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**FINAL INDICTED DEFENDANT IN CO-OP
CITY CRACK AND FIREARMS RING PLEADS GUILTY
TO NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING AND FIREARMS OFFENSES**

MICHAEL J. GARCIA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, announced today that the final Indicted member of a large crack cocaine organization, which once controlled the sales of crack cocaine in the Co-op City Housing Development, pleaded guilty to narcotics trafficking and firearms offenses before United States District Judge ROBERT P. PATTERSON. According to statements made during relevant plea proceedings, documents filed in Manhattan federal court, and the evidence at various trials:

From early 2005 until December 2005, officers of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives ("ATF") and the New York City Police Department ("NYPD"), with assistance from the United States Drug Enforcement Administration ("DEA"), conducted a joint investigation of drug trafficking -- particularly the distribution of crack cocaine -- gun possession, firearms trafficking, and related violence in the vicinity of Co-Op City, a 50,000-person residential community located in Bronx, New York. During the course of this investigation, approximately 50 guns and numerous rounds of ammunition were seized. In mid-December 2005, 18 defendants, who were later Indicted, were charged in Manhattan federal court with various narcotics and firearms offenses, including several defendants who were charged in connection with a violent pistol-whipping, on August 15, 2005, of a rival drug dealer in the area.

On December 14, 2005, JARED GOMES, a/k/a "JG," was charged in a Complaint with narcotics and firearms offenses in connection with this investigation, including offenses relating to the August 15, 2005 assault. A fugitive prior to his arrest, GOMES was arrested on March 29, 2007, with the assistance of the United States Marshal Service.

During plea proceedings on August 15 and August 20, 2007, GOMES pleaded guilty to one count of participating in a conspiracy to distribute crack cocaine and possess crack cocaine with intent to distribute it -- from 2000 to August 15, 2005 -- and one count of brandishing a handgun in connection with the August 15, 2005 assault. As a result of his plea, GOMES faces a mandatory minimum sentence of seven years in prison, and a maximum prison term of 27 years. He is scheduled to be sentenced on November 15, 2007, before Judge PATTERSON.

In connection with the wide-ranging investigation, 15 other individuals associated with crack distribution and/or firearms in Co-Op City have pleaded guilty to felony charges involving narcotics and/or firearms offenses, or been convicted of such offenses following trial. Two additional individuals have pleaded guilty to misdemeanor firearms charges. Those who have been sentenced on felony narcotics offenses have received terms of up to 151 months' imprisonment. Those who were sentenced solely for felony firearms offenses have received terms of imprisonment of up to 51 months.

Mr. GARCIA praised the collective efforts of the ATF, the NYPD, and the DEA for their work in the investigation.

The cases have been prosecuted by the Narcotics Unit of the United States Attorney's Office. Assistant United States Attorneys CHRISTOPHER GARCIA, GURUANJAN SAHNI, AVI WEITZMAN, JULIAN MOORE, MARGARET GARNETT, and IRIS LAN are in charge of the prosecutions.

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