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**21 MEN INDICTED IN INTERNATIONAL
ORGANIZED CRIME DRUG TRAFFICKING CONSPIRACY**

Greenbelt, Maryland - Allen F. Loucks, United States Attorney for the District of Maryland, announced today that a federal grand jury has indicted the following 21 individuals for crimes arising from a 3 year conspiracy to import and distribute kilogram quantities of cocaine and heroin from Guatemala to areas in the United States including the metropolitan Washington, D.C. area:

Miguel Osvaldo Bolanos-Acevedo, age 31, of Guatemala;
Cesar Molina-Maldonado, age 34, of Guatemala;
Ricardo Augusto Moran-Molina, age 30, of Guatemala;
Juan Jose Arevalo, age 41, of Hyattsville, Maryland;
Victor Garrido, age 50, of Laurel, Maryland;
Candido Rosario, age 45, of Hyattsville, Maryland;
Humberto Rafael Molina-Letona, age 67, of Guatemala;
Luis Alfonso Perez, age 66, of Guatemala;
Leonardo Antonio De Leon, age 24, of Silver Spring, Maryland;
Ramon Read, age 30, of New York, NY;
Jose Manuel Moya, age 29, of the Dominican Republic;
George Edward Smith, age 38, of Hyattsville, Maryland;
Jesse Rosario, age 22, of Hyattsville, Maryland;
Christian Ferrer-Lam, age 30, of Guatemala;
Jorge Cordon, age 48, of Guatemala;
Jesus Reyes-Diaz, age 51, of Mexico;
Veronica Longoria, age 32, of Mexico;
Oldin Obed Rizzo-Galvez, age 45, of Guatemala;

Franklin Alberto Alma, age 28, of Silver Spring, Maryland;
Peter Axarlis, age 24, of Germantown, Maryland; and
Frank Carnucci, age 51, of Annapolis, Maryland.

The superseding indictment was returned by the grand jury on March 31, 2004 and unsealed today upon the recent arrests of fugitives in Guatemala. The indictment alleges that from February 2001 to February 2004 the organization coordinated the distribution of large quantities of cocaine and/or heroin to numerous customers by, among other things, installing and concealing kilogram quantities of drugs in operable car batteries, using couriers to smuggle these batteries across the Mexican border into Texas, and redistributing the kilograms of cocaine and heroin to locations in Maryland such as Waldorf, Silver Sat 14150 Brandywine Road, Brandywine, Maryland; Rosario Imports, located at 4702 44th Avenue, Hyattsville, Maryland and Botanica Gran Poder, located at 1835 University Boulevard, Suite 6, Hyattsville, Maryland, to obtain, store and redistribute incoming shipments of heroin and cocaine.

The indictment also alleges that the defendants used drug proceeds to purchase vehicles for export to Guatemala, to effect money wire transfers from points in Maryland and other locations to individuals in Texas, Mexico and Guatemala, and to smuggle bulk amounts of currency to Texas, Mexico and Guatemala. The indictment includes charges stemming from the seizure of 8 kilograms of heroin and over 24 kilograms of cocaine; and seeks forfeiture of \$5 million in assets, including vehicles, jewelry, and over \$200,000 of cash already seized.

The indictment was unsealed today after four defendants named in the indictment were arrested by law enforcement officials in Guatemala based upon provisional warrants issued as a basis to seek extradition. The United States Attorney's Office, working with the Department of Justice and the State Department, will pursue extradition against these individuals to try them for the indicted offenses in the District of Maryland. Three fugitives remain at large, and no trial date

has been set at this time.

United States Attorney Allen Loucks stated that “This case is yet another example of our commitment to dismantle international drug cartels which poison our communities here at home. The indictment is the result of collective national and international law enforcement efforts to shut down drug trade routes which originate in foreign countries.”

Some defendants have already pleaded guilty to felony drug trafficking offenses. De Leon was sentenced to 10 years in prison on November 8, 2004 and Reyes-Diaz was sentenced to 8 years in prison.

The maximum penalty faced by each defendant is life imprisonment and a \$4 million fine.

An indictment is not a finding of guilt. An individual charged by indictment is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty at some later criminal proceedings.

The criminal charges in this indictment are the result of a three-year long Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF) investigation by the Montgomery County Department of Police, Prince George’s County Police Department, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the United States Drug Enforcement Administration and the United States Attorney’s Office. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys James M. Trusty and Donna C. Sanger.