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                  FOR THE CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA
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    UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
                                       No. ED CR 10-49-VAP
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                    Plaintiff.
                                        GOVERNMENT'S SENTENCING BRIEF;
                                        EXHIBITS
23
                    v.
                                        Sentencing date:
                                                            2/10/14
24
    JORGE SOSA,
                                       Time:
                                                            9:00 a.m.
         Aka "Jorge Vinicio Sosa
25
    Orantes,"
26
                    Defendant.
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Plaintiff United States of America, by and through the 1 2 United States Attorney of the Central District of California and the Acting Assistant Attorney General of the Criminal Division 3 4 (the "government"), hereby submits this brief in connection with 5 the sentencing of defendant JORGE SOSA, also known as "Jorge Sosa Vinicio Orantes" ("defendant"). 6 7 Dated: January 27, 2014 Respectfully submitted, 8 ANDRÉ BIROTTE JR. United States Attorney 9 DENNISE D. WILLETT 10 Assistant United States Attorney Chief, Santa Ana Office 11 12 /s/ JEANNIE M. JOSEPH 13 Assistant United States Attorney BRIAN D. SKARET 14 Trial Attorney 15 Attorneys for Plaintiff United States of America 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27

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I. INTRODUCTION

The United States Probation Office ("USPO") in the Pre-Sentence Report ("PSR") acknowledges that there are many bases for an upward departure or variance in this naturalization fraud case. However, the USPO defers to the Court in imposing an above-Guidelines sentence.

It is the government's position that a statutory maximum sentence of 10 years imprisonment is the only appropriate sentence here. Defendant led and participated in the gruesome massacre of an entire village of innocent people, more than a third of whom were children; and then defendant lied about it in order to obtain U.S. citizenship. This case falls far outside the heartland of typical naturalization fraud cases contemplated by the Guidelines. Accordingly, the government moves for an upward departure pursuant to U.S.S.G. § 5K2.0. The government also moves for an upward departure based upon underrepresentation of defendant's criminal history, pursuant to § 4A1.3(a)(1). In addition, the government moves for an upward variance based upon the sentencing factors in 18 U.S.C. § 3553(a).

In setting a statutory maximum sentence of 10 years' imprisonment for obtaining naturalization unlawfully, Congress clearly contemplated that certain cases would be sufficiently egregious to warrant such punishment. It's hard to imagine a more egregious factual scenario than that posed by the instant case. This is the rare naturalization fraud case warranting a 10-year statutory maximum sentence.

/ / /

II. STATEMENT OF FACTS

A. Indictment

On September 1, 2010, defendant was charged by a grand jury in a two-count indictment with: (1) Count One: Making a false statement in a naturalization matter, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1015(a); and (2) Count Two: Procuring naturalization contrary to law, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1425(a). On September 24, 2013, defendant proceeded to trial. On October 1, 2013, defendant was convicted by a jury of both counts of the indictment.

B. Statement of Facts

1. The Guatemalan civil conflict and the Kaibiles

From in or around 1960 to 1996, there was a civil war in Guatemala with the military on one side and the rebels or "guerillas" on the other. Within the Guatemalan military, there was a special forces unit known as the "Kaibiles," who trained at a facility in La Polvora, El Peten, Guatemala, known as "the Kaibil School."

In or around the Spring of 1982, General Efrain Rios Montt came into power in Guatemala through a coup and began a campaign to crack down on the guerillas. As a result, the Kaibil School was closed as an instruction facility and the Kaibil instructors became a rapid reaction force that could quickly be deployed to various areas to combat guerillas.

In or around November 1982, the Guatemalan guerrilla group known as "Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias" (Revolutionary Armed Forces or FAR) ambushed a Guatemalan military convoy near Las Cruces, Guatemala, killing soldiers and taking their rifles. In

response, the Guatemalan military ordered the special patrol of approximately twenty Kaibiles from the Kaibil School to find the suspected guerrillas and recover the stolen weapons. The special patrol deployed to a small village near Las Cruces named Dos Erres, where the weapons were thought to be. Defendant was one of the commanders of the special patrol.

