

U.S. attorney general: Biker club indictments part of crackdown on gangs

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U.S. Attorney General Alberto Gonzales today said a federal **indictment** handed down in Detroit against members **of** the Outlaws Motorcycle **Club** is partial fulfillment **of** the Justice Department's promise to attack gangs everywhere.

"When a gang declares a neighborhood to be its territory, it is attacking that community," Gonzales said at a news conference in Detroit.

"We will not tolerate armed gang violence and the drug trade that fuels it."

Federal agents made a series **of** arrests this morning and raided the Detroit clubhouse **of** the Outlaws on West Warren Avenue as **part of** a national **crackdown** against the bike **club** deemed an outlaw motorcycle gang by the FBI.

The Bureau **of** Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives is the lead agency conducting the racketeering investigation, officials said.

An **indictment** against 16 **club** members or associates, alleging racketeering, drug trafficking, gun violations, and acts **of** violence, was unsealed today in U.S. District Court in Detroit. A federal grand jury handed down the 18-count **indictment** on Tuesday. All the **club** members named in the **indictment** are from Michigan and Indiana.

About a dozen **of** the defendants are in custody and the rest are being sought, Gonzales said.

The **indictment** identifies the Outlaws as "an international criminal organization" that enriches its members through drug dealing, illegal gambling, gun crimes and acts **of** violence and that keeps both its victims and members in fear through violent acts.

Allegations include assault with a dangerous weapon against six defendants for an alleged attack on members **of** the rival Hells Angels Motorcycle **Club** in Indiana on April 1, 2006. Weapons used include a hammer, motorcycle **parts** and a cane, the **indictment** alleges.

Agents executed search warrants in the Jacksonville area and elsewhere in Florida today as **part of** the same investigation, officials said.

At the end **of** July, federal officials arrested or issued warrants for 15 members or associates **of** the Outlaws in the Boston, Mass., area

With the **indictment** today, the U.S. Attorney's Office in Detroit is actively prosecuting what the FBI calls the two largest outlaw gangs operating in Detroit -- the Outlaws and the Highwaymen Motorcycle **Club** .

Former Detroit FBI Special Agent in Charge Daniel Roberts, now a top official with the FBI in Washington, D.C., joined Gonzales, U.S. Attorney Stephen Murphy, and other law enforcement officials at the news conference.

About 40 members and associates **of** the Highwaymen are facing drug and conspiracy charges, and officials have said a racketeering **indictment** involving as many as 100 defendants is expected this fall.

Former Outlaws national president Harry "Taco" Bowman was on the FBI's 10 Most Wanted List when he was arrested in Sterling Heights in 1999 and is now serving a life sentence on racketeering and conspiracy charges.

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