

## U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

### Press Center

#### Treasury Targets Sinaloa Cartel Facilitators and Money Laundering Operation

7/30/2013

##### *Action Targets Supporters and Businesses Linked to Sinaloa Boss Ismael Zambada Garcia*

**WASHINGTON** – The U.S. Department of the Treasury today designated three individuals and three entities linked to Ismael Zambada Garcia, one of the principal leaders of the Sinaloa Cartel. Those designated include Jose Antonio Nunez Bedoya, a Mexican attorney and notary public who helps to create front companies in order to conceal and launder assets on behalf of Zambada Garcia, members of Zambada Garcia's family, and other members of the Sinaloa Cartel. Nunez Bedoya incorporated Estancia Infantil Nino Feliz and Establo Puerto Rico on behalf of Zambada Garcia, and he notarized real estate purchases on behalf of Santa Monica Dairy, all of which were previously designated by the Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) in May 2007. Additionally, Nunez Bedoya notarized real estate purchases on behalf of Sinaloa Cartel leader Joaquin Guzman Loera and his wife, Griselda Lopez Perez, whom OFAC designated in September 2012.

"Treasury will continue to target and disrupt financial operations linked to the Sinaloa Cartel by taking action against any facilitators, legal or financial professionals, or businesses that are laundering their narcotics proceeds," said OFAC Director Adam J. Szubin.

The cash-intensive businesses designated by OFAC today were Parque Acuatico Los Cascabeles, a Sinaloa-based water park, Centro Comercial y Habitacional Lomas, a shopping mall in Culiacan, and Rancho Agricola Ganadero Los Mezquites, a cattle ranch in Sinaloa. Nunez Bedoya incorporated and notarized all three businesses on behalf of Zambada Garcia.

Also designated today were Tomasa Garcia Rios and Monica Janeth Verdugo Garcia, wife and daughter of deceased narcotics trafficker Jose Lamberto Verdugo Calderon. Verdugo Calderon, who was killed by the Mexican military in January 2009, was widely identified by U.S. and Mexican authorities as a major financial operative and lieutenant for Zambada Garcia. Tomasa Garcia Rios and Monica Janeth Verdugo Garcia own Rancho Agricola Ganadero Los Mezquites and Parque Acuatico Los Cascabeles.

Today's action would not have been possible without critical support from the Drug Enforcement Administration.

"The Sinaloa Cartel cannot hide behind front companies like a water park or agricultural business," said DEA Special Agent in Charge Doug Coleman. "We are working with OFAC to expose these traffickers' front companies for what they really are – illegal enterprises that fuel the drug trade, its violence and corruption. As we continue to follow the money trail, we starve these traffickers of their assets and eventually put their global criminal networks out of business."

Today's action, pursuant to the Foreign Narcotics Kingpin Designation Act (Kingpin Act), generally prohibits U.S. persons from conducting financial or commercial transactions with these designees and also freezes any assets they may have under U.S. jurisdiction. The President named Ismael Zambada Garcia and the Sinaloa Cartel as significant foreign narcotics traffickers pursuant to the Kingpin Act in May 2002 and April 2009, respectively.

Internationally, OFAC has designated more than 1,300 businesses and individuals linked to 103 drug kingpins since June 2000. Penalties for violations of the Kingpin Act range from civil penalties of up to \$1.075 million per violation to more severe criminal penalties. Criminal penalties for corporate officers may include up to 30 years in prison and fines up to \$5 million. Criminal fines for corporations may reach \$10 million. Other individuals could face up to 10 years in prison and fines pursuant to Title 18 of the United States Code for criminal violations of the Kingpin Act.

For a chart relating to today's actions, see [http://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/Programs/Documents/20130730\\_sinaloa\\_network.pdf](http://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/Programs/Documents/20130730_sinaloa_network.pdf)

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