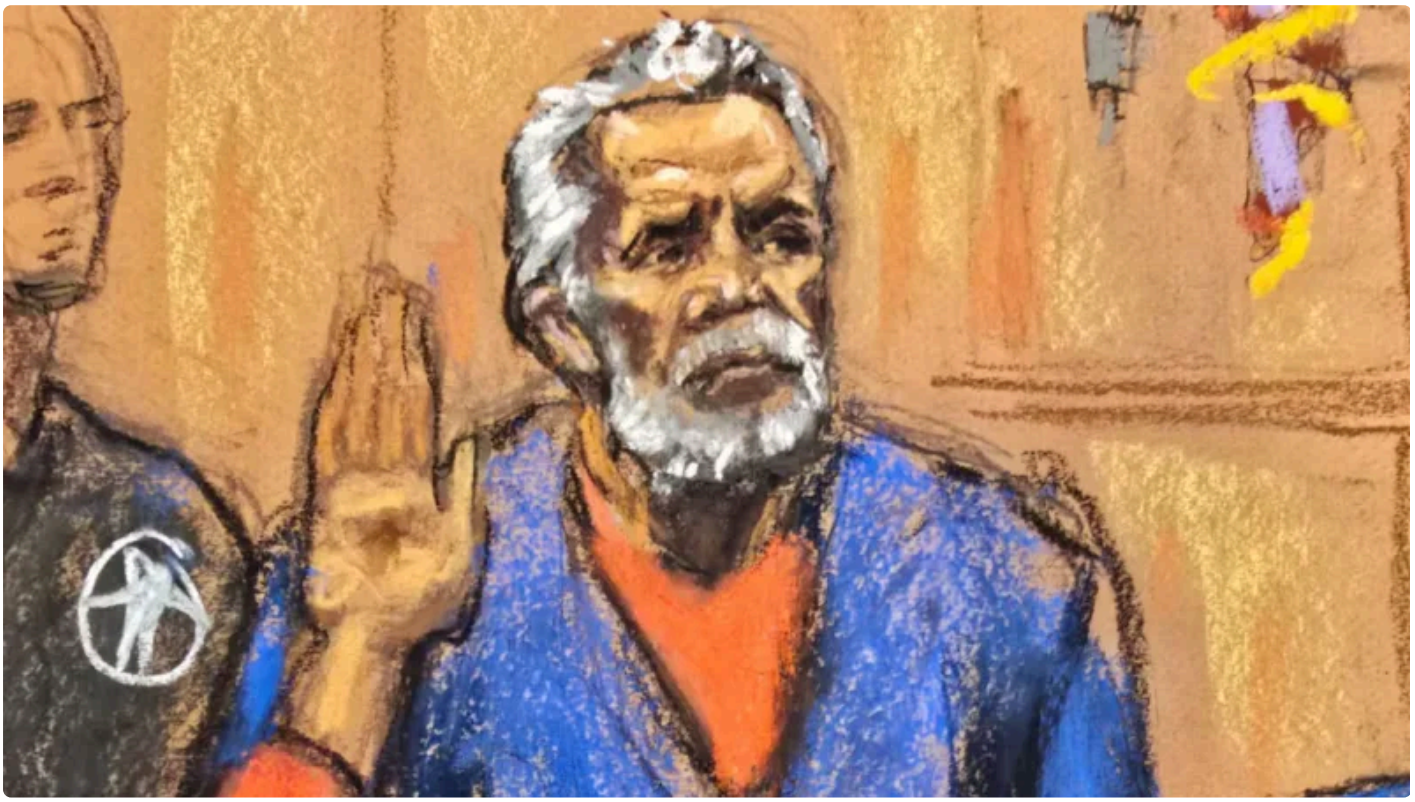
INTERNACIONAL

Solicita Fiscalía de EEUU cadena perpetua para El Mayo Zambada

13 de julio de 2026 · 4 min de lectura



La Fiscalía General de Estados Unidos solicitó nuevamente al juez de la Corte Federal para el Distrito Este de Nueva York, Brian Cogan, condenar al narcotraficante Ismael “El Mayo” Zambada a cadena perpetua y a decomisarle 15 mil millones de dólares.

