



U.S. Department of Justice

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PRESS RELEASE

THREE FEDERAL CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS CHARGED WITH SEXUALLY ABUSING FEMALE INMATES

Two Lieutenants and One Officer at the Metropolitan Detention Center in Brooklyn Indicted for Sex Crimes Against Female Inmates in Their Custody

Three separate multi-count indictments were unsealed this morning in United States District Court for the Eastern District of New York charging three federal correctional officers employed by the United States Bureau of Prisons (BOP) variously with deprivation of civil rights under color of law, aggravated sexual abuse, sexual abuse, sexual abuse of a ward, attempted sexual abuse of a ward and abusive sexual contact. The defendants – Lieutenant Carlos Richard Martinez, Lieutenant Eugenio Perez, and Officer Armando Moronta – were arrested earlier today.

The defendants are scheduled to be arraigned this afternoon before United States Magistrate Judge Marilyn D. Go, at the federal courthouse in Brooklyn. United States v. Martinez is assigned to United States District Judge Brian M. Cogan. United States v. Perez is assigned to United States District Judge Kiyo A. Matsumoto; United States v. Moronta is assigned to United States District Judge Roslynn R. Mauskopf.

The arrests are the result of a nearly year-long investigation into allegations of sexual abuse of female prisoners at the Metropolitan Detention Center (MDC) in Brooklyn. The investigation relied upon, among other evidence, the corroborated statements of many female inmate-victims, MDC video surveillance, social media evidence, phone records, documentary records, medical records and physical searches. Following their arrests, Lieutenants Martinez and Perez will be suspended without pay; Officer Moronta was previously suspended without pay for other conduct.

The charges and arrests were announced by Bridget M. Rohde, Acting United States Attorney for the Eastern District of New York; Ronald G. Gardella, Special Agent-in-Charge, United States Department of Justice, Office of the Inspector General, New York Field

Office (OIG); William F. Sweeney, Jr., Assistant Director-in-Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation, New York Field Office (FBI).

“By using their authority and power to prey upon and abuse female inmates in their care, these defendants violated their oaths of public service as well as numerous criminal laws,” stated Acting United States Attorney Rohde. “Our Office is committed to eliminating sexual violence and abuse against inmates in all forms and ensuring that any correctional staff who engage in such conduct are punished.”

“Rape, sexual assault, and threats of retaliation must be aggressively investigated and prosecuted, and Justice Department employees who engage in such conduct should know that the OIG will pursue them and bring them to justice,” stated OIG Special Agent-in-Charge Gardella. “The OIG will continue to conduct independent oversight to help ensure that federal prisons are safe, secure, and free from abuse.”

“As alleged, those charged today trapped their victims in a cycle of fear and intimidation while carrying out various acts of sexual abuse,” stated FBI Assistant Director-in-Charge Sweeney. “This type of conduct is never acceptable, especially at the hands of those who misuse the power afforded them as public servants. We want the public to know we take these crimes seriously and will continue to investigate any and all activity that violates the basic human rights of those within our prison system.”

Carlos Martinez

As alleged in publicly filed documents, over a period of five months from December 2015 to April 2016, the defendant Carlos Martinez used physical force and fear to repeatedly rape a sentenced female prisoner at the MDC. Martinez forced himself on his victim almost every weekend for a period of approximately two months, often multiple times per weekend, exploiting her fear of being sent to the Special Housing Unit and facing additional jail time to ensure her silence. Concerned about a potential investigation of his contact with his victim, Martinez ceased assaulting her for a period of time, before raping her one last time shortly before her transfer to immigration custody. At the time of Martinez’s crimes, he was an active-duty Lieutenant at the MDC, with supervisory and disciplinary authority over inmates.

Eugenio Perez

As alleged in publicly filed documents, over a period of three years from 2013 to 2016, the defendant Eugenio Perez used his position as a Lieutenant at the MDC to engage in sexual acts and contact with five different female inmates detained at the MDC and under the defendant’s supervisory and disciplinary authority. In many cases, Perez’s conduct involved the use of physical force, intimidation and threats of retaliation against his victims. Specifically, on multiple occasions, Perez lured the victims into isolated situations by arranging for them to clean the Lieutenants’ office area at night, and then requiring them to perform oral sex on him, in many cases using force, intimidation and fear of adverse consequences to ensure the victims’ compliance.

Armando Moronta

As alleged in publicly filed documents, the charges relating to the defendant Armando Moronta involve three separate victims. Between May and June 2016, Moronta engaged in criminal sexual contact and acts with female inmates, including inserting his fingers into the vagina of a female inmate and causing inmates to perform oral sex on him while he was assigned to guard their unit.

The charges in the indictment are merely allegations, and the defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty. Martinez and Perez each face a maximum sentence of life imprisonment, and Moronta faces a maximum sentence of 60 years' imprisonment, if convicted on all counts.

The investigation is ongoing; anyone with relevant information about prison corruption is asked to contact OIG through its Hotline at (800) 869-4499, or <https://oig.justice.gov/hotline/>.

The government's case is being handled by the Office's Public Integrity Section. Assistant United States Attorneys Nicole M. Argentieri, Marisa Megur Seifan, and Nadia I. Shihata are in charge of the prosecution.

The Defendants:

CARLOS MARTINEZ

Age: 47

Brooklyn, NY

EUGENIO PEREZ

Age: 46

Brooklyn, NY

ARMANDO MORONTA

Age: 39

Brooklyn, NY

E.D.N.Y. Docket Nos. 17 CR 279 (RRM); 17 CR 280 (KAM); and 17 CR 281 (BMC)