



U.S. Department of Justice

Stephen J. Murphy
United States Attorney
Eastern District of Michigan

Suite 2001
211 West Fort Street
Detroit, Michigan 48226-3277

For Immediate Release:

Contact: Gina Balaya (313) 226-9758
Vera Fedorak - ATF (313) 202-3407

March 26, 2008

EVENT: Guilty Plea

Defendant: Isaias Quesada et al

LEADER OF “DETROIT THUG LORDZ” AND CONFEDERATE PLEAD GUILTY

Drug Dealer And Co-Defendant To Be Sentenced From 15 Years To Life

Isaias Quesada, 23, of Detroit pled guilty in federal court to felony drug charges, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced today. Joining in the announcement was Special Agent-In-Charge Thomas E. Brandon, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF)

Quesada pled guilty to conspiracy to distribute more than 50 grams of crack cocaine, powder cocaine, and marijuana before United States District Judge David Lawson. Under the terms of his plea agreement, Quesada faces a minimum sentence of 15 years imprisonment and an advisory sentencing range of 25-30 years.

Also pleading guilty to drug and gun charges was Omar Gladson, 20, of Detroit, a member of the Detroit Thug Lordz who admitted to working for Quesada. As a career offender under federal sentencing guidelines, Gladson faces a mandatory minimum of 15 years imprisonment and a sentencing range of 27 to 32 years.

The Detroit Thug Lordz were an armed drug trafficking gang in northwest Detroit. The gang's territory ran along West Warren Avenue and extended from Evergreen to the Southfield Freeway. The group maintained drug houses on Woodmont, Lawndale, Winthrop, Rockdale, Longacre, and Rosemont Streets. Firearms were kept at and moved among the various houses for protection. Drug sales were accomplished through calls to pre-arranged cellular telephone numbers and deliveries made with rented vehicles. Gang members were paid as much as \$5,000 per month for distributing various drugs, including crack cocaine, powder cocaine, and marijuana. Minors were used to distribute drugs on the gang's behalf.

Federal agents with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives ("ATF"), assisted by Detroit Police Department officers, investigated the gang's activities between May 2, 2006 and February 13, 2007. Fifteen undercover purchases of crack cocaine, powder cocaine, and marijuana were made. Four of the gang's drug houses were raided and additional seizures were made from gang members' vehicles. In total, agents secured 66 grams of crack cocaine, 67 grams of powder cocaine, and 4.6 kilograms of marijuana.

"Gangs like the Thug Lordz can be beaten when federal, state, and local law enforcement team up with community groups to fight organized drug trafficking and the dangers it brings to our neighborhoods," said U.S. Attorney Murphy. "That is the purpose of our Operation TIDE, which partners all law enforcement stakeholders in the City of Detroit to provide hope to residents and to take violent drug offenders off the streets. Today's plea is an example of the results that can be achieved from such teamwork."

"Today's guilty plea and the fifteen or more years in Federal prison to be served by these gang members reiterate the need for focused task forces like Operation TIDE. We will continue our joint enforcement efforts to rid the City of Detroit of the violence that is bred by drugs and guns," stated SAC Brandon.

With today's guilty pleas, all nine defendants indicted by the government on April 24, 2007 in the Detroit Thug Lordz prosecution have been convicted. Six DTL members and affiliates pled guilty to drug charges on September 19, 2007. These included Rodolfo Moreno,

20, of Detroit; Nicholas Jaime, a/k/a Kilo, 21, of Detroit; Hassan Aljibory, 23, of Warren; Randi Carl Diggs, 19, of Detroit; Michael Moreno, 18, of Detroit; and Shane Aben, 18, of Detroit. A seventh defendant, Karen Haskins, 49, of Detroit, pled guilty on November 15, 2007.

Four defendants have been sentenced in the case. On February 4, 2008, Rodolfo Moreno was sentenced to 12 years imprisonment. Aljibory and Michael Moreno were each sentenced to 2 ½ years imprisonment on February 1 and February 14, respectively. Aben, who purchased marijuana from DTL members, was sentenced to three months in a halfway house and three years probation on January 14.

Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN) Operation TIDE is the unprecedented, long-term law enforcement and community collaboration where federal, state, county and local law enforcement officials meet regularly and work in cooperation to reduce violent crimes and prevent recidivism by focusing on the “worst of the worst” in Northwest Detroit, Detroit’s largest police district.

Other PSN Operation TIDE Task Force partners include the U.S. Marshals Service, the FBI, the Wayne County Sheriff’s Department, the Wayne County Prosecutor’s Office, and the Michigan Department of Corrections.

Citizens with information concerning illegal guns, gangs with guns, armed drug trafficking or the trafficking of illegal guns are encouraged to call 800-ATF-GUNS. Callers can remain anonymous. This number is managed and answered by law enforcement, ATF agents who work directly with local police departments. For information about Project Safe Neighborhoods call 1-800-891-8881 or visit www.psnworks.org.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Leonid Feller.