

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 28, 2005

VENEZUELAN HACKER PLEADS GUILTY TO ATTACKING DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE COMPUTER SYSTEM LOCATED IN DENVER, COLORADO

DENVER – Bill Leone, United States Attorney for the District of Colorado, and Steven O’Neill, Resident Agent in Charge of the Office of the Inspector General, Defense Criminal Investigative Service, Denver Resident Agency, announced that **RAFAEL NUNEZ-APONTE** aka “RaFa,” age 26, of Caracas, Venezuela, pled guilty before U.S. District Court Judge Walker D. Miller to intentionally damaging a protected Department of Defense computer. **NUNEZ-APONTE** is scheduled to be sentenced by Judge Miller on October 21, 2005 at 1:30 p.m.

According to the stipulated facts set out in the plea agreement, **NUNEZ-APONTE** was a member of “World of Hell,” a group of people who assisted each other with, and communicated regarding intrusions they made into government, business and corporate computers. The defendant went by the hacker name “RaFa” in connection with computer intrusions and dealings with other World of Hell members.

On or about June 10, 2001, the defendant caused the transmission of a code or command to a protected computer that was exclusively used by the United States Department of Defense, Defense Information Systems Agency (“DISA”), which is responsible for computer based training for the United States Air Force and other military personnel. The defendant perpetrated a web-page defacement on DISA web-based computers by altering the web-page to display a World of Hell message. The defendant also deleted logging information from the DISA computers to intentionally impair the availability of computer logging data.

As a result of the defendant’s transmissions to delete the computer logs, he caused the DISA networked computers to be inoperable for several days until the relevant computer-based training programs could be reloaded; the system re-secured; and the computers brought back on-line by government personnel and contractors, resulting in losses to DISA in an amount which aggregated \$10,548 during the period of June 2001.

NUNEZ-APONTE faces up to 5 years in federal prison and/or a \$250,000 fine for intentional damage to a protected computer. He has stipulated that approximately \$5,170 seized at the time of his arrest on April 2, 2005 in Miami, Florida, be retained by the government and applied towards restitution.

This case was investigated by the Office of the Inspector General, Defense Criminal Investigative Service, Denver Resident Agency.

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