2. The Dos Erres massacre

On or about December 7, 1982, the special patrol entered Dos Erres with the support of approximately 40 additional soldiers, who created a security perimeter around the village so that no one could enter or escape. The members of the special patrol searched all the houses for the missing weapons, forced the villagers from their homes, and separated the women and children from the men. No weapons were found and the villagers put up no resistance.

During the night, the Kaibiles began raping the girls and women of Dos Erres. As a result, a decision was made to kill everyone in the village. The killing began with the throwing of live children into the village's well. Next, the special patrol systematically led the men, women, and children of Dos Erres to the well, where they were questioned about the rifles, then killed, and their bodies thrown into the well. During this time, the special patrol continued to forcibly rape the women and girls of Dos Erres near the well before killing them. Defendant oversaw the killing at the well, and participated in the killing by firing a rifle and throwing a grenade into the well to kill villagers who were still alive.

By the end of the day, the only villagers left alive: a five-year-old boy named Ramiro and a three-year-old boy named Oscar. They were taken by two of the Kaibiles.

3. Defendant's application for asylum

On or about May 10, 1985, defendant applied for asylum in the United States. Defendant claimed he feared retaliation from guerillas for being a Kaibil in the Guatemalan military.

Defendant's application was denied and defendant departed for Canada, where he obtained asylum.

4. The discovery of remains at Dos Erres

In or around 1994, a non-profit organization, the Association of Relatives of the Detained and Disappeared of Guatemala ("FAMDEGUA"), filed a criminal complaint in Guatemala on behalf of the victims of Dos Erres and their families. In July 1994, the Argentine Forensic Anthropology Team (Equipo Argentino de Antropologia Forense or "EAAF") began exhumation of the village well at Dos Erres. The EAAF recovered the skeletal remains of at least 162 people, 42% of whom were children.

¹ Ramiro Osorio Cristales testified at trial. Oscar Castaneda Ramirez will be present at sentencing and wishes to make a statement to the Court.

5. Defendant re-applies for U.S. status

On or about October 22, 1997, defendant submitted a Form I-485 Application to Register Permanent Residence or Adjust Status ("Form I-485 Application") for lawful permanent resident status in the United States based upon his marriage to a United States citizen. On or about November 30, 1998, defendant appeared before a United States Citizenship & Immigration Services ("USCIS") adjudication officer for an interview based on his I-485 Application. In the application and orally at his interview, defendant responded "none" to the question in Part 3(c), which asked defendant about his prior military service:

List your present and past membership in or affiliation with every political organization, association, fund, foundation, party, club, society, or similar group in the United States or in any other place since your 16th birthday. Include any foreign military service in this part. If none, write "none." Include the name of the organization, location, dates of membership from and to, and the nature of the organization. If additional space is needed, use separate paper.

On or about November 30, 1998, defendant's petition for lawful permanent residence was granted.

On or about April 18, 2007, defendant applied to naturalize as a United States citizen. Specifically, defendant submitted a Form N-400 Application for Naturalization ("Form N-400 Application"), which was processed by the San Bernardino Field Office of the USCIS, located in San Bernardino, California.

Defendant was then residing in Riverside County, California.

On or about March 18, 2008, defendant appeared before a naturalization examiner at the San Bernardino Field Office of USCIS in San Bernardino, California, for an interview based on

his Form N-400 Application. At that time, defendant swore under oath to the answers he had made in the Form N-400 Application and knowingly made the following false statements under oath:

- (1) Part 10, Question (D)(15), that he had never committed any crime or offense for which he had not been arrested, when in truth and in fact, as he then well knew, he had committed crimes, including but not limited to murder, at the village of Dos Erres;
- (2) Part 10, question (B)(8)(a), that he was not a member of or associated with any organization, association, fund, foundation, party, club, society, or similar group in the United States or in any other place, and failed to list his membership in a foreign military, when in truth and in fact, as he then well knew, he had been a member of the Guatemalan Army; and
- (3) Part 10, Question (D)(23), that he had never given false or misleading information to any U.S. government official while applying for any immigration benefit, when in truth and in fact, as he then well knew, that he had falsely denied any foreign military service in his Form I-485 Application to Register Permanent Residence or Adjust Status in part 3(c).

