



Department of Justice

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TUESDAY, APRIL 22, 2008
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CRM
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TDD (202) 514-1888

FOREIGN NATIONAL PLEADS GUILTY TO CONSPIRACY AND ALIEN SMUGGLING CHARGES

WASHINGTON – A Ghanaian man pleaded guilty to charges of conspiracy and alien smuggling in connection with his role in smuggling East Africans to the United States, Assistant Attorney General Alice S. Fisher of the Criminal Division, U.S. Attorney for the District of Columbia Jeffrey A. Taylor, and Assistant Secretary Julie L. Myers of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) announced today.

Sampson Lovelace Boateng, 53, admitted that between approximately June 2006 and February 2007, he conspired with others to smuggle unauthorized aliens to the United States by providing them with fraudulently obtained Mexican visas. Boateng charged approximately \$500 per visa. These documents, which Boateng obtained through a corrupt employee of the Mexican Embassy in Belize, enabled East African aliens to travel into Mexico and reach a point where they could be smuggled across the southern U.S. border. Boateng's co-conspirators housed the aliens for several days or weeks in Mexico and then smuggled them to the United States by various means, including by concealing the aliens for more than twelve hours in the luggage compartments of buses. Smuggling fees totaled approximately \$5,000 per person by the time the aliens reached the United States.

Boateng pleaded guilty in the District of Columbia before U.S. District Judge Ricardo M. Urbina to one count of conspiracy and three counts of bringing aliens to the United States for profit. He faces 5 to 15 years in prison and a fine of \$250,000. Upon completion of his sentence, Boateng will be removed from the United States.

Boateng and his co-conspirator in Mexico, Mohammed Kamel Ibrahim, were charged in a 28-count indictment returned by a federal grand jury in the District of Columbia on Oct. 31, 2007, and unsealed on Dec. 5, 2007. Ibrahim is currently awaiting extradition to the United States to face prosecution.

The investigation was conducted by ICE Washington, D.C., and Los Angeles offices, with assistance from the ICE Miami office, the ICE Attache in Guatemala City, the Diplomatic Security Office of the U.S. Embassy in Belize and the DEA Attache in Belize. Valuable support was provided by the ICE Forensic Document Laboratory and U.S. Customs and Border Protection in Miami. Belizean authorities also provided substantial support.

The case is being prosecuted by Trial Attorney Brian Rogers of the Criminal Division's Domestic Security Section and Assistant U.S. Attorney Michael Harvey of the District of Columbia.

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