

Massachusetts MS-13 Member Convicted for Gang Murders of Two Teenagers

Following a multi-week trial in federal court in Boston, an MS-13 member was found guilty Thursday of racketeering conspiracy involving murder. This is the government's 49th conviction in the case. Defendant is 16th person found responsible for murder. Of the 16 individuals held accountable for murder, 15 were in the United States illegally.

Edwin Gonzalez, a/k/a "Sangriento," 22, a Salvadoran national, was found guilty of conspiracy to conduct enterprise affairs through a pattern of racketeering activity, more commonly referred to as RICO or racketeering conspiracy. In addition, the jury found that Gonzalez's racketeering activity on behalf of MS-13 included his participation in the Sept. 7, 2015, murder of a 15-year-old in East Boston and the Jan. 10, 2016, murder of a 16-year old in East Boston. U.S. District Court Judge F. Dennis Saylor IV scheduled sentencing for Sept. 26, 2018.

After a multi-year investigation, Gonzalez was one of dozens of leaders, members, and associates of MS-13 named in a superseding indictment unsealed in January 2016 that targeted MS-13's criminal activities in Massachusetts. According to court documents, MS-13 members in Massachusetts engaged in a variety of racketeering acts and crimes of violence, including six different murders committed by members of MS-13 in Massachusetts between October 2014 and January 2016.

Gonzalez was the 49th defendant to be convicted as part of this case. All nine defendants who went to trial were convicted and 40 others pleaded guilty. Of the 16 defendants held responsible for murder, 15 defendants, including

Gonzalez, were in the United States illegally at the time the murders were committed. The conviction of Gonzalez brings to end this series of prosecutions; the remaining defendants are fugitives and will be prosecuted upon arrest.

The multi-year investigation revealed that multiple MS-13 cliques operate in East Boston, Chelsea, Everett, Somerville, and other parts of Massachusetts. Gonzalez was a member of the Molinos Locos Salvatrucha clique of MS-13.

On Sept. 7, 2015, Gonzalez and three other MS-13 members lured a 15-year-old boy through social media to Constitution Beach in East Boston. Convinced that the victim was a gang rival, Gonzalez and others targeted him by pretending to be a girl on Facebook and lured the victim to the beach for a date. When the victim arrived at Constitution Beach, Gonzalez and three other MS-13 members took turns stabbing the victim repeatedly, killing him and leaving him dead on a public beach. The victim had approximately 33 sharp force injuries and multiple blunt force injuries. The other three MS-13 members who committed this murder with Gonzalez – Carlos Melara, a/k/a “Chuchito,” a/k/a “Criminal;” Henry Parada Martinez, a/k/a “Street Danger;” and Rene Mejia Flores a/k/a “Gasper,” – have pleaded guilty and are awaiting sentencing.

On Dec. 6, 2015, Gonzalez was promoted to “homeboy,” or full-member of the gang, to reward him for the murder he committed on behalf of MS-13. Melara and Mejia Flores were also promoted to “homeboys” for their role in the murder.

On Jan.10, 2016, Gonzalez and three other MS-13 members lured a 16-year-old boy through social media to Falcon Street in East Boston. Again, convinced that the victim was a gang rival, Gonzalez and others targeted him by pretending to be a girl on Facebook. Gonzalez then went to pick up the victim, pretending to be a relative of the girl that the victim was supposed to meet for a date. When Gonzalez arrived with the victim in East Boston, the MS-13 members attacked the victim.

Three of the MS-13 members, including Gonzalez, were armed with large knives and stabbed the victim repeatedly, while the fourth MS-13 member fired multiple gunshots into the victim. Gonzalez and the other MS-13 members then ran away, leaving the teenager dead on a public street. The victim had approximately 48 sharp force injuries, multiple gunshot wounds, and multiple blunt force injuries. The other three MS-13 members who committed this murder with Gonzalez – Edwin Diaz, a/k/a “Demente;” Jairo Perez, a/k/a “Seco;” and Rigoberto Mejia, a/k/a “Ninja” – have pleaded guilty and are awaiting sentencing.

United States Attorney Andrew E. Lelling; Harold H. Shaw, Special Agent in Charge of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Boston Field Division; Peter C. Fitzhugh, Special Agent in Charge of Homeland Security Investigations in Boston; Colonel Kerry A. Gilpin, Superintendent of the Massachusetts State Police; Commissioner Thomas Turco of the Massachusetts Department of Corrections; Essex County Sheriff Kevin F. Coppinger; Suffolk County Sheriff Steven W. Thompkins; Suffolk County District Attorney Daniel F. Conley; Middlesex County District Attorney Marian T. Ryan; Essex County District Attorney Jonathan Blodgett; Boston Police Commissioner William Evans; Chelsea Police Chief Brian A. Kyes; Everett Police Chief Steven A. Mазzie; Lynn Police Chief Michael Mageary; Revere Police Chief James Guido; and Somerville Police Chief David Fallon made the announcement.