On or about August 27, 2008, defendant's petition for naturalization was granted. On or about September 26, 2008, defendant became a naturalized citizen of the United States.

6. Defendant's flight to avoid prosecution

On or about May 4, 2010, defendant's home was searched pursuant to a warrant issued by a magistrate judge. Defendant was given a copy of the search warrant, which stated the crimes under investigation, including naturalization fraud. The search warrant also listed the items to be seized, which related to defendant's service in the Guatemalan military. Defendant consulted with an attorney and then vanished in mid-June 2010,

leaving behind his wife and all of his belongings, including his home, business, car, cell phone, reading glasses, and wedding ring.

Defendant fled to Mexico and, in January 2011, defendant submitted an emergency application for a Canadian passport at the Canadian embassy in Mexico City. Defendant then took a non-stop flight from Mexico to Canada. Defendant was arrested in Canada and extradited back to the United States to for trial.

III. RECOMMENDED SENTENCE

A. Guidelines Calculations

The government and USPO in the PSR calculate defendant's offense level in the same manner, under the November 1, 2007 Guidelines in effect when defendant committed the offenses for which he was convicted:

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18 U.S.C. § 1015(a)
Base Offense Level:
                            8
                                  [U.S.S.G. § 2L2.2(a)]
18 U.S.C. § 1425(a)
Base Offense Level:
                            8
                                  [U.S.S.G. § 2L2.2(a)]
Multiple count adjustment
     1.0 units
8
    +1.0 units
     2.0 units:
                                 [U.S.S.G. § 3D1.4]
                           +2
                           10
Total:
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Defendant would not receive an obstruction of justice enhancement under Section 3C1.1 for fleeing the country when he learned of his imminent indictment. U.S.S.G. § 3C1.1 n. 5(d). However, defendant's flight to avoid prosecution would warrant a greater sentence within the otherwise applicable guidelines range. Id. at n. 5; see also PSR letter p. 4. Defendant's

flight also establishes defendant's failure to accept responsibility and, as noted in the PSR, defendant has never accepted responsibility for the offenses. PSR ¶ 38. Thus, defendant should not receive a two-level decrease for acceptance under U.S.S.G. § 3E1.1. Id. At offense level 10 and criminal history category I, defendant's Guidelines' range is 6-12 months imprisonment.

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The November 1, 2007 version of the Guidelines is utilized, as opposed to the current version of the Guidelines, because application of the current version would result in an ex post facto violation. A recent amendment to Section 2L2.2 adds a specific offense characteristic where a defendant committed a naturalization fraud offense to conceal defendant's participation in a serious human rights offense. A "serious human rights offense" is defined as "(A) violations of federal criminal laws relating to genocide, torture, war crimes ... and (B) conduct that would have been a violation of any such law if the offense had occurred within the jurisdiction of the United States or if the defendant or the victim had been a national of the United States." U.S.S.G. § 2L2.2 Application Note 4. Serious human rights offenses can be committed in a variety of ways, including, for example, assault, kidnapping, and murder. U.S.S.G. Supplement to Appendix C, p. 14.

Here, defendant committed naturalization fraud to conceal his participation in genocide, torture, and war crimes.²

² Notably, other Kaibiles in Guatemala who participated in the Dos Erres massacre were convicted of murder and crimes against humanity in Guatemala, and sentenced to 6060 years imprisonment.

