



THE UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT of JUSTICE

United States Attorney's Office  
Southern District of Florida

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2022

---

**Miami Men Sentenced to Federal Prison for Stealing Medical Ventilators Intended to Treat Critically Ill COVID-19 Patients in El Salvador**

Miami, Florida – Two Miami men were each sentenced to 41 months' imprisonment for stealing 192 medical ventilators worth approximately \$3 million. The ventilators were owned by the United States Agency for International Development ("USAID"), and were bound for a COVID-19 intensive care facility in El Salvador as part of a United States COVID-19 aid program. The ventilators were stolen in South Florida while in transit to El Salvador.

Yoelvis Denis Hernandez, a/k/a "Guajiro," 42, and Luis Urrea Montero, a/k/a "Flaco," 25, previously pled guilty to theft of government property. Montero was sentenced to 41 months imprisonment this week; Hernandez was sentenced to 41 months imprisonment in December 2021.

According to court documents, on August 9, 2020, Hernandez and Montero stole a tractor trailer loaded with 192 medical ventilators during its transport by truck to Miami International Airport. USAID had acquired the ventilators and was sending them to the Government of El Salvador as part of an aid program to treat critically ill COVID-19 El Salvadorian patients. Hernandez and Montero stole the trailer from a lot where the driver had left it overnight. Following an investigation, federal law enforcement agents recovered most of the stolen ventilators.

Juan Antonio Gonzalez, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Florida, George L. Piro, Special Agent in Charge, FBI, Miami Field Office, and Thomas J. Ullom, Acting Inspector General, United States Agency for International Development, Office of Inspector General ("USAID-OIG"), announced the sentence imposed by U.S. District Judge Marcia G. Cooke.

FBI Miami, FBI Miami's Major Theft Task Force, and USAID-OIG investigated this case, with assistance from Boynton Beach Police Department, Miami Dade Police Department, Medley Police Department, City of Miami Gardens Police Department, and Broward Sheriff's Office. The case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Lindsey Lazopoulos Friedman and Michael B. Homer. Assistant U.S. Attorney Emily Stone is handling asset forfeiture.

Related court documents and information may be found on the website of the District Court for the Southern District of Florida at [www.flsd.uscourts.gov](http://www.flsd.uscourts.gov) or at <http://pacer.flsd.uscourts.gov>, under case number 20-cr-20252.

###

CONTACT: Marlene Rodriguez  
Special Counsel to the U.S. Attorney  
Public Affairs Officer

[Marlene.Rodriguez@usdoj.gov](mailto:Marlene.Rodriguez@usdoj.gov)  
[www.justice.gov/usao-sdfl](http://www.justice.gov/usao-sdfl)  
Twitter @SDFLNews

---