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Gang Member Pleads Guilty To Assault In Racketeering Case

A member of a Dodge City street gang targeted in a federal racketeering case has pleaded guilty to assaulting what he thought were members of a rival gang, U.S. Attorney Barry Grissom said today.

**Humberto Ortiz**, 20, Dodge City, Kan., pleaded guilty to one count of assault with a dangerous weapon in aid of racketeering. In his plea, Ortiz admitted that on Aug. 27, 2011 in Dodge City, he and other gang members assaulted what they thought were members of the Sureno street gang. At the time, Ortiz was a member of Los Carnales Chingones, a street gang in Dodge City associated with the Norteno street gang. He was accompanied by members of the Diablos Viejos, who also were associated with the Norteno gang.

During a confrontation at a party at 703 9th Avenue in Dodge City, Ortiz and four associates accused the victims of being Surenos, which the victims denied. When a fight began, two victims were stabbed. One of the victims received life-threatening injuries and was flown to a hospital in Wichita for treatment.

In his plea, Ortiz admitted that while he was an associate of the Nortenos the gang was engaged in a continuing criminal enterprise that employed acts of violence including murder and robbery to protect and expand the gang's operations.

Sentencing is set for Jan. 28. He faces a maximum penalty of 20 years in federal prison and a fine up to $250,000.

Co-defendants awaiting trial include **Jason Najera,** 28, Dodge City; **Fabian Neave**, 25, Dodge City; **Jesus Torres**, 28, Dodge City; and **Jose Neave**, 23, Dodge City. They were among 23 defendants indicted in May who were charged under the federal RICO Act (Racketeering Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act.) The indictment marked only the second time federal prosecutors in Kansas have filed charges under RICO and VICAR (Violent Crimes in Aid of Racketeering).

US Attorney's Office