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UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff,

v.

Levid Rivera VELAZQUEZ (1),
Irvin Hermino RAMOS ZIGA (2),
Eduardo Marine HERRERA (3),
Luiz Alfredo GARCIA VERA (4),
Jorge Luis ESPINAL (5),
Riardez Noylola AGUSTIN (6),
Jorge Rolando ARCENTALES
CASTRO (7),

Defendants.

Case No.: '23 MJ1333 MSB

COMPLAINT FOR VIOLATION OF

Title 46, U.S.C., Secs. 70503,
70506(b) - Conspiracy to Distribute
Cocaine on Board a Vessel; Title
46, U.S.C., Sec. 70503 - Possession
of Cocaine with Intent to
Distribute on Board a Vessel; Title
18 U.S.C., Sec. 2 - Aiding and
Abetting

The undersigned complainant being duly sworn states:

COUNT 1

Conspiracy to Distribute Cocaine on Board a Vessel

[46 U.S.C. §§ 70503 and 70506(b)]

Beginning at a date unknown and continuing to on or about April 8,
2023, on board a vessel subject to the jurisdiction of the United
States, while on the high seas, defendants Levid Rivera VELAZQUEZ, Irvin
Hermino RAMOS ZIGA, Eduardo Marin HERRERA, Luiz Alfredo GARCIA VERA,
Jorge Luis ESPINAL, Riardez Noylola AGUSTIN, and Jorge Rolando
ARCENTALES CASTRO, did knowingly and intentionally conspire together
and with each other and with other persons unknown to distribute 5
kilograms and more, to wit: approximately 755 kilograms (1664.5 pounds)

1 of a mixture and substance containing a detectable amount of cocaine,
2 a Schedule II Controlled Substance; in violation of Title 46, United
3 States Code, Sections 70503 and 70506(b).

4 COUNT 2

5 **Possession of Cocaine with Intent to Distribute on Board a Vessel;**
6 **Aiding and Abetting**

7 [46 U.S.C. § 70503; 18 U.S.C. § 2]

8 On or about April 8, 2023, on board a vessel subject to the
9 jurisdiction of the United States, while on the high seas, defendants
10 Levid Rivera VELAZQUEZ, Irvin Hermino RAMOS ZIGA, Eduardo Marin HERRERA,
11 Luiz Alfredo GARCIA VERA, Jorge Luis ESPINAL, Riardez Noylola AGUSTIN,
12 and Jorge Rolando ARCENTALES CASTRO, did knowingly and intentionally
13 possess, with intent to distribute, 5 kilograms and more, to wit:
14 approximately 755 kilograms (1664.5 pounds) of a mixture and substance
15 containing a detectable amount of cocaine, a Schedule II Controlled
16 Substance; in violation of Title 46, United States Code, Section 70503,
17 and Title 18, United States Code, Section 2.

18 And the complainant states that this complaint is based on the
19 attached statement of facts, which is incorporated herein by reference.

20
21 *Luis Hernandez Barrientos*

22 Luis Hernandez Barrientos
23 Special Agent
24 Drug Enforcement Administration

25 Sworn and attested to under oath by telephone, in accordance with Fed.
26 R. Crim. P. 4.1, on April 12, 2023.

27 

28 Hon. Michael S. Berg
United States Magistrate Judge

STATEMENT OF FACTS

1 I am a Special Agent with the Drug Enforcement Administration,
2 ("DEA"). I declare under penalty of perjury the following is true and
3 correct:

4 This affidavit relates to the interdiction of a "go-fast"
5 vessel in the Eastern Pacific Ocean. The United States Coast Guard
6 ("USCG") recovered approximately 755 kilograms of cocaine on or about
7 April 8, 2023, on the high seas. Seven crewmembers, Levid Rivera
8 VELAZQUEZ, Irvin Hermino RAMOS ZIGA, Eduardo Marin HERRERA, Luiz
9 Alfredo GARCIA VERA, Jorge Luis ESPINAL, Riardez Noylola AGUSTIN, and
10 Jorge Rolando ARCENTALES CASTRO, were present on board the go-fast
11 vessel at time of interdiction. The information contained herein was
12 gathered by me as well as other federal law enforcement officers,
13 including USCG personnel, all of whom I believe to be reliable.
14 Because this affidavit is being prepared for the limited purpose of
15 obtaining authorization for the requested complaint, I have not set
16 forth all facts known to me about this investigation, rather, only
17 the facts I believe are necessary to establish probable cause for my
18 request.

