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News Releases

JULY 27, 2011 ALBANY, NY

ICE detainee passes away at upstate New York hospital

ALBANY, N.Y. - A French citizen and Angolan national in the custody of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) passed away early Wednesday morning at the Albany Memorial Hospital due to an apparent heart condition.

On July 15, 2011, Irene Bamenga was encountered by U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) in Lewiston, N.Y., after being denied entry into Canada. She had been detained at the Albany County Jail pending her removal to France, which was scheduled for July 28, 2011.

The 29-year-old was rushed to Albany Memorial Hospital early Wednesday morning after detainees called jail guards and stated that Bamenga was in distress. Medical staff responded immediately and started administering medical care. Emergency medical services were contacted and Bamenga was rushed to the hospital, where she was pronounced dead. Hospital officials notified her next of kin.

The Albany County coroner is performing an autopsy to determine the exact cause of death. Bamenga was taking medication for a pre-existing congestive heart failure condition.

Consistent with ICE protocol, the appropriate state health and local law enforcement agencies have been informed. ICE also notified the French consulate.

Bamenga is the ninth detainee to pass away in ICE custody in fiscal year 2011.

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