



NEWS RELEASE

Office of the United States Attorney
Eastern District of Texas

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PRISON SENTENCE FOR DRUG DEFENDANT

(Tyler, Texas) A 36-year-old Mexican National has been sentenced to 97 months in federal prison for drug trafficking. This morning, U.S. District Judge William Steger sentenced **ARMANDO RAZO VILLASANA, also know as Mando and Ramiro**, for his role in the distribution of over 600 grams of methamphetamine in Smith and Cherokee Counties between January and June of 2003.

According to information prosecutors presented in court, Villasana, and others were involved in the distribution of methamphetamine in New Summerfield, Whitehouse and Tyler. Villasana utilized various suppliers out of the Dallas-Forth Worth metroplex to acquire quantities of methamphetamine to sell, and recruited others to distribute these illegal controlled substances in varying quantities. Recognizing the growing problem, Smith County Sheriff J.B. Smith requested federal assistance in the fall of 2002. Soon thereafter, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) Mobile Enforcement Team (MET) from Dallas launched an intensive investigation with local law enforcement into the criminal activities of drug dealers in Smith County.

Villasana and 13 other defendants were arrested on federal drug trafficking charges on August 13, 2003. In addition, law enforcement also arrested over 30

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more defendants on State felony drug charges. Villasana pleaded guilty to Possession with Intent to Distribute Methamphetamine before Judge Steger on January 12, 2004.

U.S. Attorney Matthew D. Orwig says this sentencing should send a message, "This defendant acted with no regard for the community or the people who lived there when dealing drugs. His lengthy sentence should send the message that putting drug dealers behind bars remains a top priority of law enforcement."

The sentencing of Villasana means 12 of the 14 defendants indicted last August have now been sentenced to prison. Tyrone Scott was sentenced to 120 months in prison, Simmie Davan Cooks was sentenced to 110 months in prison, Christopher Johnson was sentenced to 110 months in prison, Jennifer Smitha was sentenced to 60 months in prison, Frederick Ladale Attaway was sentenced to 108 months in prison, Richard Travail Jackson, Sr. was sentenced to 50 months in prison, Martin Vergara was sentenced to 30 months in federal prison, Jack Edward Brown was sentenced to 18 months in prison, Richard T. Jackson, Jr. was sentenced to 12 months in prison, Jose Antonio Uribe was sentenced to 51 months, and Fabian Alexander Williamson was sentenced to 188 months in prison. Another defendant has pleaded guilty and is awaiting sentencing. Saleem Jaffer Jiwani, was scheduled to plead guilty last November but did not show up for his plea hearing. He is still a fugitive.

The investigation was led by the Drug Enforcement Administration MET, Smith County Sheriff's Office, Smith County District Attorney's Office, the Tyler Police

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Department, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, the FBI, the IRS, the U.S. Marshal Service, and the Northeast Texas Narcotics Task Force. Assistant U.S. Attorney Allen Hurst is prosecuting the cases.

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