newark, New Jersey Field Office of the Department of Homeland Security's U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and thanked the New York Field Office, U.S. Customs and Border Protection for its cooperation.

Assistant United States Attorney NICHOLAS S. GOLDIN is in charge of the prosecution.

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