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NEWS RELEASE

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The Executive Office for Immigration Review Swears in Nine Immigration Judges Judge Corps Reaches 270 Serving in 59 Immigration Courts

FALLS CHURCH, Va. – Chief Immigration Judge Brian M. O’Leary invested nine immigration judges during a ceremony held at the Executive Office for Immigration Review’s (EOIR) headquarters on Dec. 17, 2010.

Attorney General Eric Holder appointed these nine immigration judges. Guadalupe R. Gonzalez, Amiena Khan, Steven A. Morley, David Neumeister, Lee A. O’Connor, Virginia Perez-Guzman, Aviva L. Poczter and Rachel A. Ruane entered on duty on Dec. 5, 2010, and Andrea H. Sloan entered on duty on Oct. 24, 2010.

“We have increased our immigration judge corps by more than 15 percent since we began our robust immigration judge hiring initiative,” said O’Leary. “The increase of the number of immigration judges on the bench will help mitigate EOIR’s pending caseload.”

The new immigration judges will preside in the immigration courts in Chicago, Ill.; El Paso, Texas; Los Angeles, Calif.; Philadelphia, Pa.; Newark, N.J.; and Portland, Ore. Biographical information follows.

Guadalupe R. Gonzalez, Immigration Judge, El Paso Immigration Court

Attorney General Eric Holder appointed Judge Gonzalez in December 2010. Judge Gonzalez received a bachelor of arts degree in 1974 from University of Texas, El Paso and a juris doctorate in 1978 from University of Michigan Law School. From 2003 to December 2010, she served as chief counsel, Department of Homeland Security, Immigration and Customs Enforcement. During that time, she also continued to serve as a special assistant U.S. attorney for the U.S. Attorney’s Office, Western District of Texas, a position she held from 1992 until

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December 2010. From 1985 to 2003, she served as district counsel for the former Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), Office of the General Counsel in El Paso. From July 1981 to 1985, Judge Gonzalez was a trial attorney for INS. From January 1981 to July 1981, she was an associate attorney with Martinez and Robins, P.C., in El Paso. From 1980 to January 1981, Judge Gonzalez was an assistant city attorney with the El Paso City Attorney's Office. From 1978 to 1979, she was an associate attorney with the Ford Motor Company, Office of the General Counsel, Dearborn, Mich. Judge Gonzalez is a member of the State Bars of Michigan and Texas.

Amiena Khan, Immigration Judge, Newark Immigration Court

Attorney General Eric Holder appointed Judge Khan in December 2010. Judge Khan received a bachelor of arts degree in 1983 from New York University Washington Square College of Arts and Science and a juris doctorate in 1987 from the New York Law School. From 1992 to December 2010, she was in private practice in New York, specializing in immigration law. From 1987 to 1992, she was in private practice in New York, practicing general litigation. Judge Khan is a member of the New York State Bar.

Steven A. Morley, Immigration Judge, Philadelphia Immigration Court

Attorney General Eric Holder appointed Judge Morley in December 2010. Judge Morley received a bachelor of arts degree in 1973 from University of Wisconsin, Madison and a juris doctorate in 1976 from the University of Wisconsin Law School. From 2003 to December 2010, he was a partner with Morley Surin & Griffin, P.C. From 1984 to 2003, Judge Morley was in private practice. From 1976 to 1984, he was a public defender for the Defender Association of Philadelphia. He has taught immigration law courses at Drexel University, Villanova University School of Law and Rutgers School of Law, Camden since 2007. Judge Morley is a member of the Pennsylvania Bar.

David Neumeister, Immigration Judge, Los Angeles Immigration Court

Attorney General Eric Holder appointed Judge Neumeister in December 2010. Judge Neumeister received a bachelor of arts degree in 1973 and a master of arts degree in English in 1978, both from California State University, Dominguez Hills and a juris doctorate in 1980 from Southwestern University School of Law. From 1980 to December 2010, he was in private practice in Bakersfield, Calif., exclusively practicing immigration law since 1982. Judge Neumeister is a member of the State Bar of California.

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Lee A. O'Connor, Immigration Judge, Los Angeles Immigration Court

Attorney General Eric Holder appointed Judge O'Connor in December 2010. Judge O'Connor received a bachelor of arts degree in 1981 from the University of California, Berkeley, and a juris doctorate in 1984 from Loyola Law School, Los Angeles. From 1999 to December 2010, he was the directing attorney of the Immigrants' and Language Rights Center at Indiana Legal Services Inc. From 1994 to 1999, he was senior attorney for the Legal Aid Society of San Diego, Inc. During that time, Judge O'Connor was a judge pro tem for the San Diego Municipal Court. From 1998 to 1999, he served as an adjunct professor of immigration law in the paralegal program at Southwestern Community College, Chula Vista, Calif. From 1988 to 1994, he was a staff attorney for the Neighborhood Legal Services of Los Angeles County, Inc. During that time, from 1993 to 1994, Judge O'Connor was a judge pro tem for the Los Angeles Municipal Court. From 1985 to 1988, he was staff attorney for the Center for Human Rights and Constitutional Law in Los Angeles. From 1984 to 1985, Judge O'Connor was an associate with Overland, Berke, Wesley, Gits, Randolph & Levanas in Los Angeles. Judge O'Connor is a member of the State Bar of California and the Indiana State Bar.

Virginia Perez-Guzman, Immigration Judge, Chicago Immigration Court

Attorney General Eric Holder appointed Judge Perez-Guzman in December 2010. Judge Perez-Guzman received a bachelor of arts degree in 1993 from Florida International University and a