U.S. Department of Justice

United States Attorney
Eastern District of New York

FJN/RMP:AA/RMU
F. #2009R01065/NY-NYE-616

271 Cadman Plaza East
Brooklyn, New York 11201

July 13, 2026

By ECF

The Honorable Brian M. Cogan
United States District Judge
Eastern District of New York
225 Cadman Plaza East
Brooklyn, New York 11201

Re: United States v. Ismael Zambada Garcia
Criminal Docket Nos. 09-CR-466 and 25-CR-262 (BMC)

Dear Judge Cogan:

The government submits this letter in advance of the July 20, 2026, sentencing of the defendant Ismael Zambada Garcia, also known as "El Mayo" and "Mayo Zambada." For decades, the defendant was one of the most—if not the most—prolific and powerful narcotraffickers in the world. Together with his co-defendant, Joaquín Guzmán Loera ("Guzmán"), also known as "El Chapo," the defendant was a co-founder in the late 1980s of the brutally violent Sinaloa Cartel (the "Cartel"). The defendant oversaw the transshipment of millions of kilograms of lethal drugs including cocaine, fentanyl, and methamphetamine. He employed armed sicarios who, at the defendant's direction, assaulted, tortured, and murdered to further the Cartel's goals. And under the defendant's control and supervision, the Cartel paid millions in bribes at all levels of the Mexican government—police, military, and politicians—to ensure the Cartel could operate without interference. It would be difficult to overstate the magnitude of the defendant's crimes and scale of the corruption, violence, and other harm he spread throughout Mexico, the United States, and the world. Indeed, the defendant's crimes are so vast that the law requires a sentence of life imprisonment. Accordingly, the government respectfully requests that the Court sentence the defendant to life imprisonment and enter a forfeiture money judgment of $15 billion, as set forth in the plea agreement.

