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**MANHATTAN FEDERAL JURY FINDS COCAINE KINGPIN GUILTY
ON NARCOTICS IMPORTATION AND DISTRIBUTION CHARGES**

PREET BHARARA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, and JOHN P. GILBRIDE, the Special Agent-in-Charge of the New York Field Division of the Drug Enforcement Administration, announced today that JORGE MARIO PAREDES-CORDOVA ("PAREDES"), designated by the United States Department of Justice as one of the world's most significant drug kingpins, was found guilty on charges of conspiracy to import and distribute cocaine.

PAREDES was charged in a two-count Indictment with conspiring to import ton-quantities of Colombian cocaine into the United States through Central America and Mexico, and to distribute the cocaine in major U.S. cities including New York. At trial, the Government offered evidence that PAREDES imported 265 kilograms of cocaine that was seized in Pennsylvania en route to New York and invested in additional ton-quantities of cocaine concealed in containers that were transported by cargo ship from Panama to Mexico. In Mexico, the cocaine was unloaded and transported by land to the U.S.-Mexico border, where it was imported by a Mexican drug kingpin. A shipment of 1,347 kilograms of cocaine, in which PAREDES invested 347 kilograms, was seized in Panama City by Panamanian Judicial Police in July 2005.

PAREDES was captured in Honduras while living there under a false identity in May 2008, and transferred to the United States for prosecution. Prior to his capture, PAREDES had been designated by the United States Department of Justice to the Consolidated Priority Organization Target ("CPOT") list, a list

of the most powerful and dangerous narcotics traffickers in the world.

Mr. BHARARA praised the outstanding investigative efforts of the DEA's New York Field Division, which led the investigation, and thanked the DEA's Offices in Houston, Colorado Springs, Miami, Guatemala City, Panama City and Mexico City, and the DEA's Special Operations Division for their crucial roles in the investigation. Mr. BHARARA also thanked the United States Marshals Service, the Department of Homeland Security's Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the United States Attorney's Offices in Houston, Miami and Colorado Springs, the United States Department of Justice's Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs Section, the United Nations Commission Against Impunity in Guatemala ("CICIG"), and law enforcement authorities in Guatemala and Honduras for their assistance during the investigation and trial.

Mr. BHARARA stated: "Today's guilty verdict brings to an end Jorge Mario Paredes-Cordova's nearly decade-long career in drug trafficking that spanned the Western Hemisphere. This Office will continue its efforts to pursue the world's most prolific and dangerous drug traffickers wherever they may be. We are grateful to our partners in law enforcement here and abroad for their exceptional efforts in bringing this cocaine kingpin to justice."

DEA Special Agent-in-Charge JOHN P. GILBRIDE stated, "This conviction proves that DEA and our law enforcement partners put our resources to the test to obtain the ultimate prosecution for the highest echelon drug traffickers in the world. Drug trafficking organizations have, for their own enrichment, exploited the United States/Mexico border while DEA and our foreign counterparts have targeted these organizations in order to decrease supply as well as decrease demand in the United States. In all aspects from enforcement, treatment and education -- law enforcement is working together to keep our communities drug free."

This case was prosecuted by the Office's International Narcotics Trafficking Unit. ANIRUDH BANSAL, JOCELYN STRAUBER, and NICHOLAS LEWIN were in charge of the prosecution.

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