



U.S. Department of Justice

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PRESS RELEASE

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**ELENA LIN YEE ENTERS INTO PRETRIAL DIVERSION AGREEMENT
FOR IMPERSONATING A DIPLOMAT AND USING FALSE IDENTIFICATION**

United States Attorney Anthony J. Jenkins and Edgar Moreno, Assistant Director for Domestic Operations of the U. S. Department of State Diplomatic Security Service announced today that on June 6, 2007, a pretrial diversion agreement was signed with Elena Lin Yee, stemming from a 2005 indictment of Yee for impersonating a diplomat and using false identification.

On September 6, 2005, U.S. Department of State Diplomatic Security Special Agents in the U.S. Virgin Islands arrested Ms. Yee for impersonating a U.S. Ambassador and using fraudulently-obtained State Department credentials, officials of the Justice and State Departments announced today.

Elena Lin Yee allegedly had claimed to be the U.S. Ambassador of Grenada, and on separate occasions the wife of a former U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations. Yee, who is also known as Elena Lilly, is 67 years old and a long-time resident of St. Thomas. She has been under investigation since the early 1990s for allegedly impersonating U.S. government officials, illegally obtaining services including motorcades and police protection, and attempting to illegally obtain diplomatic passports and other official U.S. government credentials. She was charged with one count of impersonating a U.S. government official

and one count of misuse of an official pass or permit, which carry a maximum sentence of three and five years, respectively.

As part of the pre-trial diversion plea agreement, Ms. Yee accepted responsibility for her behavior, and agreed to a set of conditions during the following 18 months. During that time, Ms. Yee must report to a pretrial diversion supervisor and not use any diplomatic titles, including "Ambassador" or "Ambassador at Large," unless authorized to do so by a competent authority. In addition, as part of the pre-trial diversion, Ms. Yee agreed not to commit any federal, state, or local violations of law.

Diplomatic Security agents allege that Ms. Yee, who often went by the title of "Her Excellency Ambassador-at-Large Elena Lilly," claimed to be an heiress to the Eli Lilly Pharmaceutical family fortune, and was successful in conning law enforcement officers and other government officials from several state, territorial, and foreign governments into providing her with protective services and other perks, including motorcades, parades, and access to sensitive events. Diplomatic Security agents began an investigation in 1996 into allegations of passport fraud, and later expanded the investigation to include agents from the Offices of Inspector General of both the Departments of State and Homeland Security. "Diplomatic Security agents are sworn to protect the interests of the State Department and the diplomats and ambassadors who work here promoting U.S. interests around the world," stated Diplomatic Security Assistant Director for Domestic Operations Edgar Moreno. "Individuals who masquerade as U.S. government employees, especially of such a high rank such as an ambassador, can create unfortunate diplomatic incidents and confusion and can distract law enforcement and protection agencies from most significant security issues."

Diplomatic Security is the worldwide law enforcement and security arm of the U.S. Department of State with special agents assigned to U.S. diplomatic missions overseas and field offices throughout the United States. Diplomatic Security special agents conduct passport and visa fraud investigations worldwide and are responsible for security at 285 U.S. diplomatic facilities around the world. The Office of the Inspector General, U.S. Department of State, also investigated the case. Assistant U.S. Attorney Jason Cohen prosecuted the case.