



U.S. Department of Justice

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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ST. CROIX MAN SENTENCED TO MORE THAN 16 YEARS IN PRISON FOR AIDING AND ABETTING A MURDER AND FIREARM POSSESSION

St. Croix, USVI - United States Attorney Ronald W. Sharpe and Joseph S. Campbell, Federal Bureau of Investigation Special Agent-in-Charge of the San Juan Division announced today that District Court Judge Raymond L. Finch sentenced Damion Bell, 24, of St. Croix to 15 years in prison for aiding and abetting others in committing second degree murder. Judge Finch also sentenced Bell to a consecutive sentence of 21 months in prison for possessing a firearm having already been convicted of a felony.

On February 28, 2012, Bell pleaded guilty in federal court on St. Croix before the Honorable Raymond L. Finch to the felon in possession and aiding and abetting charges. According to the plea agreement filed with the court, on July 3, 2010, at approximately 9:30 p.m., members of the Virgin Islands Police Department were dispatched to the Ralph De Chabert housing community in Estate Richmond to investigate a burning car. Upon arrival on the scene, detectives discovered a burned human body on the passenger side of a charred Suzuki Vitara. The body was later identified as that of Luis Roldan, Jr. Further investigation revealed that Roldan had sustained bullet wounds to his upper shoulder, back, and abdomen from two different caliber firearms. On January 29, 2010, a federal jury in St. Thomas found Roldan,

Virgin Islands Police Captain Enrique Saldana and Virgin Islands Police Sergeant George Greene, Jr., guilty of the federal charges of conspiracy to commit extortion and extortion, and the Virgin Islands charges of conspiratorial extortion, extortion under color of official right, conflict of interest and solicitation and receipt of a bribe.

During the investigation of Roldan's murder, police discovered evidence that led them to Bell. On Monday, July 5, 2010, a VIPD detective made contact with Bell and observed what appeared to be burns on his nose and facial area. On July 6, 2010, police stopped and searched a black two-door Toyota Scion in which Bell was a passenger. The search revealed a .45 caliber, Model GKK handgun belonging to Bell and evidence which placed Bell at Roldan's murder scene. In addition, DNA recovered from evidence found at the murder scene matched Bell's DNA.

U.S. Attorney Sharpe praised the efforts of the Virgin Islands Police Department and the Federal Bureau of Investigation who investigated the case. In announcing the sentence, U.S. Attorney Sharpe also praised the efforts of Assistant U.S. Attorneys Allan John Baptiste and Denise Hinds who prosecuted the case.