



*United States Attorney
Southern District of New York*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 15, 2010

CONTACT:

U.S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

**ELLEN DAVIS, EDELI RIVERA,
JESSIE ERWIN**

**PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE
(212) 637-2600**

**ATTORNEY AND FORMER ACTING NEW YORK SUPREME COURT
JUSTICE SENTENCED IN MANHATTAN FEDERAL COURT
TO 24 MONTHS IN PRISON
FOR OPERATING IMMIGRATION FRAUD MILL**

PREET BHARARA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, and JAMES T. HAYES, JR., the Special Agent-in-Charge of the United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement Office of Homeland Security Investigations in New York ("ICE HSI"), announced that SALVADOR COLLAZO, an attorney who was a former Acting Justice of the New York State Supreme Court, was sentenced yesterday to 24 months in prison on numerous charges relating to his operation of an immigration fraud mill out of his law practice. COLLAZO and DALIA PRELDAKAJ, a paralegal in COLLAZO's Bronx law office, were convicted by a jury earlier this year after a fourteen-day trial before U.S. District Judge SHIRA A. SCHEINDLIN.

According to the evidence presented at trial:

From in or about 2000 to in or about 2008, COLLAZO and PRELDAKAJ ran an immigration law practice out of COLLAZO's law office located in the Bronx, New York. COLLAZO and PRELDAKAJ prepared hundreds of fraudulent applications for amnesty and other related immigration benefits on behalf of their immigration clients and then submitted those applications to the U.S. Department of Citizenship and Immigration Services ("USCIS"). COLLAZO was found guilty of one count each of conspiracy to commit immigration application fraud, immigration application fraud, and making false statements. COLLAZO was acquitted of one count of charging excessive fees in connection with immigration applications. PRELDAKAJ was found guilty of one count each of conspiracy to commit immigration application fraud, immigration application fraud, charging excessive fees in connection with immigration applications, money laundering, engaging in an unlawful monetary transaction, and witness tampering.

On September 2, 2010, Judge SCHEINDLIN sentenced PRELDAKAJ to 78 months in prison.

During the sentencing proceeding yesterday, Judge SCHEINDLIN said "the scheme was not merely fraudulent; it was predatory."

Mr. BHARARA thanked ICE HSI and USCIS for their outstanding work in the investigation.

This case is being handled by the Office's Complex Frauds Unit. Assistant U.S. Attorneys CHRISTIAN R. EVERDELL and LEE RENZIN are in charge of the prosecution.

10-325

###