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PRESS RELEASE --
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HEROIN KINGPIN SENTENCED TO 30 YEARS IMPRISONMENT

Colm F. Connolly, United States Attorney for the District of Delaware, announced that Jesus Sarraga-Solana (real name: Cristhian Alberto Diaz), age 27, formerly of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, was sentenced today by Honorable Joseph J. Farnan, Jr., United States District Judge, to thirty years imprisonment on his two convictions, one for conspiracy to distribute more than one kilogram of heroin, and the other for possession with intent to distribute more than 100 grams of heroin. The Defendant has been in custody since his arrest December 16, 2004.

Sarraga-Solana was convicted at trial on October 7, 2005. The evidence showed that Sarraga-Solana was the heroin supplier for Anthony Copeland, a/k/a Repo, who in late 2004 was the supplier of most of the heroin distributed in the Riverside area of Wilmington. Sarraga-Solana ran a Philadelphia based operation that included seven individuals who cut and packaged heroin at two locations in Philadelphia, and Sarraga-Solana's brother (Carlos Diaz), who transported the drugs from Philadelphia to Wilmington, and the money from Wilmington to Philadelphia. The other seven individuals and Carlos Diaz all entered guilty pleas and have been sentenced. The seven "heroin house" individuals got sentences ranging from 20 months to 60 months imprisonment, and Carlos Diaz was sentenced to 15 years imprisonment. Prosecutors estimated the total street value of the heroin involved in the conspiracy as being about \$1,700,000.

Sarraga-Solana's arrest and prosecution grew out of a joint DEA/Wilmington Police Department investigation, which culminated in a wiretap and the seizure of more than 380 grams (about \$150,000 retail value) of heroin in Wilmington and Philadelphia in December 2004. In addition to the arrest and prosecution of Sarraga-Solana's organization, the wiretap resulted in the arrest of seven Wilmington drug dealers, including Copeland, all of whom entered guilty pleas. Five of them are still pending sentencing, and the two who have been sentenced averaged five years imprisonment.

Mr. Connolly stated that this case was the product of an excellent investigative partnership between DEA and the Wilmington Police Department, and resulted in the removal of a major regional heroin organization.

For further information, please contact First Assistant U.S. Attorney Richard G. Andrews, at 302-573-6197.