



U.S. Department of Justice

*United States Attorney
District of Maryland*

Rod J. Rosenstein
United States Attorney

Vickie E. LeDuc
Public Information Officer

36 South Charles Street
Fourth Floor
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

410-209-4800
TTY/TDD: 410-962-4462
410-209-4885
FAX 410-962-3091
Vickie.LeDuc@usdoj.gov

November 10, 2008
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
<http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/md>

**Contact AUSA VICKIE E. LEDUC or
MARCIA MURPHY at 410-209-4885**

**MEMBER OF MS-13 SENTENCED TO LIFE IN PRISON FOR RACKETEERING
CONSPIRACY, MURDER CONSPIRACY AND MURDER**

Participated in Planning the Murder of One Girl and the Shooting of Another

Greenbelt, Maryland - U.S. District Judge Deborah K. Chasanow sentenced Israel Ernesto Palacios, also known as Homie, age 31, of Silver Spring, Maryland, today to life in prison, after he was convicted by a federal jury on August 8, 2008 for conspiracy to participate in a racketeering enterprise, conspiracy to commit murder in aid of racketeering, murder in aid of racketeering, use of a firearm in relation to a crime of violence, and murder resulting from use of a gun during a crime of violence, announced United States Attorney for the District of Maryland Rod J. Rosenstein and Acting Assistant Attorney General Matthew Friedrich of the Criminal Division.

“By working together to prosecute Israel Palacios and many other MS-13 gang members using federal racketeering laws, law enforcement agencies are making a substantial impact on violent crime in Maryland,” said U.S. Attorney Rod J. Rosenstein.

Special Agent in Charge Theresa R. Stoop of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives said, “We wish to send a consistent message that when people choose to join a violent gang, they will be held accountable for its actions-no excuses.

According to testimony presented at the four week trial, Palacios was a member of the Langley Park Salvatruchos (LPS) clique of MS- 13. At some time prior to October 25, 2004, Palacios met with another MS-13 member to discuss and investigate rumors that Nancy Diaz was associating with a rival gang. Witnesses testified that shortly thereafter, Palacios, co-conspirator James Guillen and other MS-13 members attended a meeting of the LPS clique in Prince George’s County, Maryland in which clique leaders discussed plans to kill Nancy Diaz. On October 25, 2004, Guillen drove two other MS-13 members, Ms. Diaz and another juvenile female in his car, and dropped them off at the George Washington Cemetery in Adelphi, Maryland. According to testimony, two MS-13 members shot and killed Nancy Diaz, shot the other girl in the face and stabbed her twice in the chest to attempt to make sure she was dead, and then left the scene. On August 25, 2005, Palacios and Guillen were arrested in connection with the racketeering, murder and firearms charges.

James Guillen, also known as Toro, age 22, of Hyattsville, Maryland, pleaded guilty to conspiracy to participate in racketeering enterprise activities and was sentenced on January 11, 2008 to 262 months in prison.

To date, this office has charged 50 MS-13 members with federal offenses--30 of whom have been charged in this RICO conspiracy case and of those, twenty-two have been convicted.

United States Attorney Rod J. Rosenstein and Acting Assistant Attorney General Matthew Friedrich praised the RAGE Task Force, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives; the Prince George's County Police Department; the Federal Bureau of Investigation; U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement; the Montgomery County Department of Police; the Maryland National Capital Park Police; and the Maryland State Police. The U.S. Attorney and Acting Assistant Attorney General also recognized Prince George's County State's Attorney Glenn F. Ivey for the assistance that he and his office provided.

Mr. Rosenstein and Mr. Friedrich commended Assistant U.S. Attorney Chan Park, and Trial Attorney David Jaffe, a prosecutor for the Criminal Division's Gang Squad at the Department of Justice, who are prosecuting the case.