Specifically, defendant knowingly lied in his N-400 Application for citizenship and accompanying interview by stating that he did not commit a crime for which he was not arrested, when he had been a commander and participant in the massacre of at least 160 unarmed men, women, and children civilians - basically the entire village of Dos Erres - in Guatemala in 1982. Defendant also oversaw the rape of numerous women and children, and the kidnapping of two boys from Dos Erres. Defendant lied about these crimes in order to obtain U.S. citizenship. Thus, had this amendment been applicable, defendant's offense level would have been 25 and his Guidelines range 57-71 months' imprisonment.

The Supreme Court has held that sentencing courts are required to begin by calculating the Guidelines range, that "[f]ailing to calculate the correct Guidelines range constitutes procedural error," and that a court that imposes a non-Guidelines sentence must "provide an explanation adequate to the extent of the departure." Peugh v. United States., 133 S. Ct. 2072 (2013). "A retrospective increase in the Guidelines range applicable to a defendant creates a sufficient risk of a higher sentence to constitute an expost facto violation." Id. at 2077. However, the Supreme Court has held that sentencing

Montt was convicted of genocide and crimes against humanity in Guatemala in connection with his 1982-83 rule, which is regarded as the bloodiest period of the Guatemalan civil war. Montt's conviction was overturned on procedural grounds and he is awaiting re-trial. The convictions of the other Kaibiles in Guatemala - Reyes Collin Gualip, Manuel Pop Sun, Daniel Martinez Mendez, and Pedro Pimentel Rios - all have been upheld on appeal.

courts are "free to give careful consideration to the current version of the Guidelines as representing the most recent views of the agency charged by Congress with developing sentencing policy" in deciding whether to vary from the Guidelines range in effect at the time of the offense. Id. at 2087. Further, the Supreme Court also noted that an ex-post facto violation might be harmless if the record made clear that the court "would have imposed the same sentence under the older, more lenient Guidelines that it imposed under the newer, more punitive ones." Id. at 2088 n. 8.

B. An Upward Departure Is Warranted

First, the government seeks a 20-level upward departure to a 10-year, statutory maximum sentence. The horrific nature of the human rights offenses that defendant concealed in order to obtain naturalization constitutes grounds for an upward departure under the November 1, 2007 Guidelines as it is "an aggravating or mitigating circumstance . . . of a kind, or to a degree, not adequately taken into consideration by the Sentencing Commission in formulating the guidelines that, in order to advance the objectives set forth in 18 U.S.C. § 3553(a)(2), should result in a sentence different from that described." U.S.S.G. § 5K2.0(a)(1)(A). Among the examples listed in the Guidelines for departing upward are: death, physical injury, extreme psychological injury, abduction or unlawful restraint, property damage, use of weapons and dangerous instrumentalities, extreme conduct, and criminal

purpose. U.S.S.G. § 5K2.1-2.9.³ All of these are applicable here. Defendant oversaw and/or participated in: forcing the villagers of Dos Erres from their homes at gunpoint and holding the men at the village's school and the women and children at the village's church; murdering all the villagers, including babies and children, and throwing their bodies into the village's well; raping of women and girls; and abducting of children. Specifically, as to extreme conduct:

- Defendant told Gilberto Jordan to "be a man" to encourage him to throw a baby in the well.
- Defendant ordered the Kaibiles to bring more people to the well to be killed.
- Women and girls were raped while waiting in line to be killed, within sight and earshot of defendant at the well.
- Villagers were thrown into the well one on top of another. Some villagers survived and could be heard screaming and cursing from the well. Defendant cursed back in anger, stating "Well you sons of bitches, die then," and fired his high-powered automatic rifle into the well; defendant also threw a grenade in for good measure.

As to a criminal purpose, it was established at trial that the Kaibiles perpetrated this slaughter to cover up the fact that

³ The related provision of U.S.S.G. § 5K2.21 also could be applied to depart upward, but may be cumulative of 5K2.0 in this case. That section provides that a court may depart upward to "reflect the actual seriousness of the offense based on conduct (1) . . . underlying a potential charge not pursued in the case . . . for any other reason; and (2) that did not enter into the determination of the applicable guideline range. The commission mass murder by defendant constitutes uncharged conduct that did not enter into the determination of the applicable Guidelines range, but should be considered to reflect the seriousness of the offense.

soldiers had raped women and girls at Dos Erres; and defendant was part of the command group that made this decision.

