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MS-13 GANG MEMBER PLEADS GUILTY TO RACKETEERING CONSPIRACY

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

Greenbelt, Maryland - James Guillen, also known as Toro, age 21, of Hyattsville, Maryland, pleaded guilty today after the jury was selected to 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 and Assistant Attorney General Alice S. Fisher of the Criminal Division.

"We will continue to coordinate our efforts and use all available tools to combat violent gangs," said U.S. Attorney Rod J. Rosenstein.

Special Agent in Charge Gregory K. Gant of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives stated, "We are committed to putting violent gang members behind bars, so that we can ensure the citizens of Maryland receive the safety and security they deserve."

Glenn F. Ivey, State's Attorney for Prince George's County stated, "This guilty plea shows that continued cooperation among federal, state and local law enforcement goes a long way towards eliminating the menace of MS-13."

According to the plea agreement, La Mara Salvatrucha, also known as the MS-13 gang 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.

MS-13 is organized in "cliques," including the Sailors Locos Salvatruchos Westside, the Teclas Locos Salvatruchos and the Langley Park Salvatruchos ("LPS"). In June 2004, Guillen was "jumped-in" to the gang and received the gang name of "Toro." Guillen was a member of the LPS clique.

On June 1, 2004, Guillen and other MS-13 members confronted individuals who they perceived to be rival gang members. Montgomery County Police were called to the scene and recovered a butterfly knife from Guillen's vehicle.

At some time prior to October 25, 2004, Guillen attended a meeting of the LPS clique in Prince George's County, Maryland in which clique leaders discussed their belief that Nancy Diaz was providing information to a rival gang and needed to be killed. 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 National Cemetery, knowing that the MS-13 gang members planned to kill the two girls.

The other MS-13 members shot and killed Nancy Diaz. They shot the other girl in the face and stabbed her twice in the chest to attempt to make sure she was dead, then left the scene. On August 25, 2005, Guillen was arrested in connection with the racketeering, murder and assault charges.

Guillen faces a maximum sentence of life in prison and a \$250,000 fine. U.S. District Judge Deborah K. Chasanow has scheduled sentencing for January 11, 2008 at 2:00 p.m. Guillen remains in federal custody.

To date, this office has charged 48 gang members with various federal offenses, with 31 defendants charged in this RICO conspiracy case. Fifteen MS-13 gang members have been convicted thus far in this RICO conspiracy case. Two MS-13 gang members were convicted at trial in November 2006 of conspiracy to commit murder in aid of racketeering, conspiracy to participate in a racketeering enterprise and conspiracy to commit assaults with a deadly weapon: Oscar Ramos Velasquez, age 22, of Baltimore, was sentenced to 37 years in prison and Edgar Alberto Ayala, age 29, of Suitland, Maryland was sentenced to 35 years in prison. Three MS-13 leaders were convicted at trial in April 2007 on all counts of the racketeering conspiracy involving murder, robbery, obstruction of justice and witness tampering: Henry Zelaya, age 20, and Omar Vasquez, age 28, were sentenced to life in prison and Jose Hipolito Cruz, age 28, of Lanham, Maryland was sentenced to 35 years in prison. Ten other defendants have pleaded guilty.

United States Attorney Rod J. Rosenstein 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 Howard County Police Department; the Maryland National Capital Park Police; the Maryland State Police; and the Fairfax County, Virginia Police Department.

Mr. Rosenstein thanked the Prince George's County State's Attorney Glenn F. Ivey and Montgomery County State's Attorney John McCarthy for the assistance that they and their offices provided.

Mr. Rosenstein commended Assistant U.S. Attorneys James Trusty and Chan Park, and Trial Attorney David Jaffe, a prosecutor for the Justice Department's Gang Squad, who prosecuted the case.