



Department of Justice

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ONE TAMPA AND FOUR ORLANDO AREA MEN CHARGED WITH SELLING "CUT" FOR COCAINE AND HEROIN

Orlando - United States Attorney Robert E. O'Neill announces today the arrests of Michael Khalil El Annan (33, of Altamonte Springs), Walid Hafez Khoury (57, of Orlando), Ali Abdul-Amir Joumaa (28, of Orlando), Bassem Ali Hatoum (34, of Tampa), and Haidr Darweesh Shilleh (38, of Orlando), on charges of conspiracy to aid and abet the manufacturing of cocaine and heroin, aiding and abetting the manufacture of cocaine and heroin, and sale of drug paraphernalia. If convicted on all counts, each defendant faces a maximum penalty of life in federal prison.

According to court documents, the defendants ran several "head shops," that allegedly sold adulterants used to "cut" cocaine and heroin. A "cut" is a substance used to dilute the primary drug, such as cocaine or heroin. Undercover agents and confidential informants bought cocaine presses, narcotic adulterants, and other drug paraphernalia from the defendants. The defendants allegedly believed that the goods they sold would be used in the drug trade.

An Indictment is merely a formal charge that a defendant has committed a violation of the federal criminal laws, and every defendant is presumed innocent unless, and until, proven guilty.

This case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. It will be prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Vincent A. Citro and Vincent S. Chiu.