

NEWS RELEASE



OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

San Diego, California

***United States Attorney
Karen P. Hewitt***

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For Immediate Release

NEWS RELEASE SUMMARY - December 23, 2008

United States Attorney Karen P. Hewitt announced that Fernando Mejia-Baron pled guilty today in federal court in San Diego to Count Four of the Indictment that charged him with Assault on a Federal Officer, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 111(a) and (b). Mejia-Baron tendered his guilty plea before Magistrate Judge Anthony J. Battaglia, subject to final acceptance of the plea by United States District Court Judge Marilyn L. Huff, at the time of sentencing.

At the hearing, Mejia-Baron admitted that on October 7, 2008, he was the driver of a silver Honda Accord that entered Pine Valley, Interstate 8 checkpoint with three adult undocumented aliens in the trunk. Mejia-Baron admitted that when he attempted to flee the checkpoint, he struck United States Border Patrol Agent F. Santos with the vehicle. According to court documents, officers stationed at the checkpoint became suspicious of Mejia-Baron when he approached the checkpoint wearing a United States Army battle dress uniform with the rank of Brigadier General, a rank he appeared to be too young to achieve.

Sentencing for Mejia-Baron is scheduled for March 23, 2009 at 9:00 a.m., before Judge Huff.

DEFENDANT

Case Number: 08CR3621-H

FERNANDO MEJIA-BARON
Tijuana, Mexico

SUMMARY OF CHARGES

Title 18, United States Code, Section 111(Assault on a Federal Officer)
Maximum Penalties: 20 years' incarceration, \$250,000 fine, three years of supervised release

AGENCIES

United States Border Patrol
Immigration and Customs Enforcement
Federal Bureau of Investigation