UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK
----------x

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

v. 24 Cr. 82 (DLC)

KEONNE RODRIGUEZ and WILLIAM LONERGAN HILL,

Defendants.

----------x

New York, N.Y.
July 22, 2025
2:00 p.m.

Before:

HON. DENISE L. COTE,

District Judge

APPEARANCES

JAY CLAYTON,
United States Attorney for the
Southern District of New York
BY: ANDREW CHAN
CECILIA VOGEL
Assistant United States Attorneys

MICHAEL K. KROUSE
Attorney for Defendant Rodriguez

MATTHEW L. MAZUR
ROGER A. BURLINGAME
Attorneys for Defendant Hill

THE DEPUTY CLERK: This is 24 Cr. 82, United States v. Rodriguez and Hill.

Who's appearing for the government?

MR. CHAN: Good afternoon, your Honor. Andrew Chan and Cecilia Vogel here on behalf of the United States.

THE DEPUTY CLERK: For defendant Rodriguez.

MR. KROUSE: Good afternoon, your Honor. Michael Krouse for defendant Keonne Rodriguez, and seated next to me is Mr. Rodriguez.

THE DEPUTY CLERK: For defendant Hill.

MR. MAZUR: Good afternoon, your Honor. Matthew Mazur, and I'm here with my partner Roger Burlingame on behalf of our client William Hill, who is also present.

THE COURT: Thank you. We're here for the arraignment on a superseding indictment bearing the number 24 Cr. 82. It's superseding indictment 3.

This case was recently reassigned to me. This is my first opportunity to meet with counsel. I appreciate the government's letter of July 21st and look forward to hearing from one and all with respect to open issues.

But let's begin with the arraignment. I'd ask the defendants please to stand. I'm going to ask each of you a series of three questions.

Mr. Rodriguez, have you received a copy of S3 24 Cr. 82?

DEFENDANT RODRIGUEZ: Yes, I have.

THE COURT: Do you wish me to read it to you?

DEFENDANT RODRIGUEZ: No.

THE COURT: How do you plead, guilty or not guilty?

DEFENDANT RODRIGUEZ: Not guilty, your Honor.

THE COURT: You may be seated.

Mr. Hill, please stand. Have you received a copy of S3 24 Cr. 82?

DEFENDANT HILL: Yes, I have, your Honor.

THE COURT: Do you wish me to read it to you?

DEFENDANT HILL: No. Thank you, your Honor.

THE COURT: How do you plead, guilty or not guilty?

DEFENDANT HILL: Not guilty, your Honor.

THE COURT: Thank you. Please be seated.

We have a trial date of November 3rd, 2025. I believe from the docket sheet that that was a date set on December 11th of last year, and I want to know if there's any objection to excluding time from today until our trial date of November 3rd. Mr. Krouse.

MR. KROUSE: No objection, your Honor.

THE COURT: Mr. Mazur.

MR. MAZUR: No, your Honor.

THE COURT: I'm going to exclude the time from today until our trial date of November 3rd, finding the exclusion to be in the interests of justice and to outweigh the best

interests of the defendants and the public in a speedy trial. It will permit the various things described in the government's letter of yesterday, July 21, to be accomplished. Much of those topics relate to trial preparation and the exchange of submissions and further submissions to this Court. It will also give the defendants an opportunity, should they wish to enter a plea of guilty, to pursue those negotiations with the government through their counsel. Alternatively, if the defendants decide that they prefer to proceed to trial, to let their counsel finally prepare for that trial.

I want to advise one and all that this trial date is firm and will not move. Therefore, if either defendant wants to change counsel or is no longer able to afford counsel, they should immediately take steps to change counsel or apply to me for appointment of counsel. Any new attorney needs an opportunity to prepare for trial.

Mr. Rodriguez, do you understand what I just said?

DEFENDANT RODRIGUEZ: Yes, I do, your Honor.

THE COURT: Mr. Hill, do you understand what I just said?

DEFENDANT HILL: Yes, I do, your Honor.

THE COURT: Thank you.

The government's letter indicated that it was considering filing a superseding indictment.

Mr. Chan, what's the government's thinking about that?

MR. CHAN: Your Honor, I think that the government currently anticipates another superseding indictment before trial, which would add additional specified unlawful activities as part of the charged money laundering conspiracy in Count One. The government hopes to be able to file that superseding indictment I think within the next 45 days.

THE COURT: So we're going to set a date then of September 12th. And so if the government seeks to file a superseding indictment after that date, it should let defense counsel know, and, of course, advise me. I'm going to assume that any superseding indictment will be filed no later than September 12th.

MR. CHAN: Yes, your Honor.

THE COURT: The government's letter of July 21 also describes a number of exchanges and submissions that the parties have agreed among themselves to make, and all of those dates seem reasonable to me. There is a request in the letter that opposition to any motions in limine be due October 15th and not October 8th, and that's just fine with me. I approve that alteration to the schedule that had been previously set. I understand that motions in limine will be filed on October 1.

With respect to one of the dates described in the letter of July 21, October 14th is listed as the date for exchange of exhibits. Is that the date the parties agreed upon for the defendant to identify its trial exhibits, as well, to

the government?

