



Department of Justice

United States Attorney David E. Nahmias
Northern District of Georgia

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

08/31/07

<http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/gan/>

CONTACT: Patrick Crosby

(404)581-6016

FAX (404)581-6160

WOMAN SENTENCED TO 21 YEARS IN PRISON FOR ROLE IN DRUG TRAFFICKING CONSPIRACY

Gainesville, GA - NORA AGUIAR, 54, of Laredo, Texas, was sentenced today by United States District Judge William C. O'Kelley to serve more than two decades in federal prison on charges of drug trafficking and money laundering.

United States Attorney David E. Nahmias said, "This defendant, and those working with her, directly assisted with the distribution of significant quantities of cocaine throughout the southeastern United States. As part of the conspiracy, she also ensured that the money generated from the sale of this poison was returned to drug kingpins in Mexico. This sentence reiterates that those who distribute cocaine and other dangerous drugs in our communities will face long years in prison."

AGUIAR was sentenced to 21 years in prison to be followed by 10 years of supervised release, and fined \$2,000. AGUIAR pleaded guilty to the charges on June 4, 2007.

According to United States Attorney Nahmias and the information presented in court: On March 12, 2005, Special Agents with the Drug Enforcement Administration received information that a small, private plane would arrive at Lee Gilmer Airport in Gainesville, Georgia, to pick up over one million dollars in cash. When agents arrived at the airport, they witnessed co-defendant Kevin Felts emerge from a small plane, which, at the time, was parked on the tarmac. Felts then approached two unidentified men in the airport parking lot. Felts took two suitcases from the men and returned to the plane. The men quickly departed the area. As agents approached the plane, Felts was in the process of loading the bags into the aircraft. When they detained Felts, the DEA agents found that he had a loaded handgun tucked into the waistband of his pants. At the time, they did not see AGUIAR hiding inside of the darkened plane.

Agents asked AGUIAR to step down and asked for consent to search the plane and suitcases, and AGUIAR agreed. Inside, agents found \$1.3 million in cash packaged in a manner consistent with drug proceeds. During the encounter, AGUIAR also produced another \$20,000 in cash hidden in her purse.

The agents followed the two unidentified men seen in the parking lot back to a home near Gainesville. Inside that home and another residence, agents discovered 17 kilograms of cocaine and several hundred thousand dollars in drug proceeds.

During a subsequent interview, AGUIAR admitted she was part of a sophisticated drug trafficking operation that distributed narcotics in various cities in the southeastern United States. Additionally, she also explained that, in the months prior to her arrest, she regularly collected drug proceeds in at least five other U.S. cities. These funds were then smuggled back across the U.S.-Mexico border to drug traffickers operating in Mexico.

Felts was charged for his role in the drug conspiracy and his trial is tentatively scheduled for October 22, 2007, before United States District Judge William C. O'Kelley.

This case was investigated by Special Agents of the Drug Enforcement Administration.

Assistant United States Attorney Kurt R. Erskine prosecuted the case.

The U.S. Attorney's Office in Atlanta recommends parents and children learn about the dangers of drugs at the following web site: www.justthinktwice.com.

For further information please contact David E. Nahmias (pronounced NAH-me-us), United States Attorney, or Charysse L. Alexander, Executive Assistant United States Attorney, through Patrick Crosby, Public Affairs Officer, U.S. Attorney's Office, at (404) 581-6016. The Internet address for the HomePage for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Georgia is www.usdoj.gov/usao/gan.