



*United States Attorney
Southern District of New York*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
MARCH 12, 2010

CONTACT: U.S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
YUSILL SCRIBNER,
REBEKAH CARMICHAEL,
JANICE OH
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE
(212) 637-2600

ICE
LOU MARTINEZ
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE
(646) 313-2716

DEA
ERIN McKENZIE-MULVEY
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE
(212) 337-2906

**MANHATTAN U.S. ATTORNEY ANNOUNCES EXTRADITION
OF DEFENDANT FROM DOMINICAN REPUBLIC FOR CONSPIRACY
TO SMUGGLE COCAINE INTO NEW YORK HARBOR**

PREET BHARARA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, JAMES T. HAYES, JR., the Special Agent-in-Charge of the New York Office of the Department of Homeland Security's U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement ("ICE"), and JOHN P. GILBRIDE, the Special Agent-in-Charge of the New York Field Division of the Drug Enforcement Administration ("DEA"), announced today the extradition of JUAN PABLO NIVAR BUENO, 34, for his alleged participation in a narcotics conspiracy that imported over 500 kilograms of cocaine into a high-volume container and cargo handling facility in the New York Harbor. NIVAR BUENO was extradited from the Dominican Republic and is expected to be arraigned by a United States Magistrate Judge in Manhattan federal court later today.

According to the indictment unsealed today in Manhattan federal court and other documents filed in this and related cases:

Beginning in 2006, federal agents initiated "Operation Dockside" targeting a violent international cocaine trafficking organization with ties to Ecuador, the Dominican Republic, and the United States. With the assistance of corrupt longshoremen in both Guayaquil, Ecuador, and the New York Container Terminal ("NYCT") in Staten Island, the trafficking organization smuggled

approximately 550 kilograms of cocaine into the United States by commingling it with legitimate cargo shipments bound for New York from Ecuador.

During the course of this investigation, federal agents have seized over 215 kilograms of cocaine. Forfeiture orders totaling over \$1,000,000 have been entered against the defendants, and one defendant was ordered to forfeit his liquor store.

Twelve defendants in this case have previously pleaded guilty, four of whom have received sentences of ten or more years in prison.

NIVAR BUENO is charged in a four-count indictment with narcotics conspiracy, witness tampering, and money laundering charges. If convicted, he faces a maximum penalty of life in prison.

* * *

Mr. BHARARA praised the investigative work of ICE and the DEA. Mr. BHARARA also thanked the Department of Justice's Office of International Affairs for its assistance.

"Juan Pablo Nivar Bueno is an alleged member of a criminal organization of smugglers and corrupt longshoremen who were moving a stream of cocaine into New York Harbor. This case underscores the importance of protecting the integrity of the many points of entry into the United States," said U.S. Attorney PREET BHARARA. "We will continue to work with our ICE and DEA counterparts to uncover drug organizations that infiltrate our ports.

"Nivar's extradition is another example of the great work by our Special Agents and federal and international law enforcement partners," said JAMES T. HAYES, JR., Special Agent in Charge of the Office of Investigation for ICE in New York. "ICE is committed to detecting, disrupting and dismantling criminal networks responsible for smuggling illegal drugs into the United States."

Assistant United States Attorneys AMIE N. ELY, BRENDAN R. MCGUIRE, ARIANNA BERG, and NOLA HELLER are in charge of the prosecution.

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