



*United States Attorney  
Southern District of New York*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: U.S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE  
YUSILL SCRIBNER,  
EDELI RIVERA,  
JESSIE ERWIN  
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE  
(212) 637-2600

**INTERNET GAMBLING COMPANY SPORTINGBET PLC ENTERS  
INTO AGREEMENT WITH MANHATTAN U.S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE  
TO FORFEIT \$33 MILLION**

PREET BHARARA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, announced today that the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York has entered into a non-prosecution agreement with Sportingbet PLC ("Sportingbet"), an Internet gambling company incorporated in England and Wales and publicly traded on the London Stock Exchange. As part of the agreement, Sportingbet agreed to forfeit a total of \$33 million, representing illegal Internet gambling proceeds that the company provided to U.S. customers.

According to a statement made by Sportingbet as part of the agreement:

From 1998 until October 12, 2006, Sportingbet offered Internet gaming to players located in the United States, including real-money sportsbetting as well as wagering on poker and casino games. By the end of this time period, most of Sportingbet's active customers were located in the United States, including in the Southern District of New York. Beginning in 2001, Sportingbet began using payment processing methods designed to misrepresent the nature of its customers' gambling transactions to United States credit card issuers that disallowed the use of their cards for Internet gambling. Sportingbet also took steps to mask payments of winnings to U.S. customers.

As part of the non-prosecution agreement, Sportingbet agreed to continue to cooperate with this Office's ongoing investigation by, among other things, providing the Government with requested documents, and making employees available for interviews with Government investigators.

In the agreement, Sportingbet agreed to forfeit a total of \$33 million, representing proceeds from the Internet gambling services that Sportingbet provided to U.S. customers. Sportingbet also agreed to maintain a permanent restriction on providing Internet gambling services to U.S. customers, in the absence of a change in U.S. law.

Mr. BHARARA said that the decision to enter into the non-prosecution agreement was made after carefully weighing the factors set forth in the Department of Justice Principles of Federal Prosecutions of Business Organizations, including: (1) Sportingbet's cooperation with the Government's ongoing investigation into the illegal online gambling industry; (2) Sportingbet's termination of all real-money Internet gambling services for U.S. customers in October 2006; (3) its agreement to disgorge \$33 million; and (4) the negative effect that charges against Sportingbet would have on the company's innocent employees and legitimate activities.

Mr. BHARARA praised the efforts of the Federal Bureau of Investigation in this investigation, which he noted is ongoing.

Assistant U.S. Attorneys ARLO DEVLIN-BROWN and NICOLE FRIEDLANDER are in charge of the investigation. Assistant U.S. Attorney MICHAEL LOCKARD is in charge of the forfeiture.

10-297

###