19 On or about April 8, 2023, a maritime patrol aircraft detected a
20 blue, 30-foot go-fast vessel traveling at a high rate of speed (34
21 knots) and a northeasterly course approximately 288 nautical miles
22 southeast of Acapulco, Mexico. The go-fast vessel was operating in a
23 known drug trafficking area, displayed no indicia of nationality, and
24 had packages and a tarp covering its deck. United States Coast Guard
25 Cutter ACTIVE, United States Coast Guard Cutter BENJAMIN BOTTOMS, and
26 HMCS EDMONTON (operating with an embarked United States Coast Guard
27 Law Enforcement Detachment) were patrolling nearby and diverted to
28

1 intercept the go-fast vessel. ACTIVE launched its assigned helicopter
2 and BENJAMIN BOTTOMS launched a small boat with an embarked boarding
3 team. Once on scene with the go-fast vessel, the Coast Guard
4 helicopter confirmed that the vessel showed no indicia of nationality
5 and observed the vessel operating at a high rate of speed. The
6 helicopter crew also observed the go-fast vessel's crew jettisoning
7 packages overboard. The Coast Guard helicopter attempted to compel
8 the go-fast vessel to stop, using blue law enforcement lights and
9 verbal commands to stop over the radio in English and Spanish, but
10 the go-fast vessel disregarded the order and continued its course at
11 a high rate of speed. ACTIVE's helicopter initiated a pursuit of the
12 non-compliant vessel and expended warning shots across the bow of the
13 go-fast vessel. With warning shots ineffective at stopping the go-
14 fast vessel, the Coast Guard helicopter used disabling fire on the
15 go-fast vessel's two outboard engines. This action was effective at
16 stopping the go-fast vessel.



1 Meanwhile, a small boat assigned to EDMONTON was launched to
2 recover bales that had been jettisoned overboard by the go-fast
3 vessel's operators. BENJAMIN BOTTOMS small boat, with its embarked
4 boarding team, also arrived on scene and gained control of the go-
5 fast vessel. BENJAMIN BOTTOMS' boarding team conducted Right of Visit
6 questioning and confirmed that the vessel had no physical flag flown,
7 no registration documents, no registration numbers on the hull, no
8 homeport on the hull, no name on the hull, and no painted markings.

9 There were seven individuals on board the go-fast vessel, later
10 identified as Levid Rivera VELAZQUEZ, Irvin Hermino RAMOS ZIGA,
11 Eduardo Marin HERRERA, Luiz Alfredo GARCIA VERA, Jorge Luis ESPINAL,
12 Riardez Noylola AGUSTIN, and Jorge Rolando ARCENALES CASTRO. Each
13 claimed Mexican nationality for themselves.

14 Levid Rivera VELAZQUEZ was identified as the master of the
15 vessel and he made a verbal claim of Mexican nationality for the
16 vessel. The claimed purpose of the voyage was "somethings on board."
17 The claimed cargo was described as "something on board." The Coast
18 Guard enacted the US/MEXICO OPPRO and conducted forms exchange with
19 Mexico. Mexico could neither confirm nor deny the nationality of the
20 vessel. Therefore, the Coast Guard issued a Statement of No Objection
21 and treated the vessel as without nationality ("TWON") and conducted
22 a full law enforcement boarding.

23 During the law enforcement boarding, EDMONTON recovered 14
24 packages consistent with narcotics from the bale field and
25 transferred to ACTIVE for testing by the boarding team. 13 packages
26 each weighed approximately 55 kilograms and one package weighed
27 approximately 40 kilograms, for a total approximate weight of 755
28 kilograms (1664.5 pounds). ACTIVE's boarding team conducted two NIK

1 tests of the recovered contraband, yielding two presumptive positive
2 results for cocaine.

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