



# Department of Justice

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## **DRUG-DEALING VICTIM OF HOSTAGE-TAKING** **SENTENCED TO NEARLY 4 YEARS IN PRISON**

### ***Members of Mexico-Based Drug Trafficking Organization Kidnapped, Beat, Starved, and Chained Man Because of Alleged Drug Debt***

Atlanta, GA - OSCAR REYNOSO, 31, originally of the Dominican Republic, was sentenced in federal court today to serve almost 4 years in prison for his role in distributing cocaine supplied by a drug cell operating in Gwinnett County, Georgia.

United States Attorney David Nahmias said, "There are no free passes for drug dealers, even when they become the victims of crimes by their associates. This defendant was taken hostage and abused by members of a drug organization who claimed he owed them a debt, but he was also a drug dealer and so he must now go to prison, where the men who kidnapped him will also soon be headed. We want the drug dealers, and the violence that accompanies their illegal business, to stay out of Georgia."

Rodney G. Benson, Special Agent in Charge of the DEA Atlanta Field Division said, "Drug-related kidnappings are one of the many violent acts that are committed by drug traffickers seeking to carry out their ruthless mission. DEA and its law enforcement counterparts are committed to protecting our citizens from such actions and from the scourge of drug abuse."

REYNOSO was sentenced to 46 months in federal prison, to be followed by 5 years of supervised release. He pleaded guilty to the federal drug conspiracy charge on March 10, 2009. His sentence was reduced to reflect his cooperation in the investigation and prosecution of his kidnapers.

According to United States Attorney Nahmias and the information presented in court: Acting on information of a possible hostage taking, federal and local authorities established surveillance on the afternoon of July 11, 2008 of a house located at 755 East Fork Shady Drive, Lilburn, Georgia. Shortly thereafter, three individuals, later determined to be REYNOSO's captors, were observed at the residence. Upon seeing the authorities, all three attempted to flee. They were pursued and ultimately arrested. Searching the home, agents

found REYNOSO inside the basement, where he was bound and gagged. Agents provided immediate medical attention to REYNOSO, who appeared to have been beaten.

Agents soon learned that REYNOSO had been lured to Atlanta from Rhode Island, purportedly to complete a vehicle purchase transaction with an individual identified as "Tio." REYNOSO met Tio at a Waffle House, from where the two then rode to the 755 East Shady Fork Drive residence. Upon entering the garage, REYNOSO was ambushed and assaulted by eight men carrying firearms. After being beaten, he was imprisoned in the basement where agents found him nearly a week later.

While holding REYNOSO, his captors, including Tio, contacted REYNOSO's friends and relatives in Rhode Island in an effort to collect an alleged drug debt of at least \$150,000, and constantly threatened and beat him. Although REYNOSO disputes that he owed the drug debt, during his guilty plea he admitted to being involved in drug activity in Rhode Island with Tio and others. REYNOSO's captors, identified as VICTOR ABILES GOMEZ, 20, OMAR MENDOZA-VILLEGAS, 19, and GERARDO SOLORIO REYES, a/k/a "Gera," 23, all illegal immigrants from Mexico, pleaded guilty to federal hostage-taking, drug, and firearm charges on March 20, 2009, before Senior United States District Court Judge Jack T. Camp in Atlanta. They are scheduled to be sentenced on July 7, 2009, by Judge Camp.

This case was investigated by Special Agents of the DEA.

Assistant United States Attorneys Scott Hulsey and Cassandra Schansman prosecuted the case.

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).