I. Background

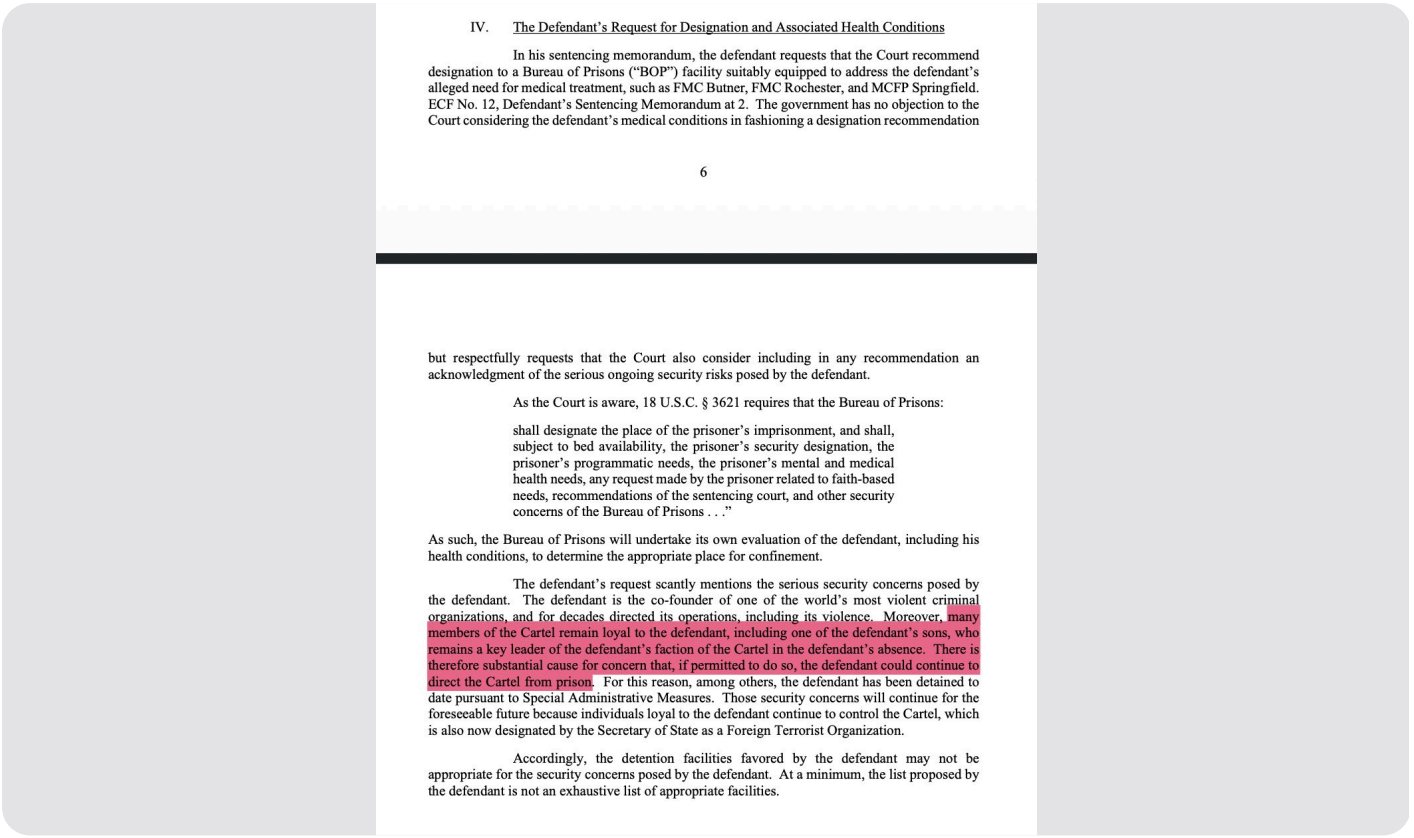
A. Overview

The Federal Bureau of Investigation ("FBI"), the Drug Enforcement Administration ("DEA"), and the Department of Homeland Security, Homeland Security Investigations ("HSI"), began their investigation into the Cartel and its leaders in the early 1990s.

Tras la declaración de culpabilidad de El Mayo, dada a conocer en días pasados, la Fiscalía estadounidense reiteró que Zambada García pagó millonarios sobornos a políticos y autoridades de "todos los niveles" en México "para garantizar que el cártel pudiera operar sin interferencias".



De acuerdo con la moción dirigida en una carta al juez del caso, Brian Cogan, la Fiscalía de EEUU solicitó una sentencia de cadena perpetua y una confiscación multimillonaria, “como fue acordado en la declaración de culpabilidad”.



IV. The Defendant's Request for Designation and Associated Health Conditions

In his sentencing memorandum, the defendant requests that the Court recommend designation to a Bureau of Prisons ("BOP") facility suitably equipped to address the defendant's alleged need for medical treatment, such as FMC Butner, FMC Rochester, and MCFP Springfield. ECF No. 12, Defendant's Sentencing Memorandum at 2. The government has no objection to the Court considering the defendant's medical conditions in fashioning a designation recommendation

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but respectfully requests that the Court also consider including in any recommendation an acknowledgment of the serious ongoing security risks posed by the defendant.

As the Court is aware, 18 U.S.C. § 3621 requires that the Bureau of Prisons:

> shall designate the place of the prisoner's imprisonment, and shall, subject to bed availability, the prisoner's security designation, the prisoner's programmatic needs, the prisoner's mental and medical health needs, any request made by the prisoner related to faith-based needs, recommendations of the sentencing court, and other security concerns of the Bureau of Prisons . . ."

As such, the Bureau of Prisons will undertake its own evaluation of the defendant, including his health conditions, to determine the appropriate place for confinement.

The defendant's request scantly mentions the serious security concerns posed by the defendant. The defendant is the co-founder of one of the world's most violent criminal organizations, and for decades directed its operations, including its violence. Moreover, many members of the Cartel remain loyal to the defendant, including one of the defendant's sons, who remains a key leader of the defendant's faction of the Cartel in the defendant's absence. There is therefore substantial cause for concern that, if permitted to do so, the defendant could continue to direct the Cartel from prison. For this reason, among others, the defendant has been detained to date pursuant to Special Administrative Measures. Those security concerns will continue for the foreseeable future because individuals loyal to the defendant continue to control the Cartel, which is also now designated by the Secretary of State as a Foreign Terrorist Organization.

Accordingly, the detention facilities favored by the defendant may not be appropriate for the security concerns posed by the defendant. At a minimum, the list proposed by the defendant is not an exhaustive list of appropriate facilities.

En el escrito presentado este 13 de julio ante el juez Brian Cogan, la Oficina de la Fiscalía en el Distrito Este de Nueva York ha señalado que Zambada es acusado de traficar cientos de toneladas de drogas de México a Estados Unidos.

