



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

Bridget G. Brennan, Special Narcotics Prosecutor

80 CENTRE STREET, SIXTH FLOOR
NEW YORK, NY 10013
212-815-0400, GEN.
212-815-0440, FAX

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 7, 2013

Catherine Christian
Office of the Special Narcotics Prosecutor
(212) 815-0178

Erin McKenzie-Mulvey
DEA, NY Division
(212) 337-2906

Paul J. Browne
New York City Police Department
(646) 610-6700

Darcy Wells
New York State Police
(518) 457-2180

Colombian Drug Kingpin Charged with Smuggling 35 pounds of Heroin Destined for New York in Freight Containers

BRIDGET G. BRENNAN, New York City's Special Narcotics Prosecutor, BRIAN R. CROWELL, Special Agent in Charge of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration's New York Division (DEA), New York City Police Commissioner RAYMOND W. KELLY and JOSEPH A. D'AMICO, Superintendent of the New York State Police, announced today the indictment of three alleged Colombian drug traffickers who conspired to ship massive quantities of heroin to New York City via the Port of Miami. Two of the defendants were arrested in Colombia yesterday pursuant to an extradition request. They will be brought to New York pending further extradition proceedings. The case centers on a shipment of 16 kilos of heroin (over 35 lbs.) seized from a freighter ship in Miami on January 10, 2012. The load of heroin was worth several million on the street.

LUIS FERNANDO GALLEANO GASCA (aka "FERNANDO"), and GEOMAR RICHARD GALLEANO GASCA (aka "RICHARD"), are charged in an indictment filed by the Office of Special Narcotics Prosecutor for the City of New York, along with a third defendant, JAIRO PATINO (aka "JAIRO"), who was arrested in New York in January 2012. FERNANDO is charged with Operating as a Major Trafficker under New York State's kingpin statute, which carries a possible life sentence.

From October 2011 through January 2012, Special Narcotics, the New York Drug Enforcement Task Force (NYDETF) Group T-12, DEA-Bogota country office, the Colombian National Police, and Homeland Security Investigations-Miami, conducted an investigation into the Colombian heroin trafficking ring, believed responsible for numerous very substantial shipments of heroin to the U.S. Assisting in the investigation were the U.S. Customs and Border Protection and the DEA's Miami Field Division. The investigation utilized wiretaps on cellphones and email accounts in both the United States and Colombia.

During this investigation, agents learned that FERNANDO was making arrangements to smuggle heroin from Colombia to Miami onboard a freight ship, the "Seaboard Pride," in January 2012. JAIRO, who was based in Flushing, Queens, was supposed to travel to Miami to meet the heroin shipment and then transport it back to New York City for distribution. In an unsuccessful attempt to evade law enforcement, the drug traffickers used a shared email account and wrote detailed messages for each other in draft form. These emails were stored but never sent. They were saved in the draft folder and then deleted once they'd been read. The messages included specific transport information that allowed investigators to intercept the heroin shipment, including the identification number of the container in which the narcotics were located.

Based on phone conversations and emails, as well as other evidence, agents in Miami stopped the "Seaboard Pride" on January 10, 2012 and readily identified the container with the shipment of narcotics. Inside, the agents found a total of 34 packages of heroin concealed within four couches tightly packed into an immense shipping bin containing a total of 34 couches, 25 of which carried no contraband. JAIRO was arrested before he could leave New York to meet the shipment.

Unable to contact JAIRO, the Colombian drug traffickers believed he had quit the conspiracy and began making plans for RICHARD to retrieve the shipment. Colombia National Police observed FERNANDO and RICHARD meeting in Bogota, Colombia shortly after JAIRO ceased contacting them. After struggling to retrieve it, the drug traffickers learned that the shipment had been seized by law enforcement.

FERNANDO, while in Colombia, coordinated for the couches containing the heroin to arrive in New York from Colombia. RICHARD, from Colombia, arranged to have the heroin picked up in Miami and delivered to New York. JAIRO's role was to pick up the heroin in Miami and bring it to New York City.

Yesterday the Colombia National Police arrested FERNANDO in Bogota and RICHARD in Anapoima. FERNANDO is indicted for Operating as a Major Trafficker, Criminal Possession of a Controlled Substance in the 1st Degree, and Conspiracy in the Second Degree. RICHARD is indicted for Criminal Possession of a Controlled Substance in the 1st Degree and Conspiracy in the Second Degree.

JAIRO is indicted for Attempted Criminal Possession of a Controlled Substance in the 1st Degree and Conspiracy in the Second Degree. He was remanded at his New York County Supreme Court arraignment in September 2012. His next court appearance is scheduled March 13, 2013 in New York County Supreme Court Part 45.

BRIDGET G. BRENNAN said: "The New York State Kingpin Statute was tailor made for LUIS FERNANDO GALLEANO GASCA. He ran a high volume narcotics ring intent on pumping out heroin to tens of thousands of people in New York City and throughout the East Coast. Dedicated investigators decoded his sophisticated schemes and I congratulate our law enforcement partners in this country and in Colombia for their work on this exceptional case."

BRIAN R. CROWELL said, "These heroin traffickers ran their business on principals similar to an online commerce company; one – place an order via email, two- fill the order, three-transport the order with tracking information and four- deliver the order. This 15 month long investigation targeting millions of dollars' worth of heroin, intended for the streets of the New York City area, led to three arrests and the seizure of 16 kilograms of heroin. This federal, state and local investigation operated with global partners and will see that all members of this organization face justice in the United States. Heroin use is a major drug threat to our communities and we commend all members of the New York Drug Enforcement Task Force, the investigators from the Office of the Special Narcotics Prosecutor, and our federal, state, local and international law enforcement partner."

RAYMOND KELLY said, "Detectives in the NYPD and their federal counterparts in this case ensured that illicit narcotics headed for New York never arrived and that, once again, kingpins who traffic drugs here are headed to prison."

JOSEPH A. D'AMICO said, "The hard work and partnership between the Drug Enforcement Administration, New York State Police, New York City Police Department and New York City Office of the Special Narcotics Prosecutor is responsible for the notable arrests and indictments of these individuals. These men attempted to bring illegal drugs into our state and our communities – a crime that we will never tolerate. I commend the considerable efforts and dedication of our agency personnel and our law enforcement partners who were able to bring these criminals to justice and to keep these drugs off our streets."

INDICTED DEFENDANTS/CHARGES

Luis Fernando Galleano Gasca, (aka "Fernando")
04/18/1959
Bogota, Colombia

Operating as a Major Trafficker – 1 Ct
CPCS 1st – 1 ct
Conspiracy 2nd – 1 Ct

Geomar Richard Galleano Gasca, (aka "Richard")
07/12/1960
Bogota, Colombia
Attempted CPCS 1st – 1 Cts
| Conspiracy 2nd – 1

Jairo Patino (aka "Jairo")
06/15/1963
153-50 77th Street, Flushing, NY

Attempted CPCS 1st – 1 Cts
Conspiracy 2nd – 1 Ct

The charges and allegations are merely accusations and the defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty.