



**U.S. Department of Justice  
U.S. Attorney's Office  
Western District of Texas**

**Johnny Sutton, U.S. Attorney**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

February 18, 2004

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**FEDERAL GRAND JURY RETURNS SUPERSEDING INDICTMENT AGAINST  
HERIBERTO SANTILLAN-TABARES**

**United States Attorney Johnny Sutton** announced today that a federal grand jury in El Paso returned a superseding indictment against 49-year-old Heriberto Santillan-Tabares and 11 other individuals in connection with a large-scale cocaine and marijuana smuggling and distribution operation based in Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua, Mexico.

The superseding indictment contains new charges against Santillan-Tabares (aka "Humberto Esteves-Lopez", "El Doctor", "El Ingeniero", and "El Maca") including a CCE (continuing criminal enterprise) charge and five counts of murder in furtherance of a CCE. Those charges are in addition to the four charges (conspiracy to possess a controlled substance with intent to distribute, conspiracy to import a controlled substance, possession with intent to distribute a controlled substance and importation of a controlled substance) contained in the original indictment returned in December 2003.

The superseding indictment alleges that from February 28, 2003, to January 15, 2004, Santillan-Tabares spearheaded an organization responsible for the distribution of approximately four tons of marijuana and over 29 kilograms of cocaine. Those charged in the drug importation and distribution conspiracy counts include: Santillan-Tabares; 51-year-old Edmundo Castillo-Flores of Torreon, Coahuila, Mexico; 52-year-old Ismael Bueno of Hereford, Texas; 37-year-old Jesus Rodriguez-Rodriguez of Durango, Mexico; 24-year-old Homero Nevarez-Montoya of Chicago, Illinois; 41-year-old Jesus Delgado (aka Chato) of El Paso; 39-year-old Arturo Bustillos of Horizon, Texas; 24-year-old Chris Sepulveda of El Paso; 35-year-old Miguel Loya-Gallegos (aka Comandante Loya) of Ciudad Juarez, Coahuila, Mexico; Julio (last name unknown) (aka Monserga); Ramon (last name unknown); and, Manuel Lujan. All defendants—with the exception of Castillo-Flores, Delgado, Julio (last name unknown), Ramon (last name unknown), Bustillos, Lujan, Sepulveda and Loya-Gallegos—are currently in federal custody.

Santillan-Tabares is also charged with the murders of five individuals between August 5, 2003, and January 14, 2004, to further his continuing criminal enterprise. Allegedly, Santillan-Tabares intentionally killed or aided, abetted and caused the murders of Fernando Reyes-Aguado, Cesar Rubio (aka El Doce), Omar Cepeda-Saenz, Luis Padilla-Cardona and Juan Carlos Perez-Gomez. The bodies of the deceased were among those recovered last month from the backyard of a residence in Ciudad Juarez.

Upon conviction of all charges, each defendant faces up to life in federal prison.

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This case is being investigated by the United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement with assistance from the Drug Enforcement Administration and the El Paso County Sheriff's Department.

**An indictment is a formal accusation of criminal conduct, not evidence of guilt. The defendants are presumed innocent unless and until convicted through due process of law.**

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