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MEDIA ADVISORY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Approved by JAK
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Re: Trial Verdict In Gang-Related Murder Trial: People v. Israel Chuca: Kern County Superior Court Case BF181697A

District Attorney Cynthia Zimmer announced a significant conviction in a homicide case today. On February 24, 2022, a Kern County jury returned verdicts finding defendant Israel Chuca guilty as charged of one count of first-degree murder committed in furtherance of a street gang and an additional count of premeditated, attempted murder. Deputy District Attorney John Allen presented the trial evidence that resulted in the convictions.

On August 2nd, 2019, Israel Chuca, a member of the “Colonia Bakers” street gang, drove down Niles Avenue in East Bakersfield and passed the two victims who were walking in the opposite direction. Chuca made a U-turn and drove to the area of Niles and Barlow and stopped his vehicle, got out and confronted the victims. During the confrontation, Chuca produced a .380 caliber semi-automatic handgun and fired eight shots at the victims. One victim, a member of a different street gang, was struck once in the head and once in the chest, killing him. The second victim was struck near the waist and survived his injuries. Chuca fled the scene after the shooting, but investigation revealed forensic DNA evidence that conclusively linked Chuca to the shootings.

District Attorney Cynthia Zimmer commented on the verdict, stating: “Gang violence will not be tolerated in our county. Despite recent legislative changes that have clearly been designed to benefit gang members, we will continue to prosecute gang violence to the fullest extent of the law to ensure justice and safety to communities that suffer from gang violence.”

Chuca faces a sentence up to life in prison without the possibility of parole, based on the gang-related special circumstance finding related to the first-degree murder conviction. Sentencing for Chuca is scheduled for April 20, 2022 at 8:30 a.m. in Department 4, before the Honorable Charles R. Brehmer.

Israel Chuca:

