



Department of Justice

United States Attorney Melinda Haag
Northern District of California

FOR IMMEDIATE
RELEASE
August 30, 2011
6599

[@usdoj.gov](http://WWW.USDOJ.GOV/USAO/CAN)

CONTACT: JACK GILLUND
(415) 436-

[Jack.Gillund](#)

SIX MS-13 GANG MEMBERS IN SAN FRANCISCO CONVICTED OF RACKETEERING CHARGES

All Three Defendants Charged With Murders Convicted and Face Mandatory Life in Prison

WASHINGTON – After a five-month trial, a federal jury today convicted six members of *La Mara Salvatrucha*, or MS-13, in federal court in San Francisco of racketeering (RICO) conspiracy and related charges, announced U.S. Attorney Melinda Haag for the Northern District of California, Assistant Attorney General Lanny A. Breuer of the Justice Department's Criminal Division, and Director John Morton of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). One defendant was acquitted of the charges against him.

The evidence presented during trial showed that the defendants were part of the violent, transnational gang known as MS-13, which claimed part of the Mission District of San Francisco as its territory and operated in the Bay Area since the 1990s. Since its inception, MS-13 members warred with rival gang members and sought to extort payments from other criminals in its territory. However, beginning in 2007, under the leadership of Marvin Carcamo, Angel Noel Guevara, and later, Moris Flores, the violence increased dramatically as the gang sought to expand its reach. The prosecution presented evidence of more than a dozen shootings and stabbings carried out by MS-13 members in the years leading up to the Oct. 22, 2008, arrest of the majority of the gang's members, including four murders that occurred in 2008. The evidence presented at trial also showed how the defendants, with others, conspired

to commit a variety of crimes to further the goals of the gang, including attacking and killing rival gang members and others who defied or challenged MS-13.

“Today’s verdicts should send a strong message to anyone who thinks gang membership gives them the power to intimidate, threaten, steal or kill,” said U.S. Attorney Haag. “Acts of senseless violence will not be tolerated. You will be caught and you will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.”

“These defendants committed senseless acts of violence and spread fear throughout San Francisco, all in the name of MS-13,” said Assistant Attorney General Breuer. “Above all else, they showed allegiance to their murderous gang. Today’s guilty verdicts, coming after five months of trial, are evidence of our relentless efforts to stop violence in its tracks, and put an end to MS-13’s brutal reign. These convictions, together with prior guilty pleas, have substantially impacted the gang’s ability to operate in San Francisco. We will continue to investigate and prosecute violent street gangs wherever we find them.”

“The jury’s verdict sends a resounding message about the shared resolve of law enforcement and the public to protect our communities from the crime and violence perpetrated by transnational gangs such as MS-13,” said ICE Director Morton. “Our goal in these enforcement actions is to disrupt a gang’s illegal activities, dismantle the organization, and stop them from further organized and vicious violence. With this investigation and resulting prosecutions, we’ve crippled this criminal enterprise and defused much of the threat posed by what was once one of the Bay Area’s most dangerous street gangs.”

The defendants convicted today are Marvin Carcamo, 31, aka “Cyco” and “Psycho;” Angel Noel Guevara, 30, aka “Peloncito;” Moris Flores, 22, aka “Slow” and “Slow Pain;” Guillermo Herrera, 22, aka “Sparky” and “Shorty;” Jonathon Cruz-Ramirez, 22, aka “Soldado;” and Erick Lopez, 23, aka “Spooky.” These defendants were among an initial group of 29 individuals charged in an indictment unsealed on Oct. 22, 2008, alleging various racketeering, narcotics and firearms-related offenses.

Among other charges, Lopez was convicted of the racketeering murders of Ernad Joldic and Phillip Ng that occurred in the early morning hours on March 29, 2008. The evidence presented at trial established that Lopez, seeking to retaliate for the shooting of a fellow MS-13 member earlier that night, shot and killed Ng and Joldic, mistakenly believing that the victims were rival Norteno gang members.

Among other charges, Herrera and Cruz-Ramirez were convicted of the July 11, 2008, racketeering murder of Armando Estrada near 20th and Mission Streets. Herrera was identified as the gunman by an eyewitness, who testified that the gunman pulled down the bandana that masked his face and laughed immediately after the shooting. Cruz-Ramirez was also convicted for helping to plan the murder and serving as the getaway driver for Herrera. The evidence showed that Estrada was a “niero,” or someone who sold counterfeit identifications and other

items, and that Herrera and Cruz-Ramirez killed Estrada as a result of MS-13's attempts to extort protection money from "nieros" in the gang's territory.

Lopez, Herrera and Cruz-Ramirez each face a mandatory minimum of life in prison on the racketeering murder convictions.

Lopez, Herrera and Cruz-Ramirez were also convicted of three racketeering-related conspiracies as well as various firearms offenses, as were the other three convicted defendants – Marvin Carcamo, Moris Flores and Angel Noel Guevara. Each of these three defendants was a leader of MS-13 in San Francisco in 2007 or 2008 and was linked to different murders committed by the gang. Carcamo and Guevara, who led the gang in 2007 until their arrest late that year, were linked to the May 2, 2007, murder of David Pollock in San Francisco, with the murder weapon recovered from Carcamo's home. Flores, who was leader of MS-13 following the arrests of Carcamo and Guevara, was involved in Lopez's retaliatory hunt for rival gang murders that led to the murder of Ng and Joldic. In addition, he also helped coordinate Herrera and Cruz-Ramirez's flight from the scene of Estrada's murder, as well as the destruction of evidence after that murder. Evidence at trial also showed that Flores ordered younger members to "hunt" for rival gang members on July 31, 2008, which led to the stabbing murder of 14-year old Ivan Miranda.

In addition, Guevara was convicted of three racketeering attempted murders that occurred Dec. 26, 2007, when he and an accomplice attacked three separate individuals with knives during a 30-minute spree of violence that began at 24th and Shotwell Streets and ended at Silver Avenue and Mission Street.

Flores, Guevara and Carcamo each face a maximum penalty of life in prison as well as a mandatory minimum of five years in prison, which would be served consecutively to the prison term on the RICO conspiracy charge. Sentencing for all six defendants is scheduled for Nov. 30, 2011, before U.S. District Judge William Alsup.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys W.S. Wilson Leung, William Frentzen, and Christine Wong, with the assistance of Paralegal Specialist Kevin Costello and Legal Assistant Marina Ponomarchuk, of the Organized Crime Strike Force of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of California; and Trial Attorney Theryn G. Gibbons of the Criminal Division's Organized Crime and Gang Section. The case was investigated by ICE Homeland Security Investigations and the San Francisco Police Department.

Further Information:

Case #: CR 08-0730 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.

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.

All press inquiries to the U.S. Attorney's Office should be directed to Jack Gillund at (415) 436-6599 or by e-mail at Jack.Gillund@usdoj.gov.

###