



*Office of the United States Attorney
District of Arizona*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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CHILD SMUGGLER OF 10-YEAR-OLD BOY SENTENCED TO PRISON FOR 15 MONTHS

TUCSON, Ariz. – Mayra Veronica Chavez-Martinez, 29, of Nogales, Sonora, Mexico, was sentenced today to 15 months in federal prison by U.S. District Judge David S. Doty. Chavez-Martinez pleaded guilty on January 6, 2009, to Conspiracy to Transport an Illegal Alien for Profit.

Chavez-Martinez attempted to enter the U.S. on October 15, 2008, at the Nogales, Ariz., Port of Entry accompanied by a 10-year-old boy whom Chavez-Martinez claimed was her son. She presented a border crossing card for herself and her own son's laser visa for the boy. The photo on the laser visa did not match the boy's appearance. She and the boy were then escorted to passport control for processing.

During questioning, Chavez-Martinez admitted that the child was not her son nor was she related in any way. She admitted that the card that she presented for the child was her own son's card. She stated that about one week prior to the attempt, an acquaintance of hers contacted her and offered her a job taking a child into the United States. She initially declined but said that she would think about it. The acquaintance asked her again and Chavez-Martinez agreed to meet the acquaintance and the child at a hotel in Nogales, Sonora. Chavez-Martinez was instructed to take the child into the U.S. and then call the woman for further instructions. She was to meet an unknown woman at a park in Nogales, Ariz., and give the boy to her for \$350.

The smuggled child was turned over to the custody of the Mexican Consulate who then turned him over to the Mexican Department of Family Services (the Mexican equivalent of U.S. Child Protective Services) to be reunited with his parents. The boy was determined to be a Mexican Citizen with no legal documents allowing him to be in the United States.

The investigation in this case was conducted by U.S. Customs and Border Protection. The prosecution was handled by Raquel Arellano, Assistant U.S. Attorney, District of Arizona, Tucson.

CASE NUMBER: CR-08-01405-TUC-CKJ
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