

Administrator Cole Ismael “El Mayo” Zambada Garcia Sentencing Remarks as Given

Good morning. For more than four decades, El Mayo helped transform the Sinaloa Cartel into one of the most violent and prolific criminal organizations. Under his leadership, the cartel produced and trafficked massive amounts of deadly drugs at industrial scale.

It's global network moved precursor chemicals across borders, operated clandestine laboratories, and flooded American communities with fentanyl, a weapon of mass destruction. The scale and severity of that threat led to the Sinaloa Cartel being designated as a foreign terrorist organization.

An operation of that size could not survive without violence and trafficking alone. Corruption was essential to El Mayo's criminal enterprise. He used bribery, influence, and intimidation to shield the cartel from justice, both within Mexico and beyond its borders. The cartel continues to corrupt institutions and undermine the rule of law for its own criminal purposes.

Today, El Mayo answered for his crimes before an American courtroom. That outcome reflects decades of tireless work by the men and women of DEA, HSI, and the FBI, and our federal law enforcement partners around the globe. It also reflects a principle that has guided this agency since its founding: No matter how powerful traffickers become, and how much wealth and influence they acquire, DEA will not relent. Whether it takes months, years, or decades, we will not stop. We will not lose focus. We do not forget.

To every member of DEA, HSI, and FBI, and our prosecutorial team who played a role in the investigation: Thank you. Some began this work decades ago, others carried it forward. Today, you provided that determination, and an unwavering commitment to justice, can overcome even the most powerful criminal organizations.

Today is a great day for law enforcement, but let me be clear - this sentencing is not the end. It's just the beginning. It's a warning to every cartel leader, global criminal enterprise, and foreign terrorist, if you traffic deadly drugs, profit from the suffering of others, and threaten our communities, DEA is coming for you. Whether you're a drug trafficker or a corrupt government official, DEA is coming for you. Our work is far from over. We will disrupt your networks, we will cut off your financial lifelines, seize your illicit profits, and work with our partners to save American lives. Because this is about America first. Americans first.

To the mothers and families who have lost their loved ones to fentanyl, DEA will never forget your loss. And we will never stop holding those responsible, accountable. Justice does not have an expiration date. Today's sentencing proves that.

God bless our troops. God bless our country.