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**MANHATTAN U.S. ATTORNEY CHARGES 30 MEMBERS
OF WHEELER AVENUE BOYS CRIMINAL ORGANIZATIONS
WITH DISTRIBUTING CRACK COCAINE**

PREET BHARARA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, and RAYMOND W. KELLY, the Police Commissioner of the City of New York ("NYPD"), today announced the unsealing of an Indictment charging 30 members of two criminal organizations based in the Wheeler Avenue area in the Bronx with conspiracy to distribute crack cocaine. In a coordinated operation on Wednesday morning, February 2, 2011, members of the NYPD arrested thirteen defendants in the Bronx. Six of the charged defendants were previously arrested. One more defendant surrendered today, while ten defendants remain at large. All of the defendants arrested yesterday were presented in Manhattan federal court last night, and one defendant who surrendered today is expected to be presented in Manhattan federal court later today.

According to the Indictment filed in Manhattan federal court, other documents filed in the case, and statements made during court proceedings:

Between 2004 and 2008, a crack cocaine distribution organization, which calls itself the Wheeler Avenue Boys, sold hundreds of grams of crack cocaine on a weekly basis on Wheeler Avenue, between 172nd Street and Watson Avenue, in the Bronx. In December 2008, the organization split into two different groups, as a result of a shooting by one member of the organization against another. Since December 2008, the Wheeler Avenue Boys have been split between the 1200 block and the 1100 block of Wheeler Avenue.

As a result of the dispute between the two groups, as well as disputes with competing drug organizations on nearby Elder Avenue, there have been dozens of shootings, as well as numerous acts of violence perpetrated by members of the organization. A shooting on January 13, 2011, resulted in the death of one individual and serious injury of another. Moreover, on several occasions, innocent bystanders have been shot by stray bullets. Since December 2008, the 1100 block and the 1200 block members of the Wheeler Avenue Boys continued to sell multiple grams of crack cocaine on a daily basis.

XAVIER CORREA, LUIS CORREA, SAIKOU DIALLO, FELIX RODRIGUEZ, DAVID MARTE, JONATHAN READ, GREGORY MELLA, ANTHONY DIXON, ENRIQUE RIVERA, GREGORY GONZALEZ, JASON MARIN, RICHARD VASQUEZ, LUIS PAULINO, RIKELBY MELLA, ROBERT ESPINAL, ETHAN TALAVERA, DANNY REYES, ALVIN RODRIGUEZ, HECTOR MELENDEZ, DONNELL SANDERS, MIGUEL COLON, and OMAR DELVILLAR were charged with participating in a conspiracy to distribute more than 50 grams of crack cocaine from at least 2005 until December 2008.

XAVIER CORREA, LUIS CORREA, DAVID MARTE, GREGORY MELLA, JUNIOR ROSARIO, EDWIN MELO, ANTHONY DIXON, ENRIQUE RIVERA, JASON MARIN, RAYMOND CONCEPCION, RIKELBY MELLA, ROBERT ESPINAL, STEVEN LEWIS, and JASON MOJICA were charged with participating in a conspiracy to distribute more than 280 grams of "crack" cocaine from at least December 2008 up to and including January 2011.

SAIKOU DIALLO, FELIX RODRIGUEZ, HECTOR MELENDEZ, DONNELL SANDERS, JOSHUA RODRIGUEZ, MIGUEL COLON, OMAR DELVILLAR, JASON MOJICA, DELMOUR BROWN, and RICCARDO BUCKERIDGE were charged with participating in a conspiracy to distribute more than 280 grams of crack cocaine from at least December 2008 up to and including January 2011.

During the course of the arrests on Wednesday morning, the NYPD recovered over 50 grams of crack cocaine from one of the defendants.

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Mr. BHARARA praised the investigative work of the NYPD.

This case is being handled by the Office's Violent Crimes Unit. Assistant U.S. Attorneys TODD BLANCHE, PARVIN D. MOYNE, and MICHAEL FERRARA 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.