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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
July 18, 2006

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**DOUBLE-MURDERER SENTENCED TO 45 YEARS IN FEDERAL PRISON**  
**FOR ROBBERY AND DRUG SLAYINGS**

MICHAEL J. GARCIA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, announced that GABRIEL TORRES, a/k/a "G-Bear," was sentenced today by United States District Judge LORETTA A. PRESKA to forty-five years in prison without parole for the murder of Raymond Serrano on December 2, 1999, in the Bronx, New York, and for the murder of Gamaliel Gonzalez on October 2, 2002, in the Bronx, New York. TORRES pleaded guilty in December 2005 to both crimes, in addition to narcotics and racketeering violations in New York and Pennsylvania; his subsequent attempt to withdraw his guilty pleas was denied by the Court. In imposing sentence, Judge PRESKA stated that as a result of TORRES's crimes, "there are two people dead and untold others whose lives have been ruined."

"The Westchester Avenue Crew terrorized neighborhoods in the Bronx, and this sentence is an appropriate response to the violent acts committed by this defendant as part of that criminal operation," stated Mr. GARCIA.

According to a criminal complaint filed in connection with the murder of Raymond Serrano, TORRES was part of a robbery crew that targeted individuals they believed were drug dealers. On December 2, 1999, TORRES and three others entered Serrano's home posing as police officers. After demanding money, while TORRES's three co-conspirators held Serrano's wife and children at gunpoint, TORRES shot Serrano at close range, killing him. TORRES and his fellow assailants then fled the Serrano residence.

In addition to home invasion robberies, TORRES sold heroin and crack cocaine in the Bronx, New York, and in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, as a member of a gang, known as the Westchester Avenue Crew, based in the St. Mary's Housing Projects on Westchester Avenue in the Bronx, New York. In October 2002, according to the Information filed against him, TORRES, in an

effort to enhance his position with the Westchester Avenue Crew, conspired with others to kill one of the gang's leaders, Gamaliel Gonzalez. According to the Information, TORRES ordered a co-conspirator to murder Gonzalez; the co-conspirator, a juvenile, subsequently shot Gonzalez to death inside an elevator in a Manhattan apartment building.

Both murder cases were investigated by DEA agents and NYPD officers assigned to the DEA Task Force "Redrum," which handles drug-related homicides. No suspects were apprehended at the time of Serrano murder, and TORRES was not charged until 2003 when information developed by the Redrum Task Force implicated him. In addition to admitting his role in the two murders, TORRES admitted to selling crack cocaine and heroin in both New York and in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, and to firing a gun at rivals in Pennsylvania.

Among the other thirteen members of the Westchester Avenue Crew who have been convicted of narcotics and firearms charges, as well as crimes of violence, the following defendants have also been sentenced as follows by Judge PRESKA:

<u>Defendant</u>	<u>Sentence</u>
Kenneth Garner	35 years
Alexis Arzola	30 years
Derick Johnson	24 years
Melvin DeJesus	22 years

Mr. GARCIA praised the investigative efforts of the DEA and the NYPD.

Assistant United States Attorney HARRY A. CHERNOFF was in charge of the prosecution.

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