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MS-13 MEMBER PLEADS GUILTY TO RACKETEERING CONSPIRACY

Participated in the Murders of Rival Gang Members

Greenbelt, Maryland - Eris Marchante-Rivas, also known as Strayboy, age 24, of Hyattsville, Maryland, pleaded guilty today to conspiracy to conduct and participate in racketeering enterprise activities of MS-13, announced United States Attorney for the District of Maryland Rod J. Rosenstein and Acting Assistant Attorney General Matthew Friedrich of the Department of Justice Criminal Division.

According to the statement of facts provided to the court as part of the plea agreement, La Mara Salvatrucha, also known as MS-13, is a gang composed primarily of immigrants or descendants of immigrants from El Salvador, with members operating throughout Prince George's County and Montgomery County, Maryland, and elsewhere. MS-13 is a national and international criminal organization with approximately 10,000 members. Members of MS-13 frequently engage in criminal activity, including murders, assaults, robberies, kidnappings, and threatening and intimidating of witnesses.

MS-13 is organized in "cliques," including, the Sailors Locos Salvatruchos Westside ("SLSW" or "Sailors"), the Teclas Locos Salvatruchos ("TLS"), and the Langley Park Salvatruchos ("LPS"). In 2003, Marchante-Rivas was "jumped-in" to the gang and by 2005 he held the leadership position of "First Word" within the TLS clique in Maryland.

Marchante-Rivas admitted that he and his co-conspirators had knowledge of, agreed to, and participated in acts of violence on behalf of MS-13, including acts that resulted in murder, attempted murder, and robbery. For example, Marchante-Rivas and other MS-13 members attended meetings at which the rules of the gang were discussed, including rules about joining in beatings and killings of rival gang members.

On October 9, 2005, Marchante-Rivas admitted he attended a meeting of the TLS clique in Prince George's County. During that meeting, one of the international leaders of the TLS clique of MS-13 spoke to the gang members by cellular telephone from a jail in El Salvador. After the meeting, Marchante-Rivas admitted he and fellow gang members drove to meet a number of gang members from other MS-13 cliques. At the meeting, the gang members discussed their plans to shoot rival gang members that day. Marchante-Rivas and other gang

members went to the 5600 block of Quintana Street in Riverdale, Maryland with the intent of killing rival gang members. Once they arrived, the gang members left their vehicles and approached Jose Cerda, Edward Trujillo and another person, who were standing in front of a house on Quintana Street. Cerda and Trujillo were shot and killed by MS-13 gang members and the third individual was wounded by a gunshot.

Marchante-Rivas faces a maximum sentence of life in prison and a \$250,000 fine. U.S. District Judge Deborah K. Chasanow has scheduled sentencing for January 12, 2009 at 10:00 a.m. Marchante-Rivas remains in federal custody.

United States Attorney Rod J. Rosenstein and Acting Assistant Attorney General Matthew Friedrich praised the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives; the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Prince George's County Police Department; U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement; the Montgomery County Police Department; the Howard County Police Department; the Maryland National Capital Park Police; the Maryland State Police; and Prince George's County State's Attorney Glenn F. Ivey and Montgomery County State's Attorney John McCarthy and their offices, for their work in this investigation and prosecution. Mr. Rosenstein thanked Assistant U.S. Attorneys Chan Park and Robert K. Hur, and Special Assistant U.S. Attorney David Jaffe, a Trial Attorney from the Justice Department's Gang Squad, who are prosecuting the case.