



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

April 16, 2007
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**Contact AUSA VICKIE E. LEDUC or
MARCIA MURPHY at 410-209-4885**

MS-13 MEMBER SENTENCED TO 14 YEARS FOR RACKETEERING CONSPIRACY

Participated in A Stabbing and Assaults

Greenbelt, Maryland - U.S. District Judge Deborah K. Chasanow sentenced Walter Noel Barahona, also known as "Lil Loco," age 23, of Hyattsville, Maryland, today to 14 years in prison, followed by 5 years of supervised release for conspiracy to conduct and participate in the racketeering enterprise activities of MS-13, announced United States Attorney for the District of Maryland Rod J. Rosenstein.

According to the statement of facts provided to the court at his January 16, 2007 guilty plea, La Mara Salvatrucha, also known as 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 2005, Barahona attended various MS-13 meetings and paid dues to the gang. On September 17, 2004, Barahona and other MS-13 gang members took part in the stabbing of a rival gang member near a night club in Langley Park, Maryland. The victim was hit and cut with beer bottles, and kicked and stabbed in the hands.

On June 7, 2005, Barahona and other MS-13 members assaulted two youths with bottles and a knife in Langley Park. Barahona fought with one of the youths, a rival gang member. The victim was forced to hold on to Barahona to prevent another MS-13 member from stabbing him. On October 21, 2003 a 17 year old man was walking home from school when he was assaulted by Barahona and other MS-13 members. The victim was punched and struck with a wooden bat. Gang paraphernalia was found in Barahona's home when it was searched in December 2004 and August 2005. His telephone number was recovered from the memory of a telephone seized at an address where MS-13 members from Arizona were discovered, and where agents recovered a videotape of MS-13 members in El Salvador saluting the Maryland MS-13 members.

To date, a total of nine MS-13 gang members have been convicted in this and related cases.

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 M. Trusty and Chan Park, and Trial Attorney David Jaffe, a prosecutor for the Justice Department's Gang Squad, who are prosecuting the case.