



U.S. Department of Justice

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EVENT: Indictment

Defendant: Carlos Salguero-Bermudez et al

**TWO COLOMBIAN DRUG TRAFFICKERS EXTRADITED TO DETROIT;
INDICTED IN AN INTERNATIONAL CONSPIRACY TO SMUGGLE TONS
OF EPHEDRINE FROM SOUTH AFRICA TO MICHIGAN TO MANUFACTURE
METHAMPHETAMINE**

Two Colombian drug traffickers were extradited today from Colombia to Detroit, Acting United States Attorney Terrence Berg announced today. The two Colombian citizens, **Carlos Salguero-Bermudez** and **Ricardo Torres-Noack**, both arrived today in Detroit from Colombia after being flown into the United States. Berg also announced that Salguero-Bermudez and Torres-Noack have been charged with conspiring to smuggle tons of ephedrine into the United States for the purpose of manufacturing of methamphetamine in Michigan. The charges were set forth in an Indictment issued by a Detroit Grand Jury on June 27, 2007 that was unsealed today.

Berg was joined in the announcement by DEA Special Agent in Charge Robert Corso, of the Detroit Field Division.

Salguero-Bermudez and Torres-Noack, both Colombian citizens, were originally

arrested by members of the Colombian National Police in Bogota, Colombia on August 30, 2007 based on provisional arrest requests issued by the U.S. Embassy in Colombia. Since August 2007, the two Colombians have been held in custody in Colombia pending the outcome of extradition requests made by the United States government in September 2007.

Salguero-Bermudez and Torres-Noack are both charged in the Indictment with conspiring to import ephedrine (a chemical component of methamphetamine) into the United States, conspiring to manufacture methamphetamine, conspiring to possess ephedrine with the intent to manufacture methamphetamine, conspiring to launder money, and laundering money. The conspiracy extended from April 2006 to June 2007. Upon conviction, both of the defendants face a maximum of life in prison.

Acting United States Attorney Berg said. "Although cocaine importation from Colombia is all too common, this is the first case in the Nation where Colombian drug traffickers have been indicted for conspiring to import huge quantities of ephedrine for the purpose of manufacturing methamphetamine in the United States and also conspiring to manufacture methamphetamine. Methamphetamine is often produced in small scale makeshift labs in rural areas in the U.S. This case presents a troubling scenario, where both the key chemical component for meth, ephedrine, is being imported into the U.S. for manufacturing purposes. We will pursue such international drug trafficking very aggressively."

Robert Corso, Special Agent in Charge, Drug Enforcement Administration said, "The arrest, extradition and pending criminal prosecution of Salguero-Bermudez and Torres-Noack, in the Eastern District of Michigan, exemplifies the strong commitment that DEA and our agents have in identifying drug trafficking organizations across the globe, in order to dismantle their operations. Thanks to outstanding support from the U.S. Attorney's Office, and our strong partnership with Colombian law enforcement, Salguero-Bermudez and Torres-Noack will now face justice for their crimes in Detroit, Michigan."

Between April 2006 and June 2007, defendants Salguero-Bermudez and Torres-Noack conspired with each other and with other individuals to manufacture large quantities of methamphetamine in South Africa. The defendants and their co-conspirators were in

possession and control of tons of ephedrine, to be used in the manufacture of methamphetamine, in South Africa and other locations. The defendants were manufacturing methamphetamine in South Africa using that ephedrine. The defendant Salguero-Bermudez offered to sell ephedrine, to be used to make methamphetamine, to individuals in the Eastern District of Michigan in the United States. In October, November, and December 2006, defendant Salguero-Bermudez arranged for meetings to take place in South Africa for the purpose of negotiating the sale of large quantities of ephedrine for shipment to the Eastern District of Michigan. The ephedrine was to be used to make methamphetamine.

The case was investigated by agents of the Drug Enforcement Administration. It is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney David A. Gardey.