



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Tuesday, February 19, 2008

*Office of the United States Attorney
District of Arizona*

For Information Contact Public Affairs
SANDY RAYNOR
Telephone: (602) 514-7625
Cell: (602) 525-2681

FORMER MEXICAN POLICE CHIEF SENTENCED TO PRISON FOR BRIBERY

TUCSON, Ariz. – Former Sonoyta, Sonora, Mexico Chief of Police Ramon Robles-Cota, 33, of Sonoyta, Sonora, Mexico, was sentenced here today by Chief U.S. District Judge John M. Roll to 7 ½ years in federal prison. Robles-Cota pleaded guilty on July 11, 2007 to Bribery of a Public Official.

U.S. Attorney Diane J. Humetewa stated that “police officers must have the trust of the people. When public corruption involving police officers occurs, it has a devastating negative impact on that community’s trust in law enforcement. My office, along with the FBI, ICE and the Department of Homeland Security Office of Inspector General and all federal law enforcement agencies are committed to rooting out instances of public corruption wherever it occurs in Arizona.”

“We are a nation of laws and when corruption occurs, especially by those sworn to defend these laws, it strikes at the core of our society,” stated Steven R. Hooper, Acting Special Agent in Charge, FBI, Phoenix. “In this case, the FBI and its law enforcement partners, joined forces to see that justice prevailed to ensure the public’s trust.”

Robles-Cota admitted that in January 2005, while he was the Chief of Police of Sonoyta, Son., Mex., he solicited a U.S. Border Patrol Agent to protect loads of marijuana being smuggled into the United States from Mexico by a Sonoyta-based drug trafficking organization. The Border Patrol Agent immediately reported the bribery attempt and agreed to wear a recording device and pose as a corruptible agent. On March 16, 2005, Robles-Cota met with the agent in Tucson and gave him \$80,020 in cash and a radio for communications during the importation. Robles-Cota then agreed to meet in Gila Bend, Ariz. on March 23, 2005, to discuss further details of the importation and to provide the agent with a different radio to use during the importation. On the way to the meeting, Robles-Cota’s vehicle was stopped by law enforcement and he and his driver were arrested. Two radios, similar to the one he provided to the agent earlier, were discovered in his vehicle.

Robles-Cota’s driver and co-defendant Julio Cesar Lozano-Lopez, was already sentenced before Judge Roll on June 8, 2006, to the 14 months and 21 days he had spent in federal custody at the time of his sentencing hearing.

The investigation preceding the indictment was conducted by the Department of Homeland Security Office of Inspector General (DHS-OIG), the Federal Bureau of Investigation and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), partner agencies in the Southwest Border Corruption Task Force. The prosecution was handled by Mary Sue Feldmeier, Assistant U.S. Attorney, District of Arizona, Tucson.

CASE NUMBER: CR-05-824-TUC-JMR
RELEASE NUMBER: 2008-036(Robles-Cota)

###

For more information on the U.S. Attorney’s Office, District of Arizona, visit <http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/az/>