



***United States Attorney
Southern District of New York***

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**U.S. ANNOUNCES HEROIN TRAFFICKER'S
EXTRADITION FROM THAILAND**

MICHAEL J. GARCIA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, JOHN P. GILBRIDE, the Special Agent-in-Charge of the New York Office of the United States Drug Enforcement Administration ("DEA"), and JOSEPH R. GUCCIONE, the United States Marshal for the Southern District of New York, announced the extradition from Thailand of JOHN KWABENA YEBOAH on charges relating to his participation in an international heroin-trafficking ring. The Indictment charges YEBOAH and two others, ANDREW SARPONG, a/k/a "Iddriss," and JOLADE DANKWAH (collectively "the Defendants"), with participating in a conspiracy to import heroin into the United States. According to the Indictment and other documents filed in Manhattan federal court:

From November 2004 until May 2006, SARPONG sold passports -- including United States passports -- to a confidential informant to be used by couriers to illegally import heroin into the United States. In addition, SARPONG agreed to provide the confidential informant with one kilogram of heroin and a courier to be used to transport the heroin into the United States.

On May 6, 2006, YEBOAH delivered approximately 640 grams of heroin to the confidential informant and an undercover DEA agent in a Bangkok hotel. SARPONG and YEBOAH subsequently introduced the confidential informant and undercover agent to DANKWAH, who was to serve as a courier for the heroin.

DANKWAH was arrested on May 24, 2006, when she traveled to New York and attempted to deliver heroin to a customer in the Bronx. SARPONG was arrested on June 2, 2006 in Thailand and presented January 18, 2007 in this District.

The extradition announced today was a part of "Operation Ivory Triangle," a joint investigation conducted by the United States Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York and the DEA in Bangkok, Thailand, Lagos, Nigeria and New York, with the cooperation of the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement ("ICE"), and Royal Thai Police. To date, two defendants have been convicted in connection with Operation Ivory Triangle. DANKWAH pleaded guilty in December 2006 before United States District Judge GERARD E. LYNCH, and YAYA YAHAYAI, a/k/a "Topmidas," pleaded guilty in October 2007 to a separate Indictment pending before United States District Judge LEONARD B. SAND. SARPONG's case is pending before Judge LYNCH.

YEBOAH is expected to be presented later today before United States Magistrate Judge DOUGLAS F. EATON.

If convicted, YEBOAH, 41, faces a maximum sentence of life in prison and a mandatory minimum sentence of 10 years in prison. The Indictment also seeks a forfeiture of at least \$24,000,000 in narcotics proceeds alleged to have been obtained as a result of the Defendants' drug trafficking operations.

Mr. GARCIA praised the cooperative investigative efforts of the DEA, ICE, and the Royal Thai Police law enforcement officers.

The prosecution is being handled by the International Narcotics Trafficking Unit of the United States Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York. Assistant United States Attorneys MARSHALL A. CAMP and EUGENE E. INGOGLIA are in charge of the prosecution.

The charges contained in the Indictment are merely accusations, and the defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.