



*United States Attorney
Southern District of New York*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
SEPTEMBER 2, 2011

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**MANHATTAN U.S. ATTORNEY ANNOUNCES GUILTY PLEAS
OF TWO COLOMBIAN NARCOTICS TRAFFICKERS**

*Defendants Were High-Ranking Members of Organization Headed by
Colombian Drug Kingpin Francisco Gonzalez Uribe*

PREET BHARARA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, announced today that HECTOR FABIO OSPINO-ROSETO and JOHN FREDY NORENA-CORREA, two high-ranking members of the narcotics trafficking organization led by Colombian drug kingpin FRANCISCO GONZALEZ URIBE, pled guilty in Manhattan federal court before U.S. Magistrate Judge DEBRA FREEMAN to narcotics importation and distribution charges. OSPINO-ROSETO, 43, pled guilty on Wednesday to conspiring to import and distribute cocaine and heroin into the United States, and NORENA-CORREA, 40, pled guilty today to conspiring to import and distribute heroin into the United States.

Manhattan U.S. Attorney PREET BHARARA said: "Hector Fabio Ospino-Rosero and John Fredy Norena-Correra were key

the world's most dangerous and prolific drug kingpins move millions of dollars worth of cocaine and heroin around the globe. They will now join their former leader behind bars."

According to the Superseding Indictment and other documents filed in Manhattan federal court, as well as statements made during the guilty plea proceedings:

From 2007 through 2009, OSPINO-ROSETO and NORENA-CORREA were members of an international narcotics-trafficking organization that shipped thousands of kilograms of cocaine and heroin to various locations in Mexico, the Dominican Republic, Venezuela, and other countries. The narcotics were then brought to the United States and various locations in Europe.

During two undercover operations in early 2009 -- with the cooperation and assistance of the governments of Colombia and the Dominican Republic -- the DEA secured large quantities of narcotics from individuals linked to OSPINO-ROSETO and NORENA-CORREA. OSPINO-ROSETO was intercepted on recorded telephone

calls personally orchestrating the shipment of cocaine and heroin to New York City. NORENA-CORREA similarly was intercepted on recorded telephone conversations arranging a large shipment of heroin from Colombia to the Dominican Republic that was ultimately intended for the United States. The cocaine and heroin that was seized by the DEA during these operations had an estimated wholesale value of approximately \$2,000,000. During the course of the investigation, OSPINO-ROSERO was also intercepted arranging the movement of large quantities of cocaine through South America to the United States and other countries. OSPINO-ROSERO also traveled to the Dominican Republic to scout out a military landing strip for the purpose of landing aircraft carrying the organization's narcotics loads.

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OSPINA-ROSERA and NORENA-CORREA are scheduled to be sentenced by U.S. District Judge LEWIS A. KAPLAN on December 2, 2011. Both defendants face a mandatory minimum sentence of 10 years in prison, and a maximum sentence of life in prison, but based on assurances made to Colombia in connection with extradition, life sentences will not be sought.

GONZALEZ URIBE, designated by the U.S. Department of Justice as one of the world's most significant drug kingpins, was arrested in the Dominican Republic in 2009 and expelled to the United States to face U.S. charges. In June 2010, GONZALEZ URIBE pled guilty to narcotics importation and distribution conspiracy charges. He was sentenced in November 2010 to 30 years in prison.

MR. BHARARA praised the outstanding efforts of the Drug Enforcement Administration, the DEA Caribbean Field Division, the DEA Bogota Country Office, the DEA New York Field Division, and all other cooperating law enforcement agencies. Mr. BHARARA also thanked the Government of the Dominican Republic, the Dominican National Control Directory, and the Dominican Armed Forces, and expressed his gratitude to the Government of Colombia and the Administrative Department of Security for their cooperation and assistance in the investigation and prosecution of GONZALEZ URIBE.

The case is being handled by the Office's Terrorism and International Narcotics Unit. Assistant U.S. Attorneys BENJAMIN NAFTALIS and JOHN P. CRONAN are in charge of the prosecution.

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