Further, the stated rationale behind the recent amendment to 2L2.2 indicates an aggravating circumstance not taken into account by the November 1, 2007 version of the Guidelines. The recent amendment resulted from the Sentencing Commission's "multi-year review to ensure that the guidelines provide appropriate guidelines penalties for cases involving human rights violations." U.S.S.G. Supplement to Appendix C, p. 14. "The new enhancement reflects the impact that such immigration fraud offenses can have on the ability of immigration and naturalization authorities to make fully informed decisions regarding the defendant's immigration petition, application, or other request, and is intended to ensure that the United States is not a safe haven for those who have committed serious human rights offenses." Id.

The government also seeks an upward departure pursuant to Section 4A1.3 because defendant's conduct during the Guatemalan civil war includes criminal activity that substantially underrepresents the seriousness of defendant's criminal history.

U.S.S.G. § 4A1.3(a)(1) ("STANDARD FOR UPWARD DEPARTURE.—If reliable information indicates that the defendant's criminal history category substantially under-represents the seriousness of the defendant's criminal history or the likelihood that the defendant will commit other crimes, an upward departure may be warranted."). Such a departure may be made both horizontally across the sentencing table (by increasing defendant's criminal

history), as well as vertically (by increasing the offense level). Id. at § 4A1.3(a)(4)(B).

Finally, because the government seeks an upward departure pursuant to § 5K2.0 based on the murders that defendant committed and then concealed in order to gain citizenship, the Court should look to murder as an analogous provision in determining defendant's Guidelines sentence in this case. The base offense level for murder is 43 (U.S.S.G. § 2A1.1), and the applicable Guidelines range is life.

C. An Upward Variance Is Warranted

Secondly, the government seeks an upward variance to a 10-year, statutory maximum sentence based upon the sentencing factors of 18 U.S.C. § 3553(a). In determining an appropriate sentence, the Court must consider the following factors:

- (1) the nature and circumstances of the offense and the history and characteristics of the defendant;
- (2) the need for the sentence imposed-
- (A)to reflect the seriousness of the offense, to promote respect for the law, and to provide just punishment for the offense;
 - (B) to afford adequate deterrence to criminal conduct;
- (C)to protect the public from further crimes of the defendant; and
- (D)to provide the defendant with needed educational or vocational training, medical care, or other correctional treatment in the most effective manner;
- (3) the kinds of sentences available;
- (4)[the Sentencing Guidelines range];
- (5) any pertinent policy statement [of the Sentencing Commission];
- (6) the need to avoid unwarranted sentence disparities among defendants with similar records who have been found guilty of
- similar conduct; and (7)the need to provide restitution to any victims of the offense.
- These factors all weigh in favor of an upward variance. The offense is extremely serious as it involved defendant's concealment of the murder of over 160 men, women, and children, as well as rape, and kidnaping. A 10-year sentence is required

to achieve just punishment. Further, there is a need to deter other human rights violators from finding sanctuary in the United States. In addition, the most recent policy statement of the Sentencing Commission is to add a specific offense characteristic that greatly enhances the sentence of a defendant who lies to conceal a serious human rights offense.

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Finally, a 10-year, statutory maximum sentence is necessary to avoid unwarranted sentencing disparities. In United States v. Jordan, 432 Fed. Appx. 950 (11th Cir. 2011) (unpublished), 4 a former-Kaibil who participated in the Dos Erres massacre and pled guilty to a single violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1425(a) was given a 10-year, statutory maximum sentence. Jordan at 951. On appeal, Jordan claimed that his 120-month sentence was unreasonable given the applicable guidelines range was 0-6 months' imprisonment. Id. The district court had imposed the statutory maximum sentence based on an upward departure under U.S.S.G. § 5K2.0(a), stating that it also would have imposed the same sentence under an upward variance. Id. The Eleventh Circuit upheld the application of the upward departure and, thus, did not address the variance. The Eleventh Circuit found that the district court did not err in departing upward to the statutory maximum for the following reasons:

