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HARRY BURTON PLEADS GUILTY TO THREE MURDERS AND DRUG CONSPIRACY CHARGES - 60 YEAR SENTENCE EXPECTED

Defendant Joins "Growing List of Violent Baltimore Criminals Exiled to Federal Prison"

BALTIMORE, Maryland - Harry Burton, a/k/a Big Harry, a/k/a Lil' Harry, age 28, of Baltimore, pleaded guilty today to three counts of using a gun to commit murder in aid of racketeering and one count of conspiracy to distribute crack cocaine, cocaine and heroin, announced United States Attorney for the District of Maryland Rod J. Rosenstein.

"Harry Burton will not be able to murder any more people on the streets of Baltimore, because he has joined the growing list of violent Baltimore criminals exiled to federal prison," said U.S. Attorney Rod J. Rosenstein.

"ATF and our law enforcement partners are committed to making the streets of Baltimore safer for our citizens and our children," says Acting ATF Special Agent in Charge David L. McCain "and and our efforts clearly demonstrate that we are making a significant impact on crime in our communities."

According to the statement of facts presented with his guilty plea, from 1999 to April 2007, Burton was a member of the Latrobe Organization, a drug and firearms organization, which operated in Latrobe Homes in East Baltimore. He conspired to distribute more than 50 grams of crack cocaine, five kilograms of cocaine and more than a kilogram of heroin. Burton and other members of the Latrobe Organization promoted a climate of fear in Baltimore area neighborhoods through violence and threats of violence.

In order to gain favor with a local drug dealer who supplied the Latrobe Organization and to improve his standing in the drug world, on January 27, 2003, Burton murdered Maurice "Smokey" Ireland and shot another man, on whom the drug dealer had allegedly put out a "hit." The shooting occurred in the 900 block of Ensor Street in East Baltimore after Ireland's companion insulted Burton by cursing the name of the drug dealer. After the incident was recounted to the drug dealer, he arranged for Burton to exchange the gun used in the shooting with a "clean" gun from one of his associates and began supplying drugs to Burton directly.

On May 19, 2003, in the 1400 block of Ponca Street in East Baltimore, Burton murdered Michael "Mike-Mike" Jones, a drug dealer from West Baltimore, after the two argued outside a local club. In retaliation, associates of Jones shot Burton on June 7, 2003, after they saw him at

a local restaurant and followed him. Burton believed that Valencia Jones, a woman he was dating at the time, had set him up for the shooting and ordered her murder. As a result, Burton had Valencia Jones killed on June 20, 2003.

Burton faces a maximum penalty of life in prison for each of the three counts of using a gun to commit murder in aid of racketeering and for one count of conspiracy to distribute crack cocaine, cocaine and heroin. As part of the plea agreement, the government and the defendant have agreed that 60 years in prison is an appropriate sentence in this case. The Attorney General authorized withdrawal of the notice to seek the death penalty against Harry Burton, after which this agreement was reached. U.S. District Judge William D. Quarles, Jr. has scheduled sentencing for September 12, 2008 at 2:00 p.m. Burton remains in federal custody.

United States Attorney Rod J. Rosenstein commended the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and the Baltimore City Police Department for their investigative work performed in this Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF) case. Mr. Rosenstein thanked Assistant U.S. Attorneys Kwame J. Manley and Robert R. Harding, who are prosecuting the case.