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## **THIRTEEN MEMBERS OF "SUR-13" GANG SENTENCED TO PRISON**

### ***Four Members Get Life; Gang Crimes Included Murders, Drive-By Shootings, Armed Robberies, Carjacking, and Drug Dealing***

Atlanta, GA - Thirteen high-ranking members of the "Sur-13" street gang in the metro Atlanta area were sentenced to federal prison this week by United States District Judge Charles A. Pannell, Jr., for crimes including murder, drive-by shootings, armed robberies, carjacking, and drug dealing. Four of the defendants were sentenced to life without parole for murder.

"Members of the gang Sur-13 committed countless acts of violence, including the murders of innocent persons," said United States Attorney David E. Nahmias. "The sentences in this case demonstrate the harsh but just consequences for gang members who commit violence, deal drugs and spread fear throughout the community. These sentences also reaffirm our commitment to prosecuting gang leaders so that they receive their full measure of justice."

"Sur-13 is a multi-layered criminal gang organization with members who commit numerous acts of violence and who terrorize our neighborhoods," said Julie L. Myers, Homeland Security Assistant Secretary for ICE in Washington, D.C. "The significant sentences handed down this week ensure these dangerous criminals will never have a chance to endanger our communities again. ICE agents and officers will continue working closely with our law enforcement partners to attack this critical public safety threat."

FBI Atlanta Special Agent in Charge Greg Jones said, "The sentences handed down today are the result of an extensive investigation that required long hours from the many dedicated individuals at all levels of law enforcement. Together with our many law enforcement partners, and through the FBI's Safe Streets Task Force (SSTF) concept, a clear message was sent that acts of violence committed by criminal street gangs and their members will not be tolerated and we will continue to combat this serious threat."

ARMANDO PRUDENTE, 34, ROBERTO SANDOVAL, 25, JORGE FLORES,

30, ISRAEL CRUZ, 28, ARTURO SANCHEZ, 31, NICASIO CALDERON URIBE, 36, RICARDO GAMA, 30, FREDDIE SANDOVAL, 22, ANGEL MAZARIEGOS, 24, LUIS ALBERTO NANDY, 27, AVILA GILBERTO MALDONADO, 29, CARLOS MARTINEZ, 24, and RODOLFO PEREZ, 29, were members of the violent street gang known as "Sureños-13" or "Sur-13." PRUDENTE, ROBERTO SANDOVAL, FLORES, CRUZ, SANCHEZ, URIBE, NANDY, GAMA, MALDONADO, and MARTINEZ are all from Atlanta, Georgia. FREDDIE SANDOVAL and PEREZ are from Lawrenceville, Georgia. MAZARIEGOS is from Doraville, Georgia.

On September 6, 2007, after a trial lasting four weeks, a jury convicted PRUDENTE, ROBERTO SANDOVAL and GAMA on charges of Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations (RICO) conspiracy. PRUDENTE and SANDOVAL were also convicted of conspiracy to distribute drugs. The same jury convicted PRUDENTE, FLORES and CRUZ of Violent Crimes in Aid of Racketeering. GAMA was also convicted of two counts of being an alien unlawfully in possession of a firearm.

On October 25, 2007, after a trial lasting three weeks, a jury convicted FREDDIE SANDOVAL, ANGEL MAZARIEGOS, and LUIS ALBERTO NANDY on charges of RICO conspiracy. SANDOVAL was also convicted on charges of engaging in a conspiracy to distribute drugs.

SANCHEZ pleaded guilty on September 27, 2007, to RICO conspiracy and aiding and abetting in the use of a firearm to commit murder. URIBE pleaded guilty on October 3, 2007, to the charge of RICO conspiracy. MALDONADO pleaded guilty on February 21, 2007, to drug conspiracy and possession of a firearm in relation to a drug trafficking crime. MARTINEZ pleaded guilty on March 1, 2007, to RICO conspiracy and use of a firearm during the violent crime of carjacking. PEREZ pleaded guilty on December 18, 2006, to RICO conspiracy.

Judge Pannell sentenced PRUDENTE, ROBERTO SANDOVAL, FLORES and CRUZ to life in prison. There is no parole in the federal system. SANCHEZ was sentenced to 21 years, 10 months in prison, followed by 5 years of supervised release. URIBE was sentenced to 5 years, 10 months in prison, followed by 3 years of supervised release. GAMA was sentenced to 4 years, 3 months in prison, followed by 3 years of supervised release. FREDDIE SANDOVAL, the brother of ROBERTO SANDOVAL, was sentenced to 15 years in prison, followed by 3 years of supervised release. MAZARIEGOS was sentenced to 13 years, 4 months in prison, followed by 3 years of supervised release. NANDY was sentenced to 2 years, 11 months in prison, followed by 3 years of supervised release. MALDONADO was sentenced to 5 years, 10 months in prison, followed by 5 years supervised release. MARTINEZ was sentenced to 12 years, 10 months in prison, followed by 5 years of supervised release. PEREZ was sentenced to 5 years probation, including 6 months home confinement. In addition, PEREZ was ordered to perform 200 hours of community service, including continued participation in

community anti-gang prevention programs. The defendants receiving lower sentences all cooperated with the government and testified at one or both trials.

With the exception of FREDDIE SANDOVAL, who is a U.S. citizen, all of the defendants will be deported upon completion of their sentences.

