

## Mario Roberto Zelaya Rojas

**Case ID:**

ARW-226

**Jurisdiction of Origin of Public Official or Entity Allegedly Involved:**

Honduras

**Position of Public Official(s) (yrs in office):**

Executive Director, Honduran Institute of Social Security (2010-2014)

**Jurisdiction of Asset Recovery:**

United States

**Jurisdiction of Asset Recovery ? Description:**

Undertaking Recovery Effort, Location of Recovery Effort, Alleged Asset Location/Asset Location

**Asset Recovery Start:**

2014

**Asset Recovery End:**

Ongoing

**UNCAC Offenses Implicated:**

Art.15

Art.19

Art.23

**Legal Basis for Asset Recovery:**

Non-Conviction Based Confiscation

**Contributing Factors in Asset Recovery:**

Ongoing Case

**Status of Asset Recovery :**

Ongoing

**Stage in Asset Recovery Chain:**

Before Court of First Instance

**Agreement for Returned Assets:**

Ongoing

**Case Summary:**

According to the US Department of Justice (DOJ) Press Release, "From 2010 to 2014, Dr. Mario Roberto Zelaya Rojas, 46, of Tegucigalpa, Honduras, served as the Executive Director of the Honduran Institute of Social Security (HISS), a Honduran Government agency that provides social security services, including workers' compensation, retirement, maternity, and death benefits. According to allegations in the forfeiture complaint, Zelaya solicited and accepted \$2.08 million in bribes from Compania De Servicios Multiples, S. de R. L. (COSEM) in exchange for prioritizing and expediting payments owed to COSEM under a \$19 million contract with HISS. Zelaya also allegedly instructed COSEM to make bribe payments to two members of the Board of Directors of HISS charged with overseeing the COSEM contract. To conceal the illicit payments, COSEM allegedly sent the bribes through its affiliate company, CA Technologies.

As further alleged in the complaint, the bribe proceeds were then laundered into the United States and used by Zelaya and his brother, Carlos Alberto Zelaya Rojas, to acquire real estate in the New Orleans area. Certain properties were titled in the name of companies nominally controlled by Zelaya's brother in an effort to conceal the illicit source of the funds as well as the beneficial owner. The current action seeks forfeiture of nine properties acquired with the proceeds of Zelaya's alleged bribery scheme." (Source: US Department of Justice Press Release, "Department of Justice Seeks Recovery of Approximately \$1,528,000 in Bribes Paid to a Honduran Official," January 13, 2015.)

In late January 2015, the defendant properties filed an Answer in the case, requesting the case be dropped for lack of sufficient evidence. As of May 22, 2016, the case was ongoing. (Sources: Answer filed January 27, 2015 and Court Docket report as of May 22, 2016.)

**Disposition of Criminal Case(s):**

NA

**Jurisdiction of Origin: Investigative Agency:**

Assistance by Public Ministry of the Republic of Honduras

**Jurisdiction of Asset Recovery: Investigative Agency:**

Homeland Security Investigations' New Orleans and Miami Field Offices and Attache Tegucigalpa; Assistance by DOJ Criminal Division's Office of Overseas Prosecutorial Development, Assistance and Training Resident Legal Advisor (Tegucigalpa)




**Jurisdiction of Asset Recovery: Prosecuting Authority/Civil Attorney(s):**

DOJ Criminal Division's Asset Forfeiture and Money Laundering Section, Kleptocracy Asset Recovery Initiative; United States Attorney's Office, Eastern District of Louisiana

**Jurisdiction of Asset Recovery: Courts Involved:**

US District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana

**Documents:**

<b>Attachment</b>	<b>Size</b>
 Zelaya_US_Forfeiture_DOJ_PR_Jan_13_2015.pdf	130.74 KB
 Zelaya_US_Forfeiture_Complaint_Jan_13_2015.pdf	15.82 MB
 Zalaya_Answer_Jan27_2015.pdf	117.83 KB

**Other Sources:**

US Department of Justice Press Release, "Department of Justice Seeks Recovery of Approximately \$1,528,000 in Bribes Paid to a Honduran Official," January 13, 2015, at <http://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/departments-justice-seeks-recovery-approxim...> (includes link to Complaint filed January 13, 2015 in US v. Real Property Located at 1404 North Highway 190, Covington, Louisiana 70433, et al, Case No. 2:15-cv-74 (EDLA); Answer filed January 27, 2015 and Court Docket Report as of May 22, 2016.)