



New York City Police Officer And Customs And Border Protection Officer Plead Guilty To International Arms Trafficking

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Defendants Used Law Enforcement Credentials to Obtain Military-Grade Assault Rifles, Sniper Rifles and Other High-Powered Weapons for Smuggling to the Philippines

Earlier today, Rex Maralit, a New York City Police Officer previously assigned to police headquarters in Manhattan, and his brother Wilfredo Maralit, a Customs and Border Protection Officer previously assigned to Los Angeles International Airport, pleaded guilty in Brooklyn federal court to violating the Arms Export Control Act. The two men were charged in connection with their respective roles in the export of high-powered weapons from the United States to the Philippines, without a license from the U.S. State Department.

The pleas were announced by Loretta E. Lynch, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of New York; James T. Hayes, Jr., Special Agent-in-Charge, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), New York; Craig W. Rupert, Special Agent-in-Charge of the Defense Criminal Investigative Service (DCIS), Northeast Field Office; Thomas J. Cannon, Special Agent-in-Charge, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), New York Field Division; and William J. Bratton, Commissioner, New York City Police Department (NYPD).

According to court filings and statements at today's proceedings, between January 2009 and September 2013, the defendants engaged in a scheme to smuggle high-powered assault rifles, sniper rifles, pistols, and firearm accessories, such as high-capacity magazines, from the United States to the Philippines, where they were sold to overseas customers. Both of the defendants who pleaded guilty today are American law enforcement officers, who brazenly used their credentials and status to obtain extremely dangerous weapons and ship the weapons for export and resale, as well as to obtain discounts on various weapons from U.S.-based gun dealers. The firearms that the defendants illegally exported and sold included the Barrett M82A1 .50 caliber semi-automatic long range sniper rifle, the FN "SCAR" assault rifle, and the FN Herstal 5.7mm semi-automatic pistol. Many of the weapons the defendants exported are specifically designed to penetrate both hard and soft body armor.

The Arms Export Control Act requires exporters of firearms to first obtain the approval of the State Department before shipping weapons overseas. The United States Munitions List requires export licenses for firearms such as the military-style assault rifles, sniper rifles, and semi-automatic handguns exported by the defendants. Similarly, dealing in firearms is regulated by the ATF, which requires gun dealers to first obtain a federal firearms license before engaging in such a business.

“Today a New York Police Officer and a Customs and Border Protection Officer admitted their involvement in a serious federal crime. This is a sad day for American law enforcement. But make no mistake: the laws that are designed to regulate the trafficking of dangerous weapons apply with equal force to anyone who would dare to ignore them,” stated U.S. Attorney Lynch. “Criminal conduct by police officers, federal agents, and their confederates is intolerable. I commend our law enforcement partners who brought these men to justice through their diligence and professionalism.” Ms. Lynch expressed her grateful appreciation to HSI, DCIS, ATF, and the NYPD’s Internal Affairs Bureau, which worked closely together to investigate the case, and to the U.S. Attorney’s Offices for the Central District of California and the District of New Jersey for their assistance.

When sentenced on October 16, 2014, by the Hon. Allyn R. Ross, the defendants each face up to 20 years in prison, forfeiture, and a fine of up to \$1,000,000.

The government’s case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Seth DuCharme and Sam Nitze, with assistance from Trial Attorney David Recker of the Department of Justice Counterespionage Section.

The Defendants:

REX G. MARALIT

Lawrenceville, New Jersey

Age: 45

WILFREDO MARALIT

Garden Grove, California

Age: 49