



# Department of Justice

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Northern District of California**

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## **FIVE MS-13 MEMBERS SENTENCED TO LIFE IN PRISON**

SAN FRANCISCO – Five San Francisco-area members of the La Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13) gang were sentenced yesterday to life in prison, announced U.S. Attorney Melinda Haag and Assistant Attorney General Lanny A. Breuer of the Justice Department's Criminal Division.

Marvin Carcamo, aka "Cyco," 31; Angel Guevara, aka "Peloncito," 30; Moris Flores, 22; Jonathan Cruz-Ramirez, 22; and Erick Lopez, aka "Spooky," 23, were sentenced by U.S. District Judge William Alsup in the Northern District of California.

The five defendants were convicted by a jury on Aug. 30, 2011, after a five-month trial. According to the evidence presented at trial, MS-13 is a transnational gang principally composed of individuals of Salvadoran descent that originated in Los Angeles and eventually spread throughout the United States and the world.

MS-13 is organized into local chapters, known as "cliques." The San Francisco clique — called the "20<sup>th</sup> Street clique" or simply "20<sup>th</sup> Street," after the location it claimed as its home base — has existed since the early 1990s. Since its founding, 20<sup>th</sup> Street's principle purpose was to attack and kill rival gang members, including members of the various Norteño and Sureño gangs in the Bay Area of California, as well as individuals who cooperated with law enforcement or defied the gang's will.

According to the evidence presented at trial, Carcamo and Guevara were MS-13 members since the early 2000s. By 2007, they ascended to the leadership of 20<sup>th</sup> Street and pushed a new “program,” presented by gang leaders in Los Angeles and El Salvador, that increased violence against rivals and extorted “tax” payments from criminals.

Carcamo and Guevara directed members of 20<sup>th</sup> Street to threaten micaros — individuals who sold counterfeit identification cards, known as “micas” — who operated in 20<sup>th</sup> Street’s territory in the Mission District. In addition, Carcamo and Guevara extended their ambitions by trying to take over the taxation of drug dealers in parts of the Tenderloin District, territory traditionally claimed by the 11<sup>th</sup> Street Sureño gang. 20<sup>th</sup> Street’s expansion attempt prompted complaints from the 11<sup>th</sup> Street Sureños, to which Carcamo and Guevara responded with threats of violence.

According to evidence at trial, by December 2007, Carcamo was arrested for robbery and Guevara was arrested for stabbing three individuals. Flores took over the leadership of the 20<sup>th</sup> Street clique and, guided by Carcamo and Guevara from jail, continued to pursue the violent new program. As a result, members of 20<sup>th</sup> Street became particularly violent in 2008.

Among other acts of violence, during the early morning of March 30, 2008, Lopez shot and killed Ernad Joldic and Philip Ng in the vicinity of Persia and Athens Street in the mistaken belief that the victims were Norteño gang members. On May 31, 2008, because of micaro resistance to paying the tax that MS-13 demanded, Cruz-Ramirez shot and killed micaro leader Juan Rodriguez as Rodriguez sat in a car in the vicinity of Laura and Huron Streets.

On July 11, 2008, following a fight the day before between members of 20<sup>th</sup> Street and micaros, Cruz-Ramirez drove fellow gang member Guillermo Herrera to the vicinity of 20<sup>th</sup> and Mission Streets, where Herrera chased down micaro Armando Estrada and killed him on a busy street. During the early morning of July 31, 2008, in response to Flores’s order to retaliate for the non-fatal shooting of a 20<sup>th</sup> Street member’s family by a suspected Norteño, a group of 20<sup>th</sup> Street members pursued 14-year old Ivan Miranda and, believing he was a Norteño, stabbed him to death in the vicinity of Persia and Madrid Streets.

All five defendants were convicted of racketeering (RICO) conspiracy, conspiracy to commit murder in aid of racketeering, conspiracy to commit assault with a dangerous weapon in aid of racketeering and possession of a firearm in furtherance of a crime of violence. Guevara was also convicted of three counts of attempted murder in aid of racketeering and three counts of assault with a dangerous weapon in aid of racketeering for his role in trying to kill three individuals in December 2007. Cruz-Ramirez was also convicted of the racketeering murder of Armando Estrada and related firearms charges. Lopez was also convicted of the racketeering murders of Ernad Joldic and Philip Ng and related firearms charges.

Co-defendant Guillermo Herrera was also convicted in August 2011 and is scheduled to be sentenced by Judge Alsup on Dec. 8, 2011. He faces a mandatory minimum sentence of life in prison for a racketeering murder charge.

On Nov. 29, 2011, in a separate trial before Judge Alsup, a jury convicted Danilo Velasquez of multiple racketeering offenses. According to evidence presented during trial, Velasquez took over the leadership of the 20<sup>th</sup> Street clique after Moris Flores's arrest in October 2008. He is scheduled to be sentenced on Feb. 14, 2012, before Judge Alsup and faces a maximum term of life in prison.

These cases were prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Wil Frentzen, Andrew M. Scoble, David Hall, and W.S. Wilson Leung of the Strike Force and Violent Crimes Section of the Northern District of California, and Trial Attorney Theryn G. Gibbons of the Organized Crime and Gang Section of the Justice Department's Criminal Division, with the assistance of Legal Assistants and Paralegals Kevin Costello, Christine Tian, Marina Ponomarchuk, and Ponly Tu. The case was investigated by Special Agents Benjamin Horton, John Moore, and Alicia MacDonald of Homeland Security Investigations, with the assistance of the San Francisco Police Department and the Daly City Police Department.

**Further Information:**

Case #: CR 08-730 WHA

A copy of this press release may be found on the U.S. Attorney's Office's website at [www.usdoj.gov/usao/can](http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/can).

Electronic court filings and further procedural and docket information are available at <https://ecf.cand.uscourts.gov/cgi-bin/login.pl>.

Judges' calendars with schedules for upcoming court hearings can be viewed on the court's website at [www.cand.uscourts.gov](http://www.cand.uscourts.gov).

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