"First, nothing in the guidelines contemplated the particular factor relied on by the district court - concealment of Jordan's membership in the military and his participation in a massacre to fraudulently obtain U.S. citizenship. As the district court explained, the case was "well beyond the heartland of the applicable guidelines,"

⁴ A copy of this decision is attached as Exhibit A.

because "a case with these particular facts is virtually unprecedented."

Second, "consideration of this factor is consistent with the goals of the Sentencing Guidelines." We have explained that upward departures under § 5K2.0(a) "are allowed for acts of misconduct not resulting in conviction, as long as those acts, whether or not relevant conduct in the section 1B1.3 sense, relate meaningfully to the offense of conviction." By concealing his role in the murders, Jordan was able to fraudulently obtain United States citizenship and a virtual safe-haven.

Third, the upward departure was reasonable. The record indicates the court properly considered the § 3553(a) factors in determining Jordan's sentence. The district court's explanation was also sufficient to support the degree of the departure, as it is difficult to imagine "any more serious basis for immigration fraud than an individual's concealment of his prior participation in a mass murder of innocent civilians."

Id. at 951-52 (internal citations omitted). These same reasons apply here, as defendant similarly lied about his membership in the Guatemalan military and his participation in the Dos Erres massacre. However, the facts of this case are even more egregious than in the <u>Jordan</u> case. That is because Jordan was a lower-level Kaibil; he confessed to his involvement in the Dos Erres massacre when first contacted by law enforcement; and he later pled guilty. Here, defendant was a high-level Kaibil in the command group and has never accepted responsibility for his crimes, as proven by his flight to avoid prosecution. Thus, to give defendant anything less than 10 years' imprisonment would be unreasonable and create unwarranted sentencing disparities.

Although cases with facts as egregious as this case are rare, there have been other similar cases where courts have

imposed an above-Guidelines, 10-year, statutory maximum sentence for immigration crimes, such that giving defendant a lesser sentence would create unwarranted sentencing disparities:

- <u>United States v. Munyenyezi</u>, CR No. 10-00085-SM (U.S.D.C. New Hampshire 2013) (unpublished): Munyenyezi was given a 10-year, statutory maximum sentence for obtaining citizenship unlawfully by lying about her role as a commander of one of the notorious roadblocks where Tutsis were singled out for slaughter in Rwanda and her affiliation with the Hutu militia party.
- United Staes v. Horton, 497 Fed. Appx. 302 (4th Cir. 2012) (unpublished): Horton's 10-year, statutory maximum sentence for making a false statement in a passport application, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1542, was upheld where he forged his wife's signature on a passport application for his daughter, which allowed him to take his daughter from the United States to Thailand. According to the Fourth Circuit: "guidelines just do not fit . . . what has occurred here." Id. at 303-04. In particular, the court relied on the following circumstances: (1) Horton fled with his daughter and made no contact with his ex-wife for several weeks, causing the child's family to wonder whether she was even alive, (2) he relocated the child to Thailand, on the other side of the world, for fourteen months and had no intention of reuniting her with her family, (3) he taunted his ex-wife by email, (4) he locked the child in her bedroom so that she would not escape, (5) he and a male companion sexually victimized the child, (6) the child was reunited with her family only due to a

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5 A copy of the judgment in <u>Munyenyezi</u> is attached as Exhibit 8.

• prolonged, diligent law enforcement campaign to locate her and apprehend Horton, and (7) expert testimony established that she would suffer lifelong trauma and need prolonged counseling. Id. at 304. In addition, the court considered Horton's contempt for the law, ... and the need to promote deterrence for this type of crime. Id.

IV. CONCLUSION

For the reasons set forth above, the government requests that the Court sentence defendant to 10 years' imprisonment.