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DALLAS, TEXAS  
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**FOUR DALLAS RESIDENTS ARRESTED  
IN DRUG DISTRIBUTION CONSPIRACY**

***Gang Member Believed to Have Ordered a "Hit" on Dallas Police Officer***

United States Attorney Richard B. Roper announced today that four Dallas residents have been arrested on drug conspiracy charges outlined in a federal indictment that was returned by a grand jury this week in Dallas.

Emiliano Martinez, a/k/a "Cubano," and his wife, Monica Chavez, both previously convicted of state narcotics felonies, were arrested on May 18, 2006 at their residence on North Fitzhugh in Dallas on charges in a federal criminal complaint that was filed May 16, 2006 in U.S. District Court. Co-defendants Irma Soto, a/k/a "Chapparra," and Elizabeth Lozano were arrested this week in Dallas on charges outlined in a related federal indictment that was returned by a federal grand jury this week in Dallas.

All four defendants are charged in the indictment with conspiracy to manufacture, distribute and possess with intent to distribute 50 grams or more of cocaine base (crack cocaine). Martinez, age 33, and Chavez, age 25, are also charged with two counts of distribution of crack cocaine, Lozano, age 36, is charged with one count of managing a drug house, and Soto, age 43, is charged with one count of being a felon in possession of a firearm.

Martinez, known in his drug trade as "Cubano," became known to the Dallas Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF) through community complaints about drug sales in the area of Fitzhugh and Deere Streets in Dallas, Texas. In April and May of 2006, Martinez and his wife, Monica Chavez sold over 50 grams of crack cocaine to a federal agent in a number of undercover purchases outside of their home.

The investigation conducted by ATF and the Dallas Police Department Gang Unit uncovered evidence that Martinez sold powder and crack cocaine and coordinated the sale of crack cocaine through associates in apartments near his home in east Dallas from his release from six years of state imprisonment in 2004 through his arrest last month. On May 18, 2006, ATF agents executed a federal search and arrest warrant at the Martinez residence on North Fitzhugh. Both front and back doors to the residence were barricaded, but ATF agents eventually entered the premises and arrested both Martinez and Chavez. Agents found crack cocaine, electronic scales, plastic baggies, and a significant amount of money, all items consistent with narcotics sales.

Elizabeth Lozano is charged with knowingly making available for use a number of apartments for Martinez and his associates to sell crack cocaine. Lozano, the manager of the Park Place Apartments, received weekly payments from Martinez since August 2004 to ignore the narcotics trafficking occurring in her apartments and to report to the police rival drug dealers at Martinez's request. Irma Soto, a previously-convicted felon, sold narcotics for Martinez through one of these apartments and was provided a firearm by Martinez to protect her drug sales.

Martinez and Chavez were detained pending trial following a hearing on May 23, 2006. At that hearing, an ATF Special Agent detailed Martinez's drug distribution operation. Martinez, a member of the violent criminal gangs East Side Locos and the Pistoleros prison gang, is believed to have ordered a "hit" on a Dallas Police Officer, employed "lookouts" to warn of police presence, possessed firearms in furtherance of his drug trade, and used threats and violence to further the unlawful operation. Soto was detained following a June 8, 2006 hearing and Lozano was released on a number of conditions.

An indictment is an accusation by a federal grand jury and a defendant is entitled to the presumption of innocence unless proven guilty. However, if convicted of their participation in the drug conspiracy, all defendants face a statutory sentence of between ten years and life imprisonment.

U.S. Attorney Roper thanked and praised the excellent investigative work of the ATF's High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area ("HIDTA") Task Force and the Dallas Police Department Gang Unit. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Jordan A. Konig.