

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
DISTRICT OF NEW JERSEY

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA : Hon.  
: :  
v. : Crim. No.  
: :  
ANDREA TORRES and : 8 U.S.C. § 1324(a)(1)(A)(v)(I)  
REGINA JOHNSON : :

**INDICTMENT**

The Grand Jury in and for the District of New Jersey, sitting at Newark, charges as follows:

**BACKGROUND**

1. Between in or about September 2016 and in or about July 2019, defendants ANDREA TORRES and REGINA JOHNSON conspired to help non-citizens who were not permitted to remain in the United States obtain legal residency by arranging for sham marriages between the non-citizens and U.S. citizens. To conceal the fraudulent nature of the sham marriages, the defendants arranged fake weddings, assisted in obtaining fraudulent marriage licenses, and counseled non-citizens and their purported spouses on various ways to make the marriages appear real. The defendants were paid substantial fees for each sham marriage they planned and facilitated.

2. At all times relevant to this Indictment:

- a. Defendant ANDREA TORRES was a resident of New Jersey.
- b. Defendant REGINA JOHNSON was a resident of New Jersey.
- c. Non-Citizen-1 was a citizen of a foreign country seeking permanent residence in the United States.
- d. Spouse-1 was a U.S. citizen.

### **THE CONSPIRACY**

3. From in or about September 2016 through in or about July 2019, in Essex County, in the District of New Jersey, and elsewhere, defendants

#### **ANDREA TORRES and REGINA JOHNSON**

conspired with each other and others to encourage and induce one or more aliens to come to, enter, and reside in the United States, knowing and in reckless disregard of the fact that such coming to, entry, or residence in the United States was or would have been in violation of the law, and did so for the purpose of commercial advantage and private financial gain, contrary to Title 8, United States Code, Section 1324(a)(1)(A)(iv).

### **GOAL OF THE CONSPIRACY**

4. The goal of the conspiracy was for defendants ANDREA TORRES and REGINA JOHNSON to attain commercial advantage and private financial gain by arranging sham or fraudulent marriages between non-citizens and U.S. citizens to allow the non-citizens to obtain legal residency in the United States, knowing that the non-citizens were not otherwise permitted to legally remain in the United States.

### **MANNER AND MEANS OF THE CONSPIRACY**

5. It was part of the conspiracy that TORRES and JOHNSON:

- a. Charged the non-citizens a substantial fee for the service of arranging the sham or fraudulent marriages;
- b. Recruited and paid money to U.S. citizens to induce them to enter into the sham marriages that the defendants arranged for the non-citizens;

- c. Assisted the non-citizens and U.S. citizens in obtaining marriage licenses, procured on the basis of fraudulent misrepresentations;
- d. Arranged for fake wedding ceremonies to make the sham marriages appear legitimate;
- e. Advised the non-citizens and their fake spouses about various ways to create the appearance of a valid union and cohabitation; and
- f. Helped the non-citizens to fill out and submit false federal forms required to initiate and process the non-citizens' applications for legal permanent residence status.

#### **OVERT ACTS**

- 6. In furtherance of the conspiracy and to achieve its objective, defendants TORRES and JOHNSON and others engaged in the following actions, among others, in the District of New Jersey and elsewhere:
  - a. In or about September 2016, TORRES introduced Non-Citizen-1 to U.S. Spouse-1. Non-Citizen-1 thereafter obtained a marriage license in the State of New York and married Spouse-1 on September 6, 2016.
  - b. The day after the fraudulent marriage, TORRES attended the fake couple's post-wedding party, during which Non-Citizen-1 paid TORRES approximately \$8,000 for her services in arranging the fraudulent marriage.
  - c. In or about June 2018, TORRES assisted Non-Citizen-1 with filling out a Form I-130 petition, which was necessary to obtain U.S. citizenship.
  - d. In or about October 2018, JOHNSON assisted an undercover law enforcement officer (the "UC"), posing as a non-citizen, with obtaining a

fraudulent marriage license. Specifically, JOHNSON accompanied the UC and a fake spouse who was a U.S. citizen to a government office in Plainfield, New Jersey on or about October 30, 2018, where the UC applied for a marriage license.

e. On or about October 30, 2018, JOHNSON accepted approximately \$600 from the UC as payment to cover the cost of a fake wedding ceremony.

All in violation of Title 8, United States Code, Sections 1324(a)(1)(A)(v)(I) and 1324(a)(1)(B)(i).

A TRUE BILL

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FOREPERSON



PHILIP R. SELLINGER  
United States Attorney

CASE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

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**United States District Court  
District of New Jersey**

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**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

**v.**

**ANDREA TORRES and  
REGINA JOHNSON**

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**INDICTMENT FOR**

**8 U.S.C. § 1324(a)(1)(A)(v)(I)**

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**A True Bill,**

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**Foreperson**

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PHILIP R. SELLINGER  
UNITED STATES ATTORNEY  
FOR THE DISTRICT OF NEW JERSEY

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