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**LEADER OF NARCOTICS ORGANIZATION SENTENCED
TO THIRTY-FIVE YEARS IN PRISON**

MICHAEL J. GARCIA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, announced that PEDRO GONZALEZ, a/k/a "Pete," was sentenced yesterday to 35 years in prison for drug trafficking. In October 2007, PEDRO GONZALEZ, 37, and his brother DAVID GONZALEZ, 33, were found guilty, following a three-week jury trial in Manhattan federal court, of conspiracy to distribute cocaine, crack cocaine, and marijuana, and PEDRO GONZALEZ was also found guilty of distributing heroin. Additionally, DAVID GONZALEZ was convicted of participating in the murder of EUGENE SOTO, who was shot to death on September 14, 1996, on Valentine Avenue in the Bronx, in connection with PEDRO GONZALEZ's drug business. On January 16, 2008, DAVID GONZALEZ was sentenced to 25 years' imprisonment. According to the proof at trial before United States District Judge LORETTA A. PRESKA:

In the early 1990s, PEDRO GONZALEZ began operating a street-level narcotics organization that sold crack cocaine and marijuana at East 196th Street and Creston Avenue in the Bronx. PEDRO GONZALEZ expanded his drug business to the point that, by the early 2000s, he and co-conspirators were selling multi-kilogram quantities of heroin and cocaine throughout the New York City area. Additionally, PEDRO GONZALEZ possessed several weapons, including semi-automatic firearms, silencers, and a hand grenade.

On September 14, 1996, following an altercation the previous day with PEDRO GONZALEZ, EUGENE SOTO encountered DAVID GONZALEZ on a Bronx street. DAVID GONZALEZ then retrieved a firearm from a stash apartment for the brothers' drug organization, and led a chase of SOTO through the streets until SOTO was trapped in the vestibule of a building on Valentine Avenue. SOTO was stabbed repeatedly in the head and neck by an associate of the GONZALEZ brothers ("CC-1"). SOTO was thereafter

shot in the head and killed, using DAVID GONZALEZ's gun, by another GONZALEZ associate ("CC-2"). CC-1 and CC-2 both previously pleaded guilty for their roles in the murder. No eyewitnesses were able to identify the killers, and the murder went unprosecuted until charges were filed more than seven years later.

Mr. GARCIA praised the investigative work of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives, the Drug Enforcement Administration, and the Internal Revenue Service.

Assistant United States Attorneys HARRY A. CHERNOFF and STEVE C. LEE are in charge of the prosecution.

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