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BVI Man Receives 57-Month Sentence for Cocaine Smuggling

Augusto Rodriguez-Molina gets 57 months for his role in smuggling 567 kilograms of cocaine

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ST. THOMAS — On Thursday, United States Attorney Delia L. Smith announced that Augusto Rodriguez-Molina, a 37-year-old resident of Tortola, British Virgin Islands and a national of the Dominican Republic, has been sentenced to 57 months in prison.

The sentencing was handed down by District Judge Wilma A. Lewis and includes an additional two years of supervised release following his incarceration.

Rodriguez-Molina's conviction stems from a charge of conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute cocaine. Court documents reveal that on January 9, 2022, Customs and Border

Protection Air and Marine Operations intercepted a suspicious vessel northeast of St. Croix in international waters—a region known for drug trafficking activities. The vessel lacked any signs of nationality such as a flag or registration documents, rendering it stateless and under U.S. jurisdiction.

During the interception, Rodriguez-Molina was found onboard along with three other individuals from the British Virgin Islands: Shannon John, Sean John, and Emmanuel Tolentino-Lebron. Authorities discovered 567 kilograms of cocaine on the vessel. All four men subsequently pleaded guilty to cocaine conspiracy charges and received sentences ranging from 57 to 70 months of incarceration.

This operation was conducted by Customs and Border Protection Air and Marine Operations in collaboration with Homeland Security Investigations. The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Rhonda Williams-Henry as part of the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces (OCDETF) initiative.

The OCDETF program employs a coordinated, multi-agency approach to dismantle high-level criminal organizations that pose a threat to national security. More details about the program are available on the Justice Department's OCDETF webpage.