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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**THREE MEN FOUND GUILTY OF COMMITTING A SERIES  
OF ARMED KIDNAPPINGS AND ROBBERIES**

MICHAEL J. GARCIA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, announced that RAFAEL RODRIGUEZ, ANGEL DIAZ, and JORGE CEDENO were found guilty today, following a four-week jury trial, of armed robbery, kidnapping, and firearms charges stemming from a series of truck robberies in and around the tri-state area in fall 2006. According to the evidence at trial in White Plains federal court before United States District Judge COLLEEN McMAHON, and documents filed in the case:

Between September 2006 and January 2007, the defendants operated an armed robbery crew, which targeted and hijacked trucks containing valuable cargo, including perfumes, cosmetic products, and cellular phones. During the robberies, the defendants brandished firearms, pistol-whipped truck drivers, tied the drivers up with plastic flex-ties, and restrained them in the sleeper cabins of their trucks while the robberies took place and the trucks were offloaded.

On September 13, 2006, members of the crew hijacked a truck containing more than half a million dollars worth of perfume products. Armed with guns, RODRIGUEZ and DIAZ stormed the truck while it was parked outside a warehouse in Blauvelt, New York. RODRIGUEZ and DIAZ pistol-whipped the two drivers and forced them to the back of the cab, where they were held and restrained with plastic flex-ties. A co-conspirator drove the truck to a warehouse in New Jersey, where DIAZ and others unloaded the truck, after which the truck was abandoned in Clifton, New Jersey, with the kidnapped drivers still restrained inside. Eventually, the drivers called out for help from the truck window to passersby, who called the police.

Two months later, on November 13, 2006, the crew hijacked a truck containing a load of Verizon cellular phones in

Allamuchy Township, New Jersey. RODRIGUEZ and CEDENO stormed the truck at a rest-area. The driver of the truck was pistol-whipped, restrained with plastic flex-ties, and held in the back of the cab. A co-conspirator drove the truck to the Bronx where several of the robbers left to negotiate a deal to sell the contents of the truck. The remaining co-conspirators watched the truck from a distance, leaving the driver restrained in the back of the cab. The driver of the truck broke free from the restraints and drove away until he flagged down a New York City police officer.

RODRIGUEZ was found guilty of eight counts: conspiracy to commit kidnapping, conspiracy to commit armed robbery, two kidnapping counts, two armed robbery counts, and two firearms charges.

DIAZ was found guilty of five counts: conspiracy to commit kidnapping, conspiracy to commit armed robbery, kidnapping, armed robbery, and a firearms charge.

CEDENO was found guilty of five counts: conspiracy to commit kidnapping, conspiracy to commit armed robbery, kidnapping, armed robbery, and a firearms charge.

The defendants are scheduled to be sentenced by Judge McMAHON on October 17, 2008 at 2 p.m. DIAZ faces a mandatory minimum sentence of life imprisonment. RODRIGUEZ faces a mandatory minimum sentence of thirty-two years' imprisonment and a maximum potential sentence of life imprisonment. CEDENO faces a mandatory minimum sentence of seven years' imprisonment and a maximum potential sentence of life imprisonment.

Six other defendants -- GERMAN CUADRADO, PLUTARCO ANGULO-AGUIRRE, JORGE FLORES, VICTOR DIAZ, SAILE PARRA, and JUAN CAMACHO -- were charged as members of the crew and pleaded guilty. Each of those defendants except CAMACHO is subject to a maximum term of life imprisonment. CAMACHO is subject to a maximum term of twenty-five years' imprisonment.

MR. GARCIA praised the outstanding work of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Orangetown Police Department in the investigation of this case.

Assistant United States Attorneys NOLA B. HELLER and MICHAEL A. LEVY are in charge of the prosecution.