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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DEA INVESTIGATION RESULTS IN 12 INDIVIDUALS INDICTED FOR PARTICIPATION IN DRUG CONSPIRACY

Forfeiture allegations for two million dollars

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico – Javier F. Peña, Special Agent in Charge, Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), and United States Attorney Rosa Emilia Rodríguez-Vélez, announced the arrest of nine of twelve individuals indicted by a federal grand jury on federal drug charges. On August 3, 2010, a federal grand jury indicted these individuals for their participation in a conspiracy to possess with the intent to distribute, and conspiracy to distribute cocaine, crack and heroin in Puerto Rico. In addition, the federal grand jury charged one of the individuals with federal firearms law violations. Agents from the DEA, with the assistance of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), the Police of Puerto Rico (PRPD) and the Puerto Rico Justice Department's Special Investigations Bureau (NIE) executed the arrest warrants.

The indictment charges that from in or about the year 2007, José Cruz-Cruz, aka "Cuco," the leader of the drug trafficking organization, was a "seller" or "broker" of illegal narcotics. It was his responsibility to obtain different narcotics from his suppliers and distribute those narcotics to various codefendants, or sellers, based on their requests. Kalim Dahud Vázquez-Dávila, aka "Flaco" was Cruz' primary customer or buyer. Serafín Hernández-Rodríguez, aka "Junito," Ramón A. Jiménez, aka "El Viejo," and Alexander Pastor-Carrasquillo, aka "Alex" were the "suppliers." They supplied Cruz-Cruz with various quantities of narcotics as needed by Cruz to fill the buyer's orders.

Noel González-Santos, aka "Junito," Jaime Fines-Rodríguez, aka "Jimmy," Nelson Pérez-Guzmán, aka "Chincho," Elbert López-Mercado, aka "Gordo," Alvin J. Alvarado-David, aka "Gordo," Carmelo Figueroa-Morales, aka "Junito," and José Ramos-González, aka "Pito" were the "buyers" or "customers" and purchased narcotics for further distribution from Cruz-Cruz during the conduct of the conspiracy. José Ramos-González, aka "Pito" was the "cook" and converted powder cocaine to crack, for other members of the conspiracy.

Defendant Kalim Dahud Vázquez-Dávila was charged with possession, use or carrying firearms with obliterated serial numbers.

"DEA, with the help of ATF, PRPD and NIE, continues its battle against violent crime, illegal firearms and drug trafficking in every corner of the island," said DEA Special Agent in Charge Javier F. Peña.

"This investigation is part of the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF) and our ongoing efforts to continue to fight drug trafficking in Puerto Rico," said U.S. Attorney Rosa Emilia Rodríguez Vélez.

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Agents of the DEA, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms and Explosives (ATF), the Puerto Rico Police Department (PRPD), and the Puerto Rico Justice Department's Special Investigations Bureau (NIE) assigned to the Fajardo High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) initiative conducted the investigation under the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF) program. Assistant U.S. Attorney Vernon B. Miles is prosecuting the case.

If convicted, the defendants face a minimum of ten (10) years imprisonment and a maximum of life imprisonment, with fines of up to \$4 million. Criminal indictments are only charges and not evidence of guilt. A defendant is presumed to be innocent until and unless proven guilty.

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