



*United States Attorney
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MANHATTAN U.S. ATTORNEY CHARGES JAMAICA-BASED
DRUG KINGPIN WITH NARCOTICS AND
FIREARMS TRAFFICKING CRIMES

PREET BHARARA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, JOHN P. GILBRIDE, Special Agent-in-Charge of the United States Drug Enforcement Administration's New York Field Division ("DEA"), and JAVIER F. PEÑA, Special Agent-in-Charge of DEA's Caribbean Division, announced that charges were unsealed today against CHRISTOPHER MICHAEL COKE, a/k/a "Michael Christopher Coke," a/k/a "Paul Christopher Scott," a/k/a "Presi," a/k/a "General," a/k/a "President," a/k/a "Duddus," a/k/a "Shortman." COKE is charged with conspiracy to distribute marijuana and cocaine and conspiracy to illegally traffic in firearms. The United States has formally requested through diplomatic channels that Jamaican authorities arrest COKE and extradite him to the Southern District of New York on the U.S. charges. According to the Superseding Indictment unsealed today in Manhattan federal court:

COKE leads an international criminal organization known as the "Shower Posse," with members in Jamaica, the United States, and other countries -- which he has led since the early 1990s. At COKE's direction and under his protection, members of his criminal organization sell marijuana and crack cocaine in the New York area and elsewhere, and send the narcotics proceeds back to COKE and his co-conspirators. COKE and his co-conspirators also arm their organization with illegally trafficked firearms.

COKE has been named by the U.S. Department of Justice to the list of Consolidated Priority Organization Targets

("CPOTs"), which includes the world's most dangerous narcotics kingpins.

COKE, 40, is charged with conspiracy to distribute cocaine and marijuana and conspiracy to illegally traffic in firearms. If convicted on the narcotics charge, he faces a maximum sentence of life in prison and a mandatory minimum sentence of 10 years in prison, as well as a fine of up to \$4 million or twice the pecuniary gain from the offense. He also faces a maximum sentence of five years in prison on the firearms trafficking charge, and a fine of up to \$250,00 or twice the pecuniary gain.

Mr. BHARARA praised the investigative work of the DEA's New York Field Division and Caribbean Division, and thanked the U.S. Department of Justice Office of International Affairs for their assistance.

"The charges against Christopher Michael Coke starkly illustrate the dangerous connection between the international trade in narcotics and illicit firearms," said United States Attorney BHARARA. "The charges are another important step in our bringing to justice the world's most dangerous criminals, wherever they may be found."

Assistant United States Attorneys JOCELYN STRAUBER and JOHN ZACH are in charge of the prosecution, which is being handled by the Office's International Narcotics Trafficking Unit.

The charges contained in the Indictment are merely accusations and the defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

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