



RICHARD A. BROWN
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

**DISTRICT ATTORNEY
QUEENS COUNTY**
125-01 QUEENS BOULEVARD
KEW GARDENS, NEW YORK 11415-1568
718-286-6000

Release #208-2007
www.queensda.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2007

CONTACT: PRESS OFFICE
(718)286-6315

**D.A. BROWN: BROOKLYN MAN CHARGED WITH ATTEMPTED MURDER AFTER
ALLEGEDLY FIRING SHOTS AT DELI OWNER DURING FAILED ROBBERY ATTEMPT**

*Alleged Defendant Hospitalized As Shopkeeper Defends Himself By Slashing Him With Machete; No
Charges to be Filed Against Deli Owner*

Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown announced today that a 27-year-old Brooklyn man was arrested yesterday on attempted murder and other charges in connection with the attempted robbery of a deli in Woodhaven. The defendant fired his weapon inside the store and was subdued by the store owner who sliced off the defendant's trigger finger with a machete that he kept for protection.

District Attorney Brown said, "According to the charges, the defendant pointed a handgun at the store owner after entering the Erick Deli and Grocery in Woodhaven and heading toward the cash register. Apparently he never suspected that the shopkeeper, Joan Marte, would quickly turn the tables on his attacker. Faced with a threat to his life and property, Marte grabbed a machete from behind a counter and was able to thwart the attack."

The District Attorney identified the defendant as Omar Rodriguez, of 82 Dwight Street, in Brooklyn. Rodriguez is charged with Attempted Murder in the Second Degree, Attempted Robbery in the First Degree, Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the Second Degree, and Assault in the Second Degree. Rodriguez faces up to 25 years in prison if convicted.

District Attorney Brown said that, according to the criminal complaint, on Wednesday, November 7, 2007, at 4:45 p.m., defendant Omar Rodriguez entered the Eric Deli and Grocery, 90-01 77th Street, in Woodhaven, and lifted the counter top and approached the store owner Joan Marte. Rodriguez allegedly pointed a gun at Marte, who grabbed for a machete in an attempt to disarm Rodriguez. Rodriguez allegedly fired four shots at Marte, missing him. A 40-caliber semi-automatic pistol and four shell casings were recovered at the scene.

The District Attorney said Rodriguez's right index finger was severed and he suffered severe lacerations to his forearm and elbow. He also suffered cuts to his head and a possible broken foot. He is in stable condition and is expected to be arraigned in the next few days. One of Marte's fingers was struck by a bullet, causing bleeding and substantial pain.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Jeanine Diehl and Shlomit Metz, of the Career Criminal Major Crimes Bureau, under the direct supervision of Deputy Bureau Chief Robert J. Hanophy, and Bureau Chief James W. Evangelou, under the overall supervision Senior Executive Assistant District Attorney for Trials James C. Quinn and Deputy Executive Assistant District Attorneys for Trials John H. Larsen and Robert J. Masters.

It should be noted that criminal charges are merely accusations and that defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty.

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Note to Editors: E-version of this press release posted at www.queensda.org