# Former Haitian Gang Leader Germine Joly Sentenced to 35 Years for Gunrunning and Kidnapping



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Germine Joly, former leader of the 400 Mawozo gang in Haiti, has been sentenced to 35 years in prison by a federal court in Washington, D.C. Joly, also known as "Yonyon," pleaded guilty in January to charges involving weapons smuggling and laundering ransoms linked to the kidnapping of 16 U.S. citizens in October 2021. The sentences were part of U.S. efforts to curb the flow of illegal arms into Haiti and combat the kidnapping of American citizens.

The 400 Mawozo gang, co-led by Joly, operates in the eastern region of Port-au-Prince and is notorious for kidnappings, drug and arms trafficking, and violent crimes. In 2021, the gang kidnapped 16 American missionaries and one Canadian from an orphanage, demanding $1 million per hostage. Using part of the ransom, they purchased guns, including AR-15s and AK-47s, which were smuggled from the U.S. to Haiti.

Joly directed these operations from a Haitian prison cell using unmonitored cell phones. The U.S. extradited him in 2022, and additional charges related to the kidnappings are still pending, with a trial scheduled for next year.

Other individuals involved, including Joly's former girlfriend Eliande Tunis, were also sentenced. Tunis received 12.5 years, while two associates, Jocelyn Dor and Walder St. Louis, received five and three years, respectively.