

## U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

## Press Center

**Treasury Designates Colombian Organized Crime Group La Oficina de Envigado for Role in International Narcotics Trafficking**

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**WASHINGTON** – The U.S. Department of the Treasury today designated the Medellín, Colombia-based criminal organization La Oficina de Envigado (La Oficina) for its significant role in international narcotics trafficking pursuant to the Foreign Narcotics Kingpin Designation Act (Kingpin Act). As a result of today's action, all La Oficina assets based in the United States or in control by U.S. citizens and entities are frozen, and U.S. persons are generally prohibited from engaging in transactions with this criminal organization. Today's action allows for additional sanctions that can target individuals and entities identified for supporting the illicit activities of La Oficina.

La Oficina has its roots in the 1980s and 1990s, when its founding members provided enforcement, assassination, and drug debt collection services for the leaders of the Medellín Cartel, including deceased Medellín Cartel leader Pablo Escobar. Since then, despite violent infighting and the loss of several important leaders, the criminal infrastructure of La Oficina has grown. Operatives for La Oficina play a major role in organized criminal activity, including narcotics trafficking, both within and outside of Colombia, although the organization's primary area of activity continues to be the Valle de Aburrá region of Colombia, where the neighboring cities of Medellín and Envigado are located. In recent years, transnational criminal groups from outside of Colombia, including the Sinaloa Cartel, have come to rely upon operatives of La Oficina for support in trafficking narcotics throughout the world.

"In addition to its direct involvement in narcotics trafficking, La Oficina de Envigado is complicit in a variety of illicit activities, including money laundering, extortion, and murder for hire. These 'secondary' activities further the operations of international trafficking groups," said Director of Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) Director Adam Szubin. "OFAC will continue to target and disrupt the narcotics trafficking networks that pose the greatest threat to U.S. interests."

OFAC has previously targeted several individuals and entities associated with La Oficina for sanctions for their involvement in other trafficking organizations. OFAC designated Diego Fernando Murillo Bejarano, a.k.a. Don Berna, the group's original leader, as a Specially Designated Narcotics Trafficker pursuant to the Kingpin Act on February 18, 2004 for his role as a key figure in the Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia (AUC), a narco-terrorist organization. Murillo Bejarano's leadership of both criminal groups is indicative of the extent to which rural paramilitary groups such as the AUC and its successors have allied with urban crime organizations like La Oficina for the provision of financial support services such as money laundering.

Since June 2000 more than 1,600 individuals and entities have been named pursuant to the Kingpin Act for their role in international narcotics trafficking.

Penalties for violations of the Kingpin Act range from civil penalties of up to \$1.075 million per violation to more severe criminal penalties. Criminal penalties for corporate officers may include up to 30 years in prison and fines up to \$5 million. Criminal fines for corporations may reach \$10 million. Other individuals could face up to 10 years in prison and fines pursuant to Title 18 of the United States Code for criminal violations of the Kingpin Act.

For a complete listing of designations pursuant to the Kingpin Act, click [here](#).

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