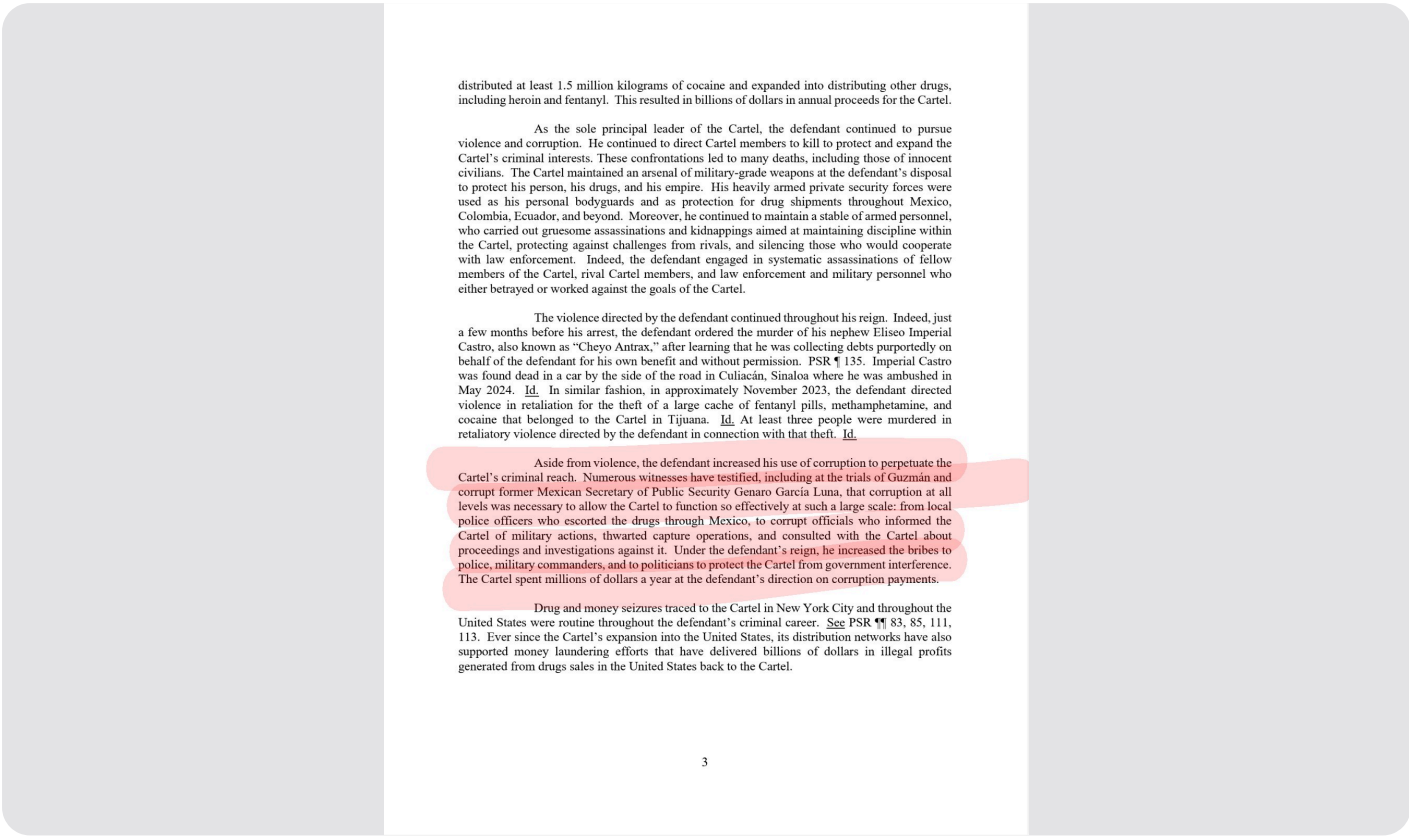


La Fiscalía también propuso que el narcotraficante, quien aceptó declararse culpable hace unos meses, pague una multa de 15 mil millones de dólares, en concepto de reparación del daño.

“Durante décadas, el acusado fue uno de los narcotraficantes más prolíficos y poderosos del mundo, si no el mayor. Junto a su coacusado, Joaquín Chapo Guzmán, Zambada fundó el brutalmente violento Cartel de Sinaloa a finales de la década de 1980. El acusado supervisó el envío de millones de kilos de droga” a Estados Unidos, señala el escrito.



