

JUSTICE NEWS

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Border Patrol Agent Pleads Guilty to Civil Rights Violation

WASHINGTON – U.S. Border Patrol Agent Eduardo Moreno pleaded guilty today in federal court in Tucson, Ariz., to a federal criminal civil rights charge for assaulting a Mexican national who was in his custody, the Justice Department and the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Arizona announced today. Sentencing has been scheduled for Aug. 12, 2010.

The underlying incident occurred on May 10, 2006, while Moreno was on duty at the U.S. Border Patrol Processing Center in Nogales, Ariz. During the plea proceedings and in documents filed in court, Moreno admitted that while escorting the victim at the center, he kicked the victim, struck him in the stomach with a baton, threw him down to ground, and punched him, all without any legitimate law enforcement reason to use force. As a result of the defendant's actions, the victim suffered bodily injury.

"We place a great deal of trust in federal law enforcement officers, and the Civil Rights Division will aggressively prosecute any officer who violates the rights of others and abuses the power they are given to perform their critical duties," said Thomas E. Perez, Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division.

Moreno faces a maximum of 10 years in prison and a fine of \$250,000. An additional count in the indictment of making a false statement to federal agents will be dismissed under the plea agreement.

This case was investigated by agents of the FBI and the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Office of Professional Responsibility. The case is being jointly prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Sandra Hansen of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Arizona and Trial Attorney Edward Chung of the Civil Rights Division.

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Civil Rights Division