

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Dominican And Grenadian Arrested After Attempting To Smuggle 61 Haitians Into St. Thomas

VIC News / **Published On June 15, 2015 10:48 PM /**

Ernice Gilbert **June 15, 2015**



ST. THOMAS -- Kendrick Christopher, 47, a Grenadian national, and Jeard Shillingford, 33, a Dominican national, were arrested June 11, 2015, on a criminal complaint charging them with encouraging and inducing aliens to enter the United States in violation of law, United States Attorney Ronald W. Sharpe announced today.

At the conclusion of their detention hearing on June 12, 2015, U.S. Magistrate Judge Ruth Miller remanded b o t h m e n to the custody of the United States Marshals Service pending further proceedings.

According to the complaint, the United States Coast Guard and U.S. Customs and Border Protection intercepted the S/V vessel Annpurna off the coast of St. John, U.S. Virgin Islands on June 10, 2015. The complaint states that the vessel was operated by both Christopher and Shillingford contained 61 Haitian nationals seeking to enter the United States illegally. If convicted of encouraging and inducing aliens to enter the United States illegally, Christopher and Shillingford face a maximum sentence of not more than five years in prison. If the offense was done for the purpose of private financial gain, the sentence is not more than 10 years in prison.

United States Attorney Sharpe reminds the public that a complaint is merely a formal charging document and is not evidence of guilt. Every defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty.

The case is being investigated by U.S. Customs and Border Protection, the U.S. Coast Guard, and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Homeland Security Investigations. It is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney David White.