Además, en el escrito se lee: "sería difícil calcular la magnitud de los crímenes del acusado y la escala de la corrupción, violencia y otros males que propagó por México, Estados Unidos y el mundo", indica la carta, que lo describe como uno de los narcos "más prolíficos y poderosos".



distributed at least 1.5 million kilograms of cocaine and expanded into distributing other drugs, including heroin and fentanyl. This resulted in billions of dollars in annual proceeds for the Cartel.

As the sole principal leader of the Cartel, the defendant continued to pursue violence and corruption. He continued to direct Cartel members to kill to protect and expand the Cartel's criminal interests. These confrontations led to many deaths, including those of innocent civilians. The Cartel maintained an arsenal of military-grade weapons at the defendant's disposal to protect his person, his drugs, and his empire. His heavily armed private security forces were used as his personal bodyguards and as protection for drug shipments throughout Mexico, Colombia, Ecuador, and beyond. Moreover, he continued to maintain a stable of armed personnel, who carried out gruesome assassinations and kidnappings aimed at maintaining discipline within the Cartel, protecting against challenges from rivals, and silencing those who would cooperate with law enforcement. Indeed, the defendant engaged in systematic assassinations of fellow members of the Cartel, rival Cartel members, and law enforcement and military personnel who either betrayed or worked against the goals of the Cartel.

The violence directed by the defendant continued throughout his reign. Indeed, just a few months before his arrest, the defendant ordered the murder of his nephew Eliseo Imperial Castro, also known as "Cheyo Antrax," after learning that he was collecting debts purportedly on behalf of the defendant for his own benefit and without permission. PSR ¶ 135. Imperial Castro was found dead in a car by the side of the road in Culiacán, Sinaloa where he was ambushed in May 2024. Id. In similar fashion, in approximately November 2023, the defendant directed violence in retaliation for the theft of a large cache of fentanyl pills, methamphetamine, and cocaine that belonged to the Cartel in Tijuana. Id. At least three people were murdered in retaliatory violence directed by the defendant in connection with that theft. Id.

Aside from violence, the defendant increased his use of corruption to perpetuate the Cartel's criminal reach. Numerous witnesses have testified, including at the trials of Guzmán and corrupt former Mexican Secretary of Public Security Genaro García Luna, that corruption at all levels was necessary to allow the Cartel to function so effectively at such a large scale: from local police officers who escorted the drugs through Mexico, to corrupt officials who informed the Cartel of military actions, thwarted capture operations, and consulted with the Cartel about proceedings and investigations against it. Under the defendant's reign, he increased the bribes to police, military commanders, and to politicians to protect the Cartel from government interference. The Cartel spent millions of dollars a year at the defendant's direction on corruption payments.

Drug and money seizures traced to the Cartel in New York City and throughout the United States were routine throughout the defendant's criminal career. See PSR ¶¶ 83, 85, 111, 113. Ever since the Cartel's expansion into the United States, its distribution networks have also supported money laundering efforts that have delivered billions of dollars in illegal profits generated from drugs sales in the United States back to the Cartel.

