

July 11, 2008
Rapid City, South Dakota

**SIoux FALLS MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO RAPID CITY CASINO ROBBERY
RECEIVES 300-MONTH SENTENCE**

United States Attorney Marty J. Jackley announced today that Yuri Chachanko, 25, of Sioux Falls, was sentenced on July 10, 2008 to 300 months in federal prison for his role in a 2004 robbery of a Rapid City casino. The sentence followed Chachanko's guilty plea earlier in the day to Using and Carrying of a Firearm During a Violent Felony.

As part of the guilty plea, Chachanko acknowledged he was one of two masked gunmen who robbed the LaCrosse Street Casino on June 5, 2004, while armed with a Norinco, Model SKS, 7.62 x 39 caliber rifle and a Remington, Model 1100, 12-gauge shotgun with a sawed-off barrel. The two gunmen demanded the contents of the till and the safe, making away with approximately \$7,000.

Chachanko was originally charged with offenses related to five robberies in South Dakota—three in Sioux Falls, one in Watertown, and one in Rapid City. Also charged in the Rapid City robbery was Choui Sam, who pled guilty in March of 2008 to possessing an Unregistered Short Shotgun not directly related to the robbery and received a sentence of 70 months.

Both Chachanko and Sam have also been convicted in Montana federal court for an armed casino robbery in Billings, Montana. In 2006, Chachanko received a 229-month prison sentence for his role in the Montana robbery, and Sam received 221 months. The South Dakota federal sentences for both Chachanko and Sam will run consecutive to their Montana federal sentences.

“No matter what an armed criminal intends the result to be, the act of robbery is inherently violent. This defendant showed an escalating pattern of violence that may well have led to serious injury or death. His sentences exceed 44 years and represent the seriousness of his criminal conduct and the trauma his victims have endured.” U.S. Attorney Jackley said. “We applaud the work of ATF and local law enforcement in compiling the evidence necessary to allow this office to ensure that this type of violent criminal will be held accountable for his actions.”

Chachanko originally pled guilty to the Rapid City casino robbery on November 1, 2007, but

he was later allowed to withdraw his plea. Using the presentence report which was completed after his first guilty plea, the court was able to immediately sentence Chachanko after his subsequent guilty plea on July 10th. In addition to his prison sentence, Chachanko was also ordered to pay restitution to all five robbery victims, totaling approximately \$19,586.

The conviction and sentence were the result of a cooperative investigation conducted by the Rapid City Police Department, the Pennington County Sheriff's Office, the Sioux Falls Police Department, the Watertown Police Department, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Mark A. Vargo. Chachanko was immediately turned over to the custody of the U.S. Marshal.

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