

# Department of Justice

United States Attorney William J. Hochul, Jr.  
Western District of New York

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CONTACT: BARBARA BURNS  
PHONE: (716) 843-5817  
FAX: (716) 551-3051

## **TWO MEN PLEAD GUILTY TO CONSPIRACY CHARGES**

ROCHESTER, N.Y.-- U.S. Attorney William J. Hochul, Jr. announced today that Alex Torres, 29, formally of Rochester, New York, pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge Charles J. Siragusa to drug conspiracy, possession of a firearm in furtherance of drug trafficking, attempted extortion by kidnapping and robbery, and money laundering conspiracy. The drug conspiracy and firearm charges carry a maximum penalty of life in prison, a fine of \$4,000,000 or both. The money laundering and attempted extortion charges carry a maximum penalty of 20 years in prison, a fine of \$500,000 or both.

Carlos Figueroa, of Rochester, New York, also pleaded guilty before Judge Siragusa to money laundering conspiracy, carrying a maximum penalty of 20 years in prison, a fine of \$500,000 or both.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Jennifer M. Noto, who is handling the case, stated that Torres and Figueroa participated in a large, armed narcotics trafficking organization responsible for the receipt and distribution of multiple kilograms of cocaine and heroin in the Rochester area between January 2007 and October 2008. The defendants were two of more than 30 related defendants charged with federal crimes involving their participation in this armed drug conspiracy that sent and received packages of cocaine via the U.S. Mail from Puerto Rico to Rochester. Proceeds from the drug sales were sent back to Puerto Rico to purchase more cocaine.

Torres also admitted involvement in an attempted extortion that involved the kidnapping, robbery and beating of an elderly man in an attempt to recover stolen kilograms of cocaine. Torres and Figueroa were two of five remaining defendants scheduled for trial in this case before Judge Siragusa beginning September 12, 2011. To date, 29 defendants have entered guilty pleas in connection with this case.

“This case stands as an example of how this Office and our law enforcement partners vigorously prosecute those who would poison our streets with illegal drugs and violence,” said U.S. Attorney Hochul.

The pleas are the culmination of a multi-agency investigation under the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HITA) and Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF) initiatives. Federal and State law enforcement agencies, including Special Agents of the Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco Firearm and Explosives, under the direction of Scott Heagney, Special Agents of the Drug Enforcement Administration, under the direction of Timothy Kernan, Postal Inspectors of the United States Postal Inspection Service, under the direction of Raymond Williams and officers from the Greater Rochester Area Narcotics Enforcement Team, under the direction of Lt. Joseph Morabito worked in concert with the United States Attorney's Office in the year long investigation.

Sentencing is scheduled for Nov. 7, 2011, at 2:15 p.m. EST, in Rochester, N.Y., before Judge Siragusa.

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