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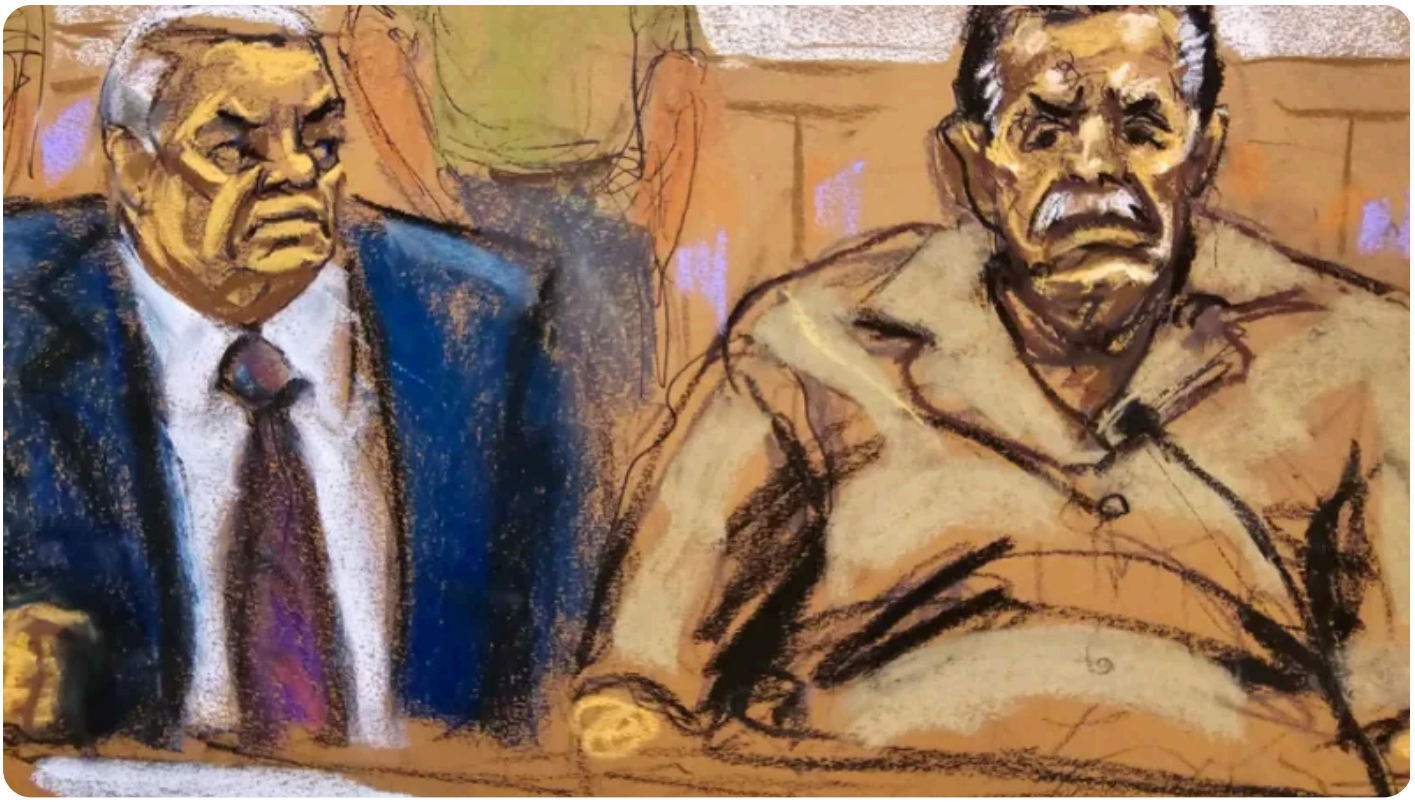
Las autoridades, por otra parte, expresaron su desacuerdo con una reciente petición de El Mayo para no ser enviado a una cárcel de máxima seguridad y que se garantice la atención a su estado de salud durante el cumplimiento de la condena.

La Fiscalía indicó que "no objeta a que el tribunal considere las condiciones médicas del acusado al decidir una recomendación" para su confinamiento, pero pide reconocer "los riesgos serios de seguridad que representa", y advierte de que las cárceles propuestas por su defensa "pueden no ser apropiadas".



Cabe señalar, que Zambada, de 76 años y considerado durante décadas el principal líder del Cartel de Sinaloa, se declaró culpable en agosto de 2025 de diversos delitos relacionados con narcotráfico y delincuencia organizada, por lo que, se espera que reciba su sentencia el próximo 20 de julio.

Incluso, el pasado 6 de julio, los abogados de El Mayo entregaron una carta al juez Brian Cogan, en la que afirmaron que el acusado se declaró culpable de los cargos en su contra “plenamente consciente de que la consecuencia legal sería una sentencia de cadena perpetua” y que no está solicitando una pena inferior a la prevista por la ley.



En dicho documento, Zambada solicitó al juez Cogan que, tome en consideración su “frágil estado de salud” y su disposición a aceptar la cadena perpetua para que no lo envíe a una cárcel de máxima seguridad.

En dicho documento, la defensa legal de El Mayo pidió que se garantice la atención a su estado de salud durante el cumplimiento de la condena y que se tenga en cuenta al definir la recomendación de la prisión a la que será enviado.

La defensa argumentó que, desde su llegada a Estados Unidos, el 24 de julio de 2024, Zambada manifestó su intención de declararse culpable, por lo que, evitó litigar el caso y no presentó mociones previas al juicio, lo que, según la carta del 6 de julio, permitió ahorrar recursos y tiempo al sistema judicial.

El escrito del 6 de julio también subraya que el narcotraficante no prestó “asistencia sustancial” a las autoridades estadounidenses ni busca hacerlo en el futuro para obtener una reducción de la condena.

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