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HARFORD COUNTY COCAINE DEALER SENTENCED TO 10 YEARS IN PRISON

*Made Numerous Trips to Philadelphia to Obtain Cocaine Which He Redistributed in Harford,
Cecil and Baltimore Counties*

Baltimore, Maryland – U.S. District Judge George L. Russell III sentenced Eric Maurice Clanton, age 35, of Edgewood, Maryland today to 10 years in prison followed by five years of supervised release for conspiracy to distribute and possess with intent to distribute five kilograms or more of cocaine.

The sentence was announced by United States Attorney for the District of Maryland Rod J. Rosenstein; Acting Assistant Special Agent in Charge Shawn Ellerman of the Drug Enforcement Administration, Baltimore District Office; Harford County Sheriff Jeffrey R. Gahler; Chief Henry Trabert of the Aberdeen Police Department; Bel Air Police Interim Chief Jack Meckley; Chief Teresa Walter of the Havre de Grace Police Department; and Harford County State's Attorney Joseph I. Cassilly.

According to his plea agreement, as part of an investigation into cocaine trafficking, the Harford County Narcotics Task Force intercepted cellular telephone calls and text messages from members of a drug trafficking organization operating in Harford County. Based on the intercepted calls and texts, Eric Clanton was identified as a member of the organization.

For example on August 26, 2014, investigators intercepted a series of text messages between Clanton and a co-conspirator in which they discussed Clanton and a courier traveling to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, to obtain cocaine. Clanton also discussed which source of supply to use. On September 27, 2014, Clanton and a courier traveled to Philadelphia to meet with a cocaine source of supply. An intercepted conversation between the source and Clanton revealed that Clanton had paid the source \$63,410, but owed the source another \$190. Based on Clanton's conversation with the source, law enforcement believes Clanton purchased approximately two kilograms of cocaine, since the cost of a kilogram of cocaine at that time was \$30,000 to \$35,000.

On October 6, 2014, Clanton and a courier again traveled to Philadelphia to meet the same source of supply. The vehicle operated by Clanton was stopped on its return to Maryland. A search of the vehicle recovered approximately 1.25 kilograms of cocaine.

Clanton admits that he made numerous trips to Philadelphia to obtain cocaine, which was then transported to Harford, Cecil and Baltimore Counties, where Clanton and other members of

the conspiracy redistributed the drugs. During his participation in the conspiracy, Clanton was responsible for the distribution of at least five kilograms of cocaine.

United States Attorney Rod J. Rosenstein praised HSI Baltimore and Harford County Narcotics Task Force, comprised of members of the Harford County Sheriff's Office, Maryland State Police, Aberdeen Police Department, Bel Air Police Department, Havre de Grace Police Department and the Harford County States Attorney's Office. Mr. Rosenstein thanked Assistant U.S. Attorney Christopher J. Romano, who prosecuted this Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force case.