MR. CHAN: Yes, your Honor.

THE COURT: Okay. Thank you.

So I was interested to learn from the government's letter that bail conditions for Mr. Hill included his residency in Portugal pending trial. I assume, Mr. Mazur, there's a date on which the defendant is returning to this country to prepare for trial. Can you let me know what that is?

MR. MAZUR: Your Honor, I don't think we settled on a date for that yet, but yes, I agree with your assumption that there will be a date when he will be here to prepare for trial.

THE COURT: Why don't you advise the government and me of what that date will be, shall we say by Friday, advise us of what the date will be.

MR. MAZUR: Sure. I appreciate the chance to confer about that. Thank you.

THE COURT: Thank you.

The government describes what it anticipates the length of the trial to be, that is three weeks. Does that estimate include the entirety of the trial? Of course we can't tell how long deliberations will take or know what the length of the defense case will be, but that's the government's best estimate at this time?

MR. CHAN: Yes, your Honor. That estimate of three weeks is based on the government's case and estimates of the

cross-examinations by defense counsel, as well as potential defense case. Although, we have not received any information from the defendants as to their estimated length of their defense case.

THE COURT: I have a 12.2 filing. It was made on May 29th by Defendant Hill. We're still trying to get our hands around of what's actually been docketed.

Let me let counsel know that in this case, in all criminal cases, everything gets docketed, everything. I don't want submissions to me creating a shadow docket. Now, of course, some things should be docketed under seal, that's fine. There are arrangements we could make to file matters under seal when that's appropriate. And so we've been trying to catch up and make sure everything is docketed and there's an official record in this case with respect to everything.

One of the things we've recently discovered is this 12.2 notice provided on May 29th by Mr. Hill, and there is a reference to it being supplemented on July 18th, and I'll take a description from Mr. Hill's counsel that's appropriate for a public record to describe the form in which that supplementation was made.

MR. MAZUR: Thank you, your Honor. Yes, it was not a formal supplemental notice that was served. It was simply that the government asked certain questions about the notice to facilitate what I expect to be a motion for a court ordered

examination in response to our notice. We provided the information the government requested in an email and identified type of expert and the testing that we had done so that they could match it on their end.

THE COURT: Great. So there was no notification to the Court or was there supplemental notice to the government's counsel?

MR. MAZUR: Correct.

THE COURT: Thank you.

And of course 12.2 notice is required when there's a condition that bears on guilt. I'm going to need briefing with respect to that if this remains ripe. I understand defense counsel has reserved the right to withdraw the notice, and I expect there may be further consultation among counsel. But at some point where this truly is ripe and may be an issue for trial, I'm going to need briefing from defense counsel with respect to how this condition for which 12.2 notice was given actually could bear on guilt. Thank you.

So there are a set of papers we've been able to identify that are not on the record. Or, if on the record -- excuse me one second. So I have two inches of material here that I don't think have been docketed. I think there was a request, perhaps on May 29th, by Mr. Hill's counsel to file these materials under seal. I don't know that that request was ruled upon. I don't believe it was.

Looking at this group of materials, I'm not sure that all of it need be filed under seal or that a sealing application would be granted in its entirety. So I'm going to ask Mr. Hill's counsel, please, to review these materials and, where you can, file the materials on the public record and where you believe it remains appropriate to request a filing under seal, that you make that submission to me. This batch of materials, you can examine this batch of materials after this conference to figure out what I'm referring to, but i think it was in connection to motion practice made on May 29th, and my deputy, Mr. Whertvine, will have custody of these. Thank you.

I'd like a letter from the government — again, it can be this Friday — that describes for me and for defense counsel the chain of exclusions pursuant to the Speedy Trial Act that took us to today. I've entered an order pursuant to Title 18, United States Code, Section 3161(h)(7)(A) for today through to our trial date. I'd just like to confirm that we have exclusions that run to today.

MR. CHAN: Yes, your Honor.

THE COURT: Thank you.

So a number of motions were submitted in this case and remain open. There is a motion to dismiss that was made by both defendants and a reply was filed on that motion. There was a motion made by Defendant Hill for a *Franks* hearing, there was a motion made by defendant Hill for a severance, and there

was a motion made for additional discovery of an August 23, 2023 telephone call between the prosecutors and FinCEN, and a request for hearing in connection with those. I've reviewed all those papers. I'm going to deny the motions to some extent. I may write, other motions may be subject to an oral ruling at a later date. But I wanted to let you know that I had a chance to review all those motion papers and become familiar with those issues.

I think that's it with respect to my list of items for today's conference, but let me give everyone else an opportunity to raise issues with the Court.

Mr. Chan.

MR. CHAN: Nothing for the government, your Honor. Thank you.

THE COURT: Thank you.

Mr. Krouse.

MR. KROUSE: No, your Honor. Thank you.

THE COURT: Yes.

Mr. Mazur.

MR. MAZUR: No, nothing. Thank you, your Honor.

THE COURT: Thanks, all.

THE DEPUTY CLERK: All rise.

* * *