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District Attorney

NEWS RELEASE

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Two Men Found Guilty of 2013 Santa Paula Murder

VENTURA, California – District Attorney Gregory D. Totten announced today that Franky Magana (DOB 11/12/1985) and Omar Ruiz (DOB 07/27/1987), both of Santa Paula, were convicted of second-degree murder for the benefit of a criminal street gang for shooting and killing Ulises Virto in the city of Santa Paula. Ruiz was also convicted of assault with a firearm on a peace officer for shooting at a peace officer during his arrest five months later.

On May 27, 2013, Ulises Virto was standing on a street corner on the 400 block of Dartmouth Road in the city of Santa Paula. Magana, Ruiz, and a third unidentified gunman drove up next to Virto, exited their vehicle, and opened fire with three handguns in a gang-motivated attack. Virto was shot seven times and died at the scene. A Santa Paula Police Department officer intercepted and pursued the three gunmen as they fled the scene in their vehicle. During the high-speed chase, all three guns and other evidence were tossed from the vehicle. Soon thereafter, the car temporarily stopped to let Magana exit and flee on foot. The officer chased Magana on foot and quickly took him into custody. Ruiz and the unidentified gunman continued to flee in the vehicle, eventually abandoning it two blocks away. On November 7, 2013, Ruiz was tracked down by Ventura County Sheriff's deputies to an address on the 5300 block of Holly Ridge Drive in the city of Camarillo. From within the home, Ruiz watched on a closed-circuit surveillance system as deputies approached the residence. Ruiz fired on the deputies with an AR-15 semi-automatic rifle until the gun jammed. After a brief stand-off, Ruiz was taken into custody. No deputies were injured during the assault.

All the evidence thrown from the vehicle, including the three guns, as well as other evidence seized at the crime scene, were forensically analyzed and connected to Ruiz and Magana.

Magana and Ruiz will be sentenced on March 26, 2018, at 9:00 a.m. in courtroom 45 of the Ventura Superior Court, County of Ventura. Both will be facing life sentences.

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The Ventura County District Attorney's Office is the public prosecutor for the county's 850,000 residents. The office employs approximately 280 employees including attorneys, investigators, victim advocates, and other professional support staff who strive to seek justice, ensure public safety, and protect the rights of crime victims.

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