



**U.S. Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Western District of Texas**

Robert Pitman, U.S. Attorney

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

On the web: www.usdoj.gov/usao/twx/index.html

Daryl Fields, Public Information Officer
(210) 384-7440

April 24, 2012

**WESTERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS FEDERAL GRAND JURY INDICTS
SINALOA CARTEL LEADERS "EL CHAPO" GUZMAN, "MAYO" ZAMBADA
AND 22 OTHER HIGH RANKING SINALOA CARTEL MEMBERS**

RICO indictment alleges conspiracy to commit murder, kidnaping, money laundering and drug distribution

United States Attorney Robert Pitman, DEA Special Agent in Charge Joseph M. Arabit, FBI Special Agent in Charge Mark Morgan and ATF Special Agent in Charge Robert Champion today announced the indictment of Joaquin Guzman Loera, aka "El Chapo," Ismael Zambada Garcia aka "Mayo," and 22 other individuals responsible for the operations and management of the Sinaloa Cartel (Cartel) charging them with violating the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations (RICO) Act.

The fourteen-count grand jury indictment, returned on April 11, 2012, and unsealed today, charges conspiracy to violate the RICO statute; conspiracy to possess more than five kilograms of cocaine and over 1000 kilograms of marijuana; conspiracy to import more than five kilograms of cocaine and 1000 kilograms of marijuana; conspiracy to commit money laundering; conspiracy to possess firearms in furtherance of drug trafficking crimes; murder in furtherance of a continuing criminal enterprise (CCE) or drug trafficking; engaging in a CCE in furtherance of drug trafficking; conspiracy to kill in a foreign country; kidnapping; and violent crimes in aid of racketeering.

The other 22 defendants charged in this indictment include:

German (Last Name Unknown) aka "Paisa," "German Olivares";
Mario Nunez-Meza aka "Mayito," "M-10";
Amado Nunez-Meza aka "Flaco," "M-11," "El Flais";
Jose Antonio Torres Marrufo aka "Jaguar," "Tonin," "Catorce," "14," "Tono," "El Uno";
Gabino Salas-Valenciano aka "El Ingeniero";
Sergio Garduno-Escobedo aka "Coma";
David Sanchez-Hernandez aka "Christian";
Ivan Sanchez-Hernandez;
Jesus Rodrigo Fierro-Ramirez aka "Huichi," "Pena";
Arturo Lozano-Mendez aka "Garza";
Mario De La O Lopez aka "Flaco";
Arturo Shows Urquidi aka "Chous";
Salvador Valdez aka "Robles";
Daniel Franco Lopez aka "Micha," "Neon," "Fer";
Luis Arellano-Romero aka "Bichi," Bichy," "Helio";
Fernando Arellano-Romero aka "Rayo," "24," "Gamma," "Blue Demon";
Mario Alberto Iglesias-Villegas aka "Dos," "El 2," "Delta," "Parka," "Grim Reaper," "Daniel Cuellar Anchondo," "Delfin";
Adrian Avila-Ramirez aka "Bam Bam," "Tacuba," "El 19";
Valentin Saenz De La Cruz aka "El Valle," "Lic";
Emigdio Martinez, Jr. aka "Millo";
Carlos Flores aka "Buffalo," "Charly"; and,
Jose (Last Name Unknown) aka "Toca," "Tocayo," "Pachi".

– more –

Chapo Guzman indictment release

April 24, 2011

Page 2

According to the indictment, the purpose of the Sinaloa Cartel is to smuggle large quantities of marijuana and cocaine, as well as other drugs, into the United States for distribution. Laundered proceeds of drug trafficking activities are returned to Cartel members and are used in part to purchase properties related to the daily functioning of the Cartel, including real estate, firearms, ammunition, bullet proof vests, radios, telephones, uniforms and vehicles. In an effort to maintain control of all aspects of their operations, the Cartel and its associates, including members of the *Gente Nueva* (“New People”) and the *Artistas Asesinos* (“Murder artists”), kidnap, torture and murder those who lose or steal assets belonging to, are disloyal to, or are enemies of the Cartel. This includes the Juarez Cartel led by Vicente Carrillo Fuentes, a competing drug organization, as well as its enforcement arm known as La Linea and the Barrio Aztecas. Oftentimes, murders committed by the Cartel involve brutal acts of violence as well the public display of the victim along with banners bearing written warnings to those who would cross the Cartel.

“Murder, kidnapping, money laundering and drug trafficking are the four corners of this organization’s foundation,” stated U.S. Attorney Robert Pitman. “For years, their violence, ruthlessness and complete disregard for human life and the rule of law have greatly impacted the citizens of the Republic of Mexico and the United States. They must be held accountable for their criminal actions.”

This investigation resulted in the seizure of hundreds of kilograms of cocaine, and thousands of pounds of marijuana in cities throughout the United States. Law enforcement also took possession of millions of dollars in drug proceeds which were destined to be returned to the Cartel in Mexico. Agents and officers likewise seized hundreds of weapons and thousands of rounds of ammunition intended to be smuggled into Mexico to assist the Cartel’s battle to take control of one of the key drug trafficking corridors used to bring drugs into the United States.

“This indictment is the result of a complex, long-term investigation by DEA and our law enforcement partners in the US and Mexico, targeting the Sinaloa Cartel at its highest levels. In addition to violations relating to the trafficking of huge quantities of cocaine and marijuana, the charges encompass money laundering, weapons smuggling, kidnappings and murders employed by the cartel to fund, expand and protect its far-reaching criminal enterprise. These charges are an important step in bringing to justice those responsible for supplying a large portion of the illegal drugs flowing into communities in the United States through the El Paso area, as well as much of the violence that has ravaged neighboring Ciudad Juarez,” said Joseph M. Arabit, Special Agent in Charge, Drug Enforcement Administration-El Paso Division.

The indictment references two acts of violence allegedly committed by members of the Cartel. First, the indictment alleges that in September 2009, Jose Antonio Torres Marrufo, Gabino Salas-Valenciano, Fernando Arellano-Romero and Mario Iglesias-Villegas, under the leadership of Joaquin Guzman and Ismael Zambada, conspired to kidnap and murder a Horizon City, Texas, resident. Specifically, Jose Antonio Torres Marrufo ordered the kidnapping of the victim to answer for the loss of a 670-pound load of marijuana seized by Border Patrol at the Sierra Blanca checkpoint on August 5, 2009. After the kidnapping, the victim was taken to Juarez where Torres Marrufo interrogated him and ordered that he be killed. On September 8, 2009, the victim’s mutilated body was discovered in Juarez.

Chapo Guzman indictment release

April 24, 2011

Page 3

Second, the indictment alleges that on May 7, 2010, Jose Torres Marrufo, Fernando Arellano-Romero and Mario Iglesias-Villegas, under the leadership of Joaquin Guzman and Ismael Zambada, conspired to kidnap and murder an American citizen and two members of his family. Specifically, Torres Marrufo caused an individual in El Paso to travel to a wedding ceremony in Juarez to confirm the identity of a target. The target was the groom, a United States citizen and a resident of Columbus, NM. Under Torres Marrufo's orders, the groom, his brother and his uncle were all kidnapped during the wedding ceremony and subsequently tortured and murdered. Their bodies were discovered by Juarez police a few days later in the bed of an abandoned pickup truck. Additionally, a fourth person was killed during the kidnapping at the wedding ceremony.

"This indictment has been years in the making, the focus being to dismantle the Sinaloa Cartel by focusing on its upper echelon. The indictment represents the unwavering commitment and collaboration among the law enforcement community to bring justice to those who have inflicted unconscionable violence on so many citizens on both sides of the border. We are sending a clear message that we will continue our relentless pursuit of drug trafficking organizations responsible for such wide-spread devastation within our communities," stated FBI Special Agent in Charge Mark Morgan.

"This highly cooperative investigation shows that law enforcement can make significant inroads into drug trafficking organizations and that the major players are not immune from prosecution. This also relates to the illegal firearm traffickers who support such organizations and are responsible for the violence and bloodshed that is occurring," stated ATF Special Agent in Charge Robert Champion.

This investigation was conducted by the Drug Enforcement Administration, Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives together with the Immigration and Customs Enforcement-Homeland Security Investigations, United States Border Patrol, Customs and Border Protection, United States Marshals Service, El Paso Police Department, El Paso Sheriff's Office and Texas Department of Public Safety. United States Attorney Robert Pitman also expresses his appreciation to New Mexico United States Attorney Ken Gonzalez and his attorneys; Attorney General of Mexico Marisela Morales and her attorneys; and, to law enforcement authorities in Mexico for their assistance.

Upon conviction, the defendants face up to life in federal prison. Three of the 14 counts (7,11,14)– which involve the kidnapping and murder of a resident of Horizon City and three members of a wedding party in Juarez–may result in the imposition of the death penalty upon conviction.

It is important to note that an indictment is merely a charge and should not be considered as evidence of guilt. The defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

#####