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**EAST BALTIMORE DRUG DEALER CONVICTED OF DRUG CONSPIRACY AND
FIREARMS OFFENSES**

BALTIMORE, Maryland - United States Attorney for the District of Maryland Rod J. Rosenstein announces that today Darrell Alston, 42, of Baltimore, Maryland, was convicted following a four-day jury trial, of conspiracy to distribute and possess with the intent to distribute heroin and cocaine base (crack), possession of a firearm in furtherance of a drug trafficking offense and two counts of witness intimidation.

The federal jury trial began on September 6, 2005, before the U.S. District Court Judge J. Frederick Motz. Testimony concluded on Monday, September 12, 2005 and the jury returned the verdicts of guilty today.

According to the facts presented during the trial, from 2003 until 2005, Alston was the leader of a drug organization known as "Jigga", which operated in East Baltimore. Based on the testimony of witnesses during the trial, the organization sold both heroin and cocaine base (crack), in the area bounded by Holbrook, Hoffman, Ensor, Asquith and Lanvale Streets. The witnesses also testified that the organization possessed various firearms to protect the drugs and drug proceeds. The trial testimony included descriptions of the organization employing various workers as lookouts,

stash house workers and sellers. According to documents entered into evidence during the trial and the testimony of witnesses, Alston attempted to bribe and intimidate two witnesses to prevent their participation in the investigation of the organization.

Darrell Alston faces a maximum sentence of life imprisonment and a fine of \$4,000,000 for the conspiracy conviction. Alston faces a maximum sentence of 10 years imprisonment and a fine of \$250,000 for each of the two witness intimidation convictions. In addition, Alston faces a mandatory minimum 5 year period of incarceration consecutive to any period of imprisonment imposed on the other counts and a fine of \$250,000. Judge Motz has scheduled sentencing for November 30, 2005 at 9:30 a.m. Alston is detained pending his sentencing.

On September 7, 2005, Anthony Chandler, 27, of Baltimore, Maryland, a co-defendant of Alston, entered a guilty plea to conspiracy to distribute and possess with the intent to distribute heroin and cocaine base (crack). Judge Motz has scheduled sentencing for Chandler on November 29, 2005 at 9:00 a.m.

United States Attorney Rosenstein thanked the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and the Baltimore City Police Department for their investigation and expressed his appreciation to the Baltimore City State's Attorney's Office, which originally handled the case before it was referred for federal prosecution. Mr. Rosenstein praised Assistant U.S. Attorneys Kwame J. Manley and Angela White, who prosecuted the case.