



Department of Justice

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Romanian Citizen Pleads Guilty to Smuggling Aliens

WASHINGTON – A Romanian citizen who resides in Davenport, Fla., has pleaded guilty to a charge of inducing aliens to enter the United States illegally, Assistant Attorney General Alice S. Fisher of the Criminal Division and U.S. Attorney Paul I. Perez for the Middle District of Florida announced today.

Constantin C. Durbalau, 30, entered the plea today before U.S. District Judge Anne C. Conway at the federal court in Orlando.

In his plea agreement, Durbalau admitted that during the past three years he personally helped as many as 24 Romanians enter or remain in the United States through fraudulent means. As part of this scheme, Durbalau and another individual prepared fraudulent visa applications for the aliens that falsely stated that they were circus performers coming to work in Florida circuses. In fact, the aliens were not circus performers and were not needed at any of the circuses listed in the applications. Rather, the visa applications were simply a means for the aliens to enter or remain in the United States and were provided by Durbalau in return for a fee of between \$2,000 and \$3,500 per alien. As part of his plea agreement, Durbalau agreed to be removed to Romania upon the completion of his prison sentence. Sentencing is scheduled for Feb. 12, 2007. Durbalau also agreed to forfeit to the United States approximately \$50,000 he earned in smuggling fees.

The case was investigated by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Diplomatic Security, and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services at the Department of Homeland Security. The case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Cynthia Hawkins of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Middle District of Florida and Trial Attorney Arlene Reidy of the Domestic Security Section of the U.S. Department of Justice.

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