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**IMMIGRATION LAWYER CONVICTED OF CONSPIRING TO SUBMIT
FALSE GREEN CARD APPLICATIONS BASED ON SHAM MARRIAGES**

MICHAEL J. GARCIA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York and MARK J. MERSHON, the Assistant Director-in-Charge of the New York Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation ("FBI") announced that IHAB TARTIR, an immigration lawyer based in Brooklyn, New York, was found guilty by a jury this afternoon in Manhattan federal court of conspiring to defraud the United States Department of Homeland Security by helping others obtain permanent resident cards, commonly known as "Green Cards," through sham marriages. The Honorable GERARD E. LYNCH presided over the six-day trial.

According to the evidence at trial, from 2002 to 2004, TARTIR agreed to submit false Green Card applications based on sham marriages to the Department of Homeland Security. From December 2006 to September 2007, TARTIR again agreed to submit false applications to the Department of Homeland Security seeking Green Cards based on sham marriages. TARTIR met repeatedly with individuals who had entered into, or agreed to enter into, sham marriages, and he used his skill and training as an immigration lawyer to advise them how to trick the immigration authorities into believing that the marriages were genuine.

Four other defendants have pleaded guilty in this case. TARTIR is scheduled to be sentenced on January 16, 2009.

Mr. GARCIA praised the work of the FBI and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement in the investigation and prosecution of this case.

Assistant United States Attorneys DAVID B. MASSEY and
NICOLE W. FRIEDLANDER are in charge of the prosecution.

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