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MS-13 MEMBER SENTENCED TO 9 YEARS FOR RACKETEERING CONSPIRACY

Participated in A Stabbing and Plans to Murder a Police Officer

Greenbelt, Maryland - U.S. District Judge Deborah K. Chasanow sentenced Ronaldo Diaz Vasquez, also known as Sapó, age 26, of Wheaton, Maryland, today to 9 years in prison, followed by 5 years of supervised release for conspiracy to conduct and participate in racketeering enterprise activities of an MS-13 gang, announced United States Attorney for the District of Maryland Rod J. Rosenstein.

According to his plea agreement, La Mara Salvatrucha, also known as the MS-13 gang (hereafter "MS-13"), is a gang composed primarily of immigrants or descendants of immigrants from El Salvador, with members operating throughout Prince George's County and Montgomery County, Maryland, and elsewhere. MS-13 is a national and international criminal organization with approximately 10,000 members.

Beginning at least in 2001 and continuing through August 2006, Vasquez attended various MS-13 meetings and provided funds collected by the gang to other gang members who were incarcerated for acts of gang violence. On October 4, 2004, Vasquez and other MS-13 gang members took part in a stabbing at a 7-11 on Georgia Avenue in Silver Spring, Maryland.

On July 9, 2005, Vasquez and other MS-13 gang members met to discuss the murder of a police officer. Other meetings occurred during this time frame, including one in which Vasquez was present and a gang member discussed purchasing firearms to use against this police officer. Ultimately, no attempt was made on the police officer's life.

Vasquez's home was searched in December 2004 and August 2005. Gang paraphernalia was found and a machete was recovered.

United States Attorney Rod J. Rosenstein praised the investigative work performed by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives; the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Prince George's County Police Department; U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement; the Montgomery County Police Department; the Howard County Police Department; the Maryland National Capital Park Police; the Maryland State Police and the Fairfax County, Virginia Police

Department. Mr. Rosenstein thanked Assistant U.S. Attorneys James Trusty and Chan Park, and Special Assistant U.S. Attorney David Jaffe, who are prosecuting the case.