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**MANHATTAN U.S. ATTORNEY ANNOUNCES EXTRADITION
OF COLOMBIAN PARAMILITARY LEADER TO THE UNITED STATES
ON NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING CHARGES**

PREET BHARARA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, JOHN P. GILBRIDE, the Special Agent-in-Charge of the New York Field Division of the Drug Enforcement Administration ("DEA"), and JAMES T. HAYES, JR., the Special Agent-in-Charge of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Office of Homeland Security Investigations in New York ("ICE HSI"), announced the extradition of EDER PEDRAZA-PENA, a/k/a "Don Ramon", on charges that he conspired to import cocaine into the United States and to engage in maritime narcotics smuggling. PEDRAZA-PENA, 45, a citizen of Colombia and former commander in a right-wing Colombian paramilitary drug organization, arrived in the United States yesterday and will make his initial appearance before U.S. Magistrate Judge FRANK MAAS later today. The case is assigned to U.S. District Judge RICHARD J. HOLWELL.

Manhattan U.S. Attorney PREET BHARARA said: "As we have charged, Pedraza-Pena was a ringleader of one of the most vicious and deadly narco-terrorist groups in South America. He bankrolled his organization, in part, by allegedly smuggling their poison into the United States. Today's extradition demonstrates once again that we will work seamlessly with our law enforcement partners both here and around the world to thwart

those who are exporting their illegal trade and to prosecute them to the full extent of the law."

DEA Special Agent-in-Charge JOHN P. GILBRIDE said: "Eder Pedraza-Pena is charged with smuggling tons of cocaine into the United States and today he will face the consequences of his illegal enterprise. Time and time again, law enforcement investigates and identifies those individuals behind the scenes who are responsible for organizing illegal actions such as drug trafficking. This extradition is a statement for international, local, state and federal law enforcement that we will not tolerate drug trafficking in our communities and will continue to fully identify and investigate those who make millions off the sale of poison."

ICE HSI Special Agent-in-Charge JAMES T. HAYES, JR. said: "This investigation shows ICE's resolve to pursue those who think they can ignore our nation's drug smuggling laws. We will continue to aggressively investigate those involved in illicit drug activity to ensure that they face justice."

According to the Indictment and documents filed in the extradition proceedings:

From 1999 through March 2009, PEDRAZA-PENA served as a Commander in a right-wing paramilitary drug organization and terrorist group, then called the Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia (the "AUC") and now known as *Bandas Criminales Emergentes*, or BACRIMS. For years, the AUC's main political objective has been to defeat the left-wing Colombian terrorist group *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia* (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or "FARC"). The AUC, which is organized in individual blocques that control separate areas of Colombia, financed its terrorist activities through the proceeds of cocaine trafficking in AUC-controlled regions. PEDRAZA-PENA collected taxes from narcotics traffickers who transported cocaine through the bloque he controlled.

PEDRAZA-PENA also trafficked in cocaine, some of which was destined for Central America, Mexico, and ultimately the United States. In January 2009, PEDRAZA-PENA arranged for a shipment of over 2,000 kilograms of cocaine that was later seized by U.S. Coast Guard officers in international waters off the coast of Jamaica. PEDRAZA-PENA was arrested by Colombian authorities on October 11, 2009.

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PEDRAZA-PENA is charged with one count of conspiracy to import cocaine into the United States and one count of conspiracy to possess cocaine with intent to distribute while on board a vessel subject to the jurisdiction of the United States. He faces a maximum sentence of life in prison and a mandatory minimum sentence of 10 years in prison.

Mr. BHARARA praised the outstanding investigative work of the DEA's Cartagena Resident Office; the New York Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Strike Force (which is comprised of agents and officers of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, the New York City Police Department, the U.S. Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation Division, the Department of Homeland Security's Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the New York State Police); and the U.S. Coast Guard. Mr. BHARARA also thanked the Colombian National Police and the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of International Affairs for their ongoing assistance.

The case is being handled by the Office's Terrorism and International Narcotics Unit. Assistant U.S. Attorneys JOCELYN STRAUBER and JASON SMITH are in charge of the prosecution.

The charge and allegations contained in the Indictment are merely accusations and the defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

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