



U.S. Department of Justice

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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Fourteen Individuals, Including Ten Mexican Nationals, Charged with Fentanyl and Cocaine Trafficking and Immigration Offenses

Richard G. Frohling, Acting United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Wisconsin, announced today that a criminal complaint charging fourteen individuals was unsealed, and thirteen of the fourteen charged individuals have been arrested. Additionally, multiple search warrants were executed in the Eastern District of Wisconsin and the Central District of California in coordination with the arrests. All the defendants are charged with narcotics trafficking, including fentanyl and cocaine, and two of the individuals, Osmar Venejas-Mejia and Hector Rodriguez-Villalobos, are charged with illegal reentry after removal from the United States.

The defendants charged in this law enforcement action are identified as follows:

Name	Age	Citizenship
FERNANDO PALMA-JIMENEZ	49	Mexico
DANIEL MORALEZ	37	USA
CARMELO HERNANDEZ-RAMIREZ	40	Mexico
LUIS QUINONEZ-HERNANDEZ	36	USA
REYNALDO SANCHEZ-GONZALEZ	48	Mexico
CARLOS PEREZ-SANTANA	32	Mexico
EQUIEL MARTINEZ	39	Mexico
GERARDO OSORIO-JARAMILLO	47	Mexico
JESUS MEDINA-RODRIGUEZ	47	Mexico
ERIK RODRIGUEZ	33	USA
ANDREA ROA	30	Mexico
HECTOR RODRIGUEZ-VILLALOBOS	35	Mexico
OSMAR VENEJAS-MEJIA	34	Mexico
JOSEPH MARINCIC	40	USA

According to the criminal complaint, between approximately March 2023 and the present, the fourteen defendants conspired to possess with intent to distribute and to distribute controlled substances, including fentanyl and cocaine, and that multiple defendants possessed with intent to distribute controlled substances, distributed controlled substances, and used communication facilities to facilitate the distribution of controlled substances. If convicted, the penalties for the narcotics trafficking offenses carry maximum penalties of forty years to life in prison depending on the specific offense and weight of controlled substances charged.

The complaint also alleges that Osmar Venejas-Mejia and Hector Rodriguez-Villalobos, both Mexican nationals, were previously removed from the United States and unlawfully reentered the United States. If convicted, the penalties for the illegal reentry offense carry a maximum penalty of two years in prison and a \$250,000 fine.

The defendants were charged based on a long-running investigation by law enforcement officers from the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), and Wisconsin Department of Justice Division of Criminal Investigation (DCI), in partnership with the North Central High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas (HIDTA). This case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Gail Hoffman and Elizabeth Monfils. Multiple law enforcement agencies participated in the arrests and execution of search warrants related to the case, including the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), United States Marshal Service (USMS), the United States Postal Inspection Service (USPIS), Internal Revenue Service-Criminal Investigations (IRS-CI), the West Allis Police Department, the Brookfield Police Department, the Waukesha Police Department, the South Milwaukee Police Department, Milwaukee County Sheriff's Department, Waukesha County Sheriff's Department, and Wisconsin State Patrol.

This case was charged as part of Operation Take Back America (<https://www.justice.gov/dag/media/1393746/dl?inline>) a nationwide initiative that marshals the full resources of the Department of Justice to repel the invasion of illegal immigration, achieve the total elimination of cartels and transnational criminal organizations (TCOs), and protect our communities from the perpetrators of violent crime. Operation Take Back America streamlines efforts and resources from the Department's Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces (OCDETFs) and Project Safe Neighborhood (PSN).

The public is cautioned that an indictment or criminal complaint is merely a charge and the defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty.

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