

U.S. sentences female Colombian rebel

by UPI

WASHINGTON - A federal judge in Washington Monday sentenced a top female leader of a Colombian rebel group to nearly 17 years in prison for cocaine trafficking.

Nayibe Rojas Valderrama, also known as "Sonia," was handed a 200-month sentence by U.S. District Judge James Robertson, the U.S. Attorney's office said in a news release. Robertson also sentenced co-defendants Jose Antonio Celis, a k a "Calvo," and Juan Diego Giraldo, a k a "Flaco," to 175 months and 200 months in prison, respectively.

Valderrama was extradited to the United States in 2005 on charges she headed a cocaine trafficking operation used to finance the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, a leftist group commonly called FARC. She was FARC's most senior female leader.

FARC has been fighting Colombian forces for more than 40 years.

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