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ATTORNEY GENERAL ALBERTO R. GONZALES OUTLINES KEY PRIORITIES  
AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE IN ANNUAL  
REMARKS



US Attorney General  
Alberto Gonzales

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales today outlined the top priorities for the Department of Justice for the upcoming year and highlighted the major accomplishments of the Department during his first year as Attorney General.

The Attorney General's remarks to Justice Department employees focused on six specific areas where the Department will direct the greatest number of resources to build on its recent successes. He cited terrorism, violent crime, drug trafficking, cybercrime, government and corporate corruption, and civil rights as key priorities and areas where the Department has made great strides since he took office in February 2005.

"My goal is simple: Secure the opportunities of the American dream for all Americans and for future generations," Attorney General Gonzales said to Justice Department employees. "Keeping this charge is no small task and it will require no small effort. And I am well aware that I can't do it alone. I will need your help. So, today, I'm laying out a set of priorities and initiatives to guide our work for the coming year. This plan will allow us to continue the progress you've already achieved-most notably, four years without another terrorist attack here at home and a violent crime rate that is at its lowest level in more than three decades."

The Attorney General also announced new policy initiatives in some of the Department's key priority areas, including Project Safe Childhood, to prevent the exploitation of children over the Internet; an anti-gang initiative that will help combat some of the worst, most violent gangs in the country; and Operation Home Sweet Home, a concentrated initiative to expose and eliminate housing discrimination in America.

Other priorities discussed by the Attorney General today include:

## Terrorism

Combatting terrorism remains the Department's highest priority. In his remarks today, the Attorney General highlighted the hard work of Department leaders to make possible the reauthorization of the USA PATRIOT Act and said that the Department will continue to focus on its permanent renewal in Congress.

He also highlighted the Department's success in prosecuting terrorists in his first year on the job. In 2005, the Department obtained dozens of convictions in counterterrorism cases, including those of Zacarias Moussaoui, who pleaded guilty to six charges related to his participation in a plot to fly planes into buildings; Eric Robert Rudolph, who pleaded guilty to charges related to several deadly bombings, including the bombing at the 1996 Olympics; and Ali Al Timimi, who was convicted on all charges after he encouraged other individuals to go to Pakistan to receive military training from a foreign terrorist group in order to fight U.S. troops in Afghanistan.

## Violent Crime

Keeping our communities safe from violent crime remains a top priority. During his remarks, the Attorney General discussed the continued prosecution of violent crime through Violent Crime Impact Teams (VCIT's); the Safe Streets task forces; and Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN), under which the number of federal firearms prosecutions has increased 73 percent in the past five years. This year, the Department will devote \$10 million in grant funds to support PSN's gun crime reduction programs.

The Attorney General announced that another \$30 million in grants will be devoted to expanding PSN to include new and enhanced anti-gang efforts in 2006. In his remarks, the Attorney General also unveiled plans for a new six-city anti-gang program that will devote extensive resources to defeating some of the most violent and pervasive gangs in the country. This new program will focus on prevention, targeted enforcement, and reentry of prisoners to society.

## Cybercrime

In discussing the Department's renewed focus on cybercrime, the Attorney General revealed plans for the Project Safe Childhood Initiative, which will focus on integrating federal, state, and local efforts to investigate and prosecute child exploitation cases. The initiative also calls for increased federal involvement in child pornography cases, additional training for law enforcement, and community awareness programs.

In 2005, the Criminal Division's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section (CEOS) netted a 25 percent increase in indictments over 2004 and an 80 percent increase in convictions under the Child Sex Tourism Initiative. CEOS also has shown a 104 percent increase in child prostitution convictions in 2005.

## Drug Trafficking

To help curb the flow of illicit drugs, the Attorney General pledged that the Department of Justice will remain dedicated to dismantling drug trafficking organizations and stopping the spread of illegal drugs. He cited as successes of his first year the arrests of

members of three major drug cartels. These include the Cali Cartel, which was the world's chief supplier of cocaine to the U.S. in the 1990's, earning an estimated \$8 billion in profits; Haji Bashir Noorzai, an Afghan drug kingpin who was charged with conspiring to import more than \$50 million worth of heroin; and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, a Colombian terrorist group.

#### Civil Rights

In 2005, the Civil Rights Division secured more convictions against human trafficking defendants, increased the number of trafficking lawsuits filed by over 30 percent, and doubled the number of trafficking defendants charged from the previous year. In his remarks today, the Attorney General promised to build on these successes while pushing for reauthorization of the Voting Rights Act and renewing the Department's commitment to the principle of fair housing.

The Attorney General announced the creation of Operation Home Sweet Home, which will focus on improved targeting, increased testing, aggressive public awareness, and partnership with fair-housing organizations across the country. The initiative will include concentrated housing discrimination testing in areas recovering from the effects of Hurricane Katrina, and bring to an all-time high the number of fair housing test investigations nationwide.

#### Public and Corporate Corruption

The Attorney General stated that integrity in government and business is essential for a strong America, and taxpayers and investors deserve nothing less. He highlighted the Department's robust efforts to prosecute business and government officials guilty of corruption and called on Justice Department employees to continue efforts needed to preserve the integrity of our public institutions and corporations.

In the last year, the Department made great strides in this area, including the prosecution of former Qwest CEO Joseph Nacchio, who was indicted on insider trading charges; the guilty plea of former lobbyist Jack Abramoff, who was charged with conspiracy, aiding and abetting honest services mail fraud, and tax evasion; and the guilty pleas of 40 defendants in connection with Operation Lively Green, a widespread bribery and extortion conspiracy that was in place from January 2003 through March 2004.

The Attorney General reiterated that this list of priorities is not exclusive. He told Department employees they each have other responsibilities that are no less important to the American dream.

"These priorities are not new," Attorney General Gonzales said. "They are fundamental to the American dream. Nor is this list comprehensive. But we will work in these areas - with a targeted agenda focused on producing results-because they are vital to the health of that dream in the 21st century."

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