

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Man Gets 21 Months For Role In Drug Trafficking Transaction

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ST. THOMAS -- District Court Judge Curtis V. Gomez today sentenced Marco Asala-Belgar, 35, of the Dominican Republic, to 21 months' imprisonment, followed by one year of supervised release for misprision of a felony.

Judge Gomez also ordered Asala-Belgar to pay a \$100 special assessment and perform 200 hours of community service.

During his trial in April, Asala-Belgar pleaded guilty to misprision of a felony. Two of his co-defendants, Alexandro Gerandino-Aracena, 39, of the Dominican Republic, and Ricardo Cardona, 35, of Puerto Rico, were found guilty of conspiracy to possess with

intent to distribute cocaine, and various firearms possession charges.

According to Asala-Belgar's plea agreement and evidence presented at trial, on September 3, 2015, Gerandino-Aracena, Cardona, and another co-defendant, Pedro Guzman, 35, of the Dominican Republic, traveled in a private vessel from Fajardo, Puerto Rico to the Marine Center Dock at the University of the Virgin Islands on St. Thomas to purchase 100 kilograms of cocaine.

Upon arrival in St. Thomas, they met with other conspirators to collect the cocaine in exchange for \$250,000 and three assault rifles. Asala-Belgar drove the green Ford Explorer that delivered the money for the cocaine. When Asala-Belgar was interviewed by U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration agents, he did not tell the agents that his co-defendants had arranged to deliver the money in exchange for cocaine.

This case was investigated by the DEA, FBI, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, and U.S. Customs and Border Protection. It was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Sigrid M. Tejo-Sprotte and Delia Smith