



**Office of the
Special Narcotics Prosecutor
for the City of New York**

**Bridget G. Brennan, Special Narcotics
Prosecutor**

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PRESS RELEASE

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COCAINE HIDDEN IN KIDDIE TOYS

Special Narcotics Prosecutor Bridget G. Brennan, New York Drug Enforcement Administration Special Agent-In-Charge John P. Gilbride, and Ron Verrochio, Inspector in Charge of the New York Division, Postal Inspection Service, announced the arrest on Tuesday morning of 9 people in Bronx and Manhattan in connection with a drug importation and money laundering organization that shipped kilograms of cocaine from Puerto Rico to New York City concealed in boxes of children's toys and puzzles.

During the course of the investigation 4 kilograms of cocaine (8.8 pounds); 4 handguns and \$86,400 were recovered. The New York leader of the organization, Jose Diaz a/k/a Jose David Diaz-Ortega, was arrested on July 30, 2008. A total of 9 people have been arrested and charged in an indictment unsealed today.

A five-month investigation revealed that Jose Diaz a/k/a Jose David Diaz-Ortega, directed associates in Puerto Rico to ship kilograms of cocaine, concealed inside children's toy tool boxes and large building toy container boxes, to New York City. The organization used United

States Postal Service Express Mail to make deliveries to drop off addresses in Manhattan and the Bronx. Eight other members of the Diaz-Ortega drug or money laundering enterprise in the Bronx, New Jersey and Puerto Rico, also face top felony charges. The narcotics were destined to be sold to buyers on the East Coast.

One sale occurred on June 5, 2008 at Diaz-Ortega's Bronx residence. A Connecticut resident purchased a kilogram of cocaine concealed inside a child's pegboard stool. With the assistance of the New Haven Drug Enforcement Administration District Office and the Ansonia Police Department, the cocaine, still inside the stool, was recovered in the Waterbury, Connecticut area.

Diaz-Ortega and Jesus Diaz, an employee in Prima Check Cashing, a money remitter and check cashing business at 1740 First Avenue in Manhattan, are also charged with laundering the proceeds of the narcotics business. As often as twice a week, Diaz-Ortega brought drug proceeds amounting to \$40,000-\$50,000 to Prima Check Cashing where Jesus Diaz, with the assistance of Lisa Rodriguez, sent wire transfers to associates in Puerto Rico. He also converted drug proceeds received in smaller denominations into \$100 dollar bills. Diaz-Ortega stashed currency in his residence at 1314 Clay Avenue in the Bronx.

A June 13, 2008 search warrant at Diaz-Ortega's home led to the recovery of \$86,400 and a .380 caliber handgun. Diaz-Ortega, who was not home at the time, was arrested on July 30, 2008 at First Avenue and 101st Street in Manhattan. He is being held on bail in the amount of \$500,000 cash/ \$250,000 bond. His next court date is October 6, 2008 before the Honorable William Wetzel, Supreme Court Part 34. He and eight of his co-conspirators were indicted by a Special Narcotics Grand Jury on August 29, 2008.

This morning a search warrant at Cessa Eddy's Prospect Avenue Bronx home led to the recovery of a .38 caliber, .25 caliber and .9 millimeter handguns and an ounce of cocaine and an ounce of marijuana packaged in numerous plastic zip lock bags for distribution. Teams of DEA agents and Special Narcotics investigators arrested the remaining defendants charged in the indictment, including: Mark Marasi, Cessa Eddy, Jackeline Viera, Jesus Diaz, Lisa Rodriguez, Juan Carambot, Jose Weekes and Julio Perez.

The defendants will be arraigned this afternoon in Supreme Court Part 1.

Below are names, addresses and charges against the defendants in this case:

1. Jose Diaz-Ortega, 28 1314 Clay Avenue Bronx, NY
2. Mark Marasi, 37 405 East 92nd Street, Apt. 5J New York, NY
3. Cessa Eddy, 22 2339 Prospect Avenue, Apt 3D Bronx NY
4. Jackeline Viera, 28

2312 Beaumont Avenue, Apt. 1 Bronx, NY
5. Jesus Diaz, 36 27 Adult Drive Moonachie, NJ
6. Lisa Rodriguez, 36 27 Adult Drive Moonachie, NJ
7. Juan Carambot, 40 1806 1st Avenue New York, NY
8. Julio Perez, 32 1830 1st Avenue New York, NY
9. Jose Weekes, 20 1806 1st Avenue New York, NY

CHARGES

CONSPIRACY IN THE SECOND DEGREE

Jose David Diaz-Ortega, Julio Perez, Juan Carambot, Jose Weekes, Jackeline Viera, Cessa Eddy, Mark Marasi

CONSPIRACY IN THE FOURTH DEGREE

Jesus Diaz, Lisa M. Rodriguez (2 counts)

CRIMINAL POSSESSION OF A CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE IN THE FIRST DEGREE

Cessa Eddy (3 counts), Mark Marasi (2 counts), Juan Carambot (3 counts), Jackeline Viera (1 count) Jose Diaz (7 counts)

CRIMINAL SALE OF A CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE IN THE FIRST DEGREE

Jose Diaz (1 count)

ATTEMPTED CRIMINAL POSSESSION OF A CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE IN THE FIRST DEGREE

Jose Diaz

CRIMINAL POSSESSION OF A CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE IN THE THIRD DEGREE

Jose Diaz (7 counts)

MONEY LAUNDERING IN THE THIRD DEGREE

Jose Diaz, Jackeline Viera (1 count)

MONEY LAUNDERING IN THE THIRD DEGREE

Jose Diaz, Jose Weekes, Jackeline Viera (1 count)

CRIMINAL POSSESSION OF A WEAPON IN THE FOURTH DEGREE
Jose Diaz (1 count)