
THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEYS OFFICE
SOUTHERN DISTRICT *of* NEW YORK

[U.S. Attorneys](#) » [Southern District of New York](#) » [News](#) » [Press Releases](#)

Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office

Southern District of New York

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, October 18, 2019

**Former Honduran Congressman Tony Hernández
Convicted In Manhattan Federal Court Of Conspiring To
Import Cocaine Into The United States And Related
Firearms And False-Statements Offenses**

**Hernández Participated in the Importation of Almost 200,000 Kilograms of
Cocaine, Used Heavily Armed Security including Members of the Honduran
National Police, and Coordinated Two Drug-Related Murders**

Geoffrey S. Berman, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, and Wendy C. Woolcock, the Special Agent in Charge of the Special Operations Division of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration ("DEA"), announced today that a jury returned a guilty verdict against JUAN ANTONIO HERNÁNDEZ ALVARADO, a/k/a "Tony Hernández" ("HERNÁNDEZ") on all four counts in the Superseding Indictment, which included cocaine-importation, weapons, and false-statements offenses. HERNÁNDEZ is scheduled to be sentenced on January 17, 2020.

Manhattan U.S. Attorney Geoffrey S. Berman said: "Former Honduran congressman Tony Hernandez was involved in all stages of the trafficking through Honduras of multi-ton loads of cocaine that were destined for the U.S. Hernandez bribed law enforcement officials to protect drug shipments, solicited large bribes from major drug traffickers, and arranged machinegun-toting security for cocaine shipments. Today, Hernandez stands convicted of his crimes and faces the possibility of a lengthy prison sentence."

DEA Special Agent in Charge Wendy C. Woolcock said: "This conviction serves as a warning to all those who traffic illegal drugs into our country with complete disregard for human life. The United States will not tolerate any individual or organization that seeks to gain profit through violence and corruption. The DEA will continue to stand with its partners to pursue justice regardless of social status. No one is exempt from being held accountable for predatory criminal activity."

As reflected in the Superseding Indictment and the evidence presented at trial:

HERNÁNDEZ is a former member of the National Congress of Honduras, the brother of the current President of Honduras, and a large-scale drug trafficker who worked with other drug traffickers in, among other places, Colombia, Honduras, and Mexico, to import cocaine into the United States. From at least in or about 2004, up to and including in or about 2018, HERNÁNDEZ helped process, receive, transport, and distribute multi-ton loads of cocaine that arrived in Honduras via planes, helicopters, and go-fast vessels. HERNÁNDEZ controlled cocaine laboratories in Honduras and Colombia, at which some of his cocaine was stamped with the symbol “TH,” *i.e.*, “Tony Hernández.” HERNÁNDEZ also coordinated and, at times, participated in providing heavily armed security for cocaine shipments transported within Honduras, including by members of the Honduran National Police and drug traffickers armed with machineguns and other weapons. HERNÁNDEZ also used members of the Honduran National Police to coordinate the drug-related murder of Franklin Arita in 2011, and he used drug-trafficking associates to murder a drug worker known as “Chino” in 2013. In connection with these activities, HERNÁNDEZ participated in the importation of almost 200,000 kilograms of cocaine into the United States.

HERNÁNDEZ made millions of dollars through his cocaine trafficking, and he funneled millions of dollars of drug proceeds to National Party campaigns to impact Honduran presidential elections in 2009, 2013, and 2017. Between 2010 and at least 2013, one of HERNÁNDEZ’s principal co-conspirators was former Sinaloa Cartel leader Joaquín Archivaldo Guzmán Loera, a/k/a “Chapo.” During that period, HERNÁNDEZ helped Guzmán Loera with numerous large cocaine shipments and delivered a \$1 million bribe from Guzmán Loera to HERNÁNDEZ’s brother in connection with the 2013 national elections in Honduras.

* * *

HERNÁNDEZ, 42, was convicted on four counts: (1) conspiring to import cocaine into the United States, which carries a mandatory minimum prison term of 10 years and a maximum prison term of life; (2) using and carrying machine guns during, and possessing machine guns in furtherance of, the cocaine-importation conspiracy, which carries a mandatory consecutive prison term of 30 years; (3) conspiring to use and carry machine guns during, and to possess machine guns in furtherance of, the cocaine-importation conspiracy, which carries a maximum prison term of life; and (4) making false statements to federal agents, which carries a maximum prison term of five years.

Mr. Berman praised the outstanding efforts of the DEA’s Special Operations Division Bilateral Investigations Unit, New York Strike Force, and Tegucigalpa Country Office, as well as the U.S. Department of Justice’s Office of International Affairs.

This case is being handled by the Office’s Terrorism and International Narcotics Unit. Assistant U.S. Attorneys Amanda L. Houle, Jason A. Richman, Matthew J. Laroche, and Emil J. Bove III are in charge of the prosecution.

Topic(s):
Drug Trafficking

Firearms Offenses
Public Corruption

Component(s):

USAO - New York, Southern

Press Release Number:

19-347

Updated October 18, 2019