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**LEADER OF COLOMBIAN HEROIN TRAFFICKING ORGANIZATION
EXTRADITED TO THE UNITED STATES**

MICHAEL J. GARCIA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, and JOHN P. GILBRIDE, the Special Agent-in-Charge of the New York Office of the United States Drug Enforcement Administration ("DEA"), announced today the extradition of HUMBEIRO CARVAJAL-MONTOYA, the leader of a Colombian heroin trafficking organization -- whose members include Colombian law enforcement officials and airport and airline personnel -- that smuggled heroin into the United States through the Jose Maria Cordoba International Airport in Medellin, Colombia. CARVAJAL-MONTOYA is expected to be arraigned in Manhattan federal court later today. According to the Indictment filed in Manhattan federal court:

Members of the CARVAJAL-MONTOYA Organization, which operated from at least August 2006 through September 2007, included its leader, CARVAJAL-MONTOYA; his wife and partner DIANA LOPEZ; Colombian National Police officers MANUEL JULIAN LOPEZ-NAIZZIR, a/k/a "El Costeño," a/k/a "El Costeñito," JULIAN DARIO HENAO-VERGARA and HENRY ALBERTO TOBON-CADAVID, who were all assigned to the Airport Police Unit; Medellin Airport security supervisor GERMAN SOTO-VILLA, who worked in the duty free zone; and Avianca employee ELKIN FERNANDO DAZA-RIOS, who worked in the international cargo facility; and courier NATALIE RIOS-CANO.

Couriers for the CARVAJAL-MONTOYA Organization smuggled heroin into the United States through the Jose Maria Cordoba International Airport concealed inside layers of clothing, within the linings of suitcases and handbags, beneath false bottoms of suitcases, inside computers, and inside international cargo. Organization couriers traveled at least once a month from the

Medellin area to New York City, each time carrying between several hundred grams to several kilograms of heroin. Seizures from five different couriers, including co-defendant NATALIE RIOS-CANO, who traveled or were scheduled to travel on Avianca Airlines from Medellin to New York City, are specified in the Indictment.

CARVAJAL-MONTOYA, LOPEZ, LOPEZ-NAIZZIR, DARIO HENAO-VERGARA, TOBON-CADAVID, SOTO-VILLA, DAZA-RIOS, and RIOS-CANO are each charged with conspiracy to import heroin into the United States.

Colombian authorities, pursuant to a request for provisional arrests from the United States, arrested CARVAJAL-MONTOYA, LOPEZ, LOPEZ-NAIZZIR, SOTO-VILLA and DAZA-RIOS in Colombia on November 28, 2007. HENAO-VERGARA, TOBON-CADAVID and RIOS-CANO were arrested earlier. LOPEZ and RIOS-CANO were successfully extradited to the United States on August 19, 2008. Four other defendants are currently in the custody of Colombian authorities pending extradition to the United States.

The case is assigned to United States District Judge LEONARD B. SAND. The initial appearance before Judge SAND is scheduled for October 7, 2008, at 12:30 p.m.

If convicted, CARVAJAL-MONTOYA faces a mandatory minimum sentence of ten years in prison and a maximum sentence of life in prison. However, pursuant to agreement, the United States has provided assurances to Colombia that CARVAJAL-MONTOYA will not be required to serve a life sentence.

The investigation was led by the New York Drug Enforcement Task Force, including Special Agents of the DEA in the New York Field Division and Bogota Country Offices, Detectives of the New York Police Department, and Investigators of the New York State Police. Mr. GARCIA praised the Task Force and its members for their work in this case, and thanked Avianca Airlines for its assistance in uncovering the conspiracy. Mr. GARCIA also thanked the United States Department of Justice Criminal Division's Office of International Affairs for their involvement in the extradition process.

The prosecution is being handled by the Office's International Narcotics Trafficking Unit. Assistant United States Attorney SARAH LAI is in charge of the prosecution.

The charge contained in the Indictment is merely an accusation, and the defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.