According to United States Attorney Nahmias and the information presented in court: NICASIO CALDERON URIBE started the Atlanta sect of Sur-13 in 1995. Beginning in 1998, URIBE began a series of prison sentences followed by deportations, and he was thus not available to lead the gang. By 1999, ARMANDO PRUDENTE had emerged as the leader of Sur-13. On April 24, 1999, PRUDENTE ordered a retaliation against "Brownside Locos," a rival gang. PRUDENTE picked four members of SUR-13 to commit the retaliation, and he gave semi-automatic weapons to ROBERTO SANDOVAL and JORGE FLORES. SANDOVAL, FLORES and the two other members drove to Gwinnett County, which they knew to be the territory of Brownside Locos. Once there, they spotted a white Monte Carlo that they suspected was being driven by a Brownside gang member. SANDOVAL ordered the driver to pull alongside the Monte Carlo. As their car drove up to the Monte Carlo, FLORES hung out of the passenger window and fired two shots. One of the shots struck and killed Rogelio Guzman. After the shooting, SANDOVAL and FLORES returned to PRUDENTE's apartment and gave him back the weapons. The evidence presented at trial showed that Guzman was not a member of a gang but was singled out because of his car. (The driver of the car from which the fatal shot was fired, Sergio Escutia, was prosecuted and convicted by the State of Georgia in 2001.)

CRUZ was sentenced for murdering Florentino Marcial in the early morning hours of December 13, 2003. CRUZ and some other members of Sur-13 were at a community party at a recreation center on Lindbergh Avenue in Fulton County celebrating the Mexican holiday of the Feast of the Virgin of Guadeloupe. Several members of the rival gang "Vatos Locos" showed up at the party, and a fight broke out between Sur-13 and Vatos Locos. Security made all the gang members leave the building. CRUZ stood on the front steps of the building, pulled out a gun, and fired several shots into the crowd. Marcial, who was shot in the back, was killed instantly. The evidence presented at trial showed that Marcial was not a member of Vatos Locos. CRUZ fled Atlanta after the murder and was eventually arrested in September 2004 in Omaha, Nebraska, where he was being harbored by members of Sur-13.

SANCHEZ was sentenced for aiding and abetting the murder of Waldemar Divas Murcia. In the early afternoon of June 9, 2001, SANCHEZ was with a fellow Sur-13 member, known to law enforcement only by his gang name of "Wino." They spotted Murcia, who was wearing a gold chain and medallion, and they decided to rob him. SANCHEZ and Wino approached Murcia on the grounds of an apartment complex on Buford Highway in DeKalb County. Even though Wino had a gun, Murcia refused to

hand over the jewelry, and a struggle ensued. Wino fired two shots, one of which hit Murcia in the chest with fatal results. SANCHEZ testified to this murder and to other gang activity at trial. In recognition of the substantial assistance that SANCHEZ provided, the government recommended a sentence of 21 years, 10 months.

GAMA was sentenced for supplying weapons and drugs to fellow gang members. GAMA had the reputation of being the point person for Sur-13 members who needed a gun. During the course of the investigation, GAMA sold two firearms and marijuana to an informant working at the direction of law enforcement. The jury heard conversations that were covertly recorded in which GAMA made arrangements with the informant to sell him weapons and drugs.

FREDDIE SANDOVAL was sentenced for his extensive involvement in many aspects of the gang's criminal activities. According to evidence presented to the jury, SANDOVAL became a member of Sur-13 when he was about 13 years old. He participated in several armed robberies of pedestrians. SANDOVAL also broke into vehicles to steal stereos, firearms, and cash. SANDOVAL would then sell the stolen items to other members of the gang. He also committed drive-by shootings against suspected rival gang members. SANDOVAL moved up the hierarchy in the gang and became one of the leaders of the "Tiny Locos," the group made up of the new recruits of Sur-13. These recruits were often 13 to 16 years old, and SANDOVAL was in charge of their training, which included teaching them to mark the gang's territory with Sur-13 graffiti, acquire property and money for the gang through robberies, act as lookouts for encroachment by rivals, and commit acts of violence against rival gang members. Towards the end of the conspiracy in 2005, SANDOVAL was involved in selling controlled substances, including marijuana, cocaine, and methamphetamine.

MAZARIEGOS' sentence reflects a crime spree that he went on in the early days of 2005 with other members of Sur-13, some of whom were juveniles. The evidence presented at trial showed that MAZARIEGOS and other Sur-13 members committed numerous armed robberies and drive-by shootings against rival gang members in early January 2005. MAZARIEGOS also participated in at least one carjacking.

NANDY was convicted for his participation in Sur-13. The evidence presented in court showed that he also assisted in training the "Tiny Locos" as they became valued members of Sur-13. The jury heard numerous recorded conversations between NANDY and the informant in which NANDY recounted confrontations that he had with rival gang members.

MALDONADO pleaded guilty and testified to his association with members of Sur-13 and the assistance he provided in helping PRUDENTE distribute controlled substances. MARTINEZ also testified about crimes that he committed as a member of Sur-13, including an armed robbery and carjacking. PEREZ was shot by a rival gang in

1998 and remains confined to a wheelchair. Even so, he continued to associate with members of Sur-13. PEREZ's sentence reflects the substantial assistance that he provided, including testifying at both trials about the entire scope of the gang's criminal activities.

This case was investigated by Immigration and Customs Enforcement, (ICE), Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and members of the FBI Safe Street Task Force, Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms and Explosives (ATF), Georgia Bureau of Investigation (GBI), Atlanta Police Department, DeKalb County Police Department, DeKalb County District Attorney's Office, Gwinnett County Police Department, Gwinnett County District Attorney's Office, Fulton County Police Department, Fulton County District Attorney's Office and the Omaha Police Department, Omaha, Nebraska.

Assistant United States Attorneys Kim Dammers and Paul Jones 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](http://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](http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/gan).