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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

FEBRUARY 19, 2015

Montgomery County District Attorney Risa Vetri Ferman and Franconia Township Police Chief Joseph Kozniewski announce the filing of criminal charges against Peter Jok Atem (age 32) for the murder of Danny Vazquez (age 25) at the MOPAC Rendering Plant on Souder Road in Franconia Township.

On Wednesday, February 18, 2015, the Franconia Township Police Department responded to the 700 block of Souder Road for a report of a stabbing victim. The victim, identified as Danny Vazquez, was transported by Harleysville Ambulance to Abington-Lansdale Hospital and pronounced dead. A joint investigation by the Montgomery County Detectives and the Franconia Police was commenced.

The investigation revealed that the victim and defendant were co-workers at the rendering plant and that on February 17, 2015 the victim tried to pull a chair out from under the defendant. Following the prank, the defendant told the victim that he was "going to get you for that." The next day, February 18, 2015, while at work in the rendering plant, a witness saw the defendant in a physical confrontation with Vazquez. The defendant had the victim on the floor and was choking him. The victim was able to get away from the defendant and the witness returned to work. A short time later, the witness heard screaming and witnessed the defendant stabbing Vazquez. Following the stabbing, the witness tried to get help for Vazquez at a nearby office but the victim collapsed outside the office, uttered his last words and became unresponsive.

When police arrived on the scene they attended to the victim and then canvassed the area for the defendant. Officers located the defendant a short distance from the stabbing scene where he was hiding in a shed. Officers observed stab and/or slash wounds to the defendant that appeared to be self-inflicted. The defendant was rushed to Paoli Memorial Hospital for treatment of his wounds. He underwent surgery, and remains in the hospital at this time.

Near the defendant in the shed, police located a knife as well as a written note. The note said in part, "see you in hell. life for life."

An autopsy was performed at the Montgomery County Coroner's Office this morning. Autopsy results revealed that Vazquez died of multiple stab wounds and the manner of death was ruled homicide.

Charges have been filed against the defendant for first degree murder and related offenses. Because of the defendant's medical condition, details regarding the arraignment are still pending and police are with the defendant at the hospital.

The case will be prosecuted by Assistant District Attorneys Alec O'Neill and Heather Hines.

Approved for release:



Risa Vetri Ferman

CRIMINAL CHARGES, AND ANY DISCUSSION THEREOF, ARE MERELY ALLEGATIONS AND ALL DEFENDANTS ARE PRESUMED INNOCENT UNTIL AND UNLESS PROVEN GUILTY.