



PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

October 2, 2012

**LAS CRUCES HOTEL OWNERS SENTENCED TO PROBATION FOR
AIDING AND ABETTING UNDOCUMENTED ALIENS**

Defendants Ordered to Pay \$15,600 in Restitution and a \$1,000 Fine

ALBUQUERQUE – This afternoon, a federal judge in Las Cruces sentenced Elina Sihombing, 47, and David Girle, 55, both of Las Cruces, N.M., for their misdemeanor convictions for aiding and abetting undocumented aliens to elude examination or inspection. Sihombing and Girle each was ordered to serve a two-year term of probation. The defendants also were ordered to pay restitution in the amount of \$15,600 to two victims, and each defendant is required to pay a \$1,000 fine.

U.S. Attorney Kenneth J. Gonzales said that Sihombing and Girle, who were arrested on May 23, 2011, entered their guilty pleas on March 20, 2012, under plea agreements with his Office. During their plea hearings, the defendants admitted to providing lodging, food and other resources to two Indonesian women to help the women avoid detection by immigration officials. They also admitted to housing one of the women from March 25, 2007, to Jan. 10, 2010, and the other woman from Dec. 2, 2008, to Jan. 10, 2010, at the couple's hotel, America's Best Value Inn on Picacho in Las Cruces. At the time, the two Indonesian women were illegally present in the United States.

Sihombing and Girle were charged with two felony counts of harboring illegal aliens in an indictment that was filed on Aug. 17, 2011. As required by the plea agreements, the United States moved to dismiss after the defendants were sentenced.

The investigation was initiated by the FBI in Las Cruces and the New Mexico Attorney General's Office. The investigation received assistance from Homeland Security Investigations and the Las Cruces Police Department. The case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Jessica Cárdenas Jarvis in conjunction with the New Mexico Attorney General's Office.

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