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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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BALTIMORE MAN SENTENCED TO 262 MONTHS FOR DRUG TRAFFICKING

BALTIMORE, Maryland - United States Attorney for the District of Maryland Allen F. Loucks announces that today U.S. District Court Chief Judge Benson E. Legg sentenced Richard Stanford, age 29, of Baltimore, Maryland to 262 months in prison followed by 5 years of supervised release in connection with his guilty plea to conspiracy to distribute and posses with intent to distribute cocaine.

According to the agreed statement of facts presented to the court, on March 4, 2004, Baltimore County Police officers intercepted telephone calls between one of the Stanford's co-conspirators, Ramon Rodriguez, in which Rodriguez was overheard conversing with an unknown Hispanic male about a meeting to pick up four kilograms of cocaine. Shortly after the calls, law enforcement officers observed Rodriguez driving northbound on I-95 to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania where he met with two unknown Hispanic males. Rodriguez was then observed traveling back into Baltimore County, Maryland where he met with Stanford to deliver the cocaine. Both Stanford and Rodriguez were arrested. A search of the car that had been operated by Rodriguez revealed approximately 4 kilos of cocaine in a hidden compartment in the vehicle. Rodriguez advised

Baltimore County Police officers that at Stanford's request he made regular trips to two specific locations in Philadelphia to deliver money, usually \$100,000, supplied by Stanford and to pick up kilograms of cocaine, usually four kilos at a time. Rodriguez further stated that Stanford paid him \$200 per kilo for the trips and that he had made multiple trips to Philadelphia to deliver Stanford's money and pick up cocaine for Stanford.

Rodriguez had previously pled guilty on October 4, 2004 and was sentenced on January 28, 2005 to 87 months imprisonment. Two other defendants, Muhammed Jacobs and Don Thomas, Jr., have also pled guilty and are awaiting sentencing. Overall, members of the conspiracy were responsible for distributing between 50-150 kilograms of cocaine, with an estimated value of more than \$1 million.

This case was investigated by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and the Baltimore County Police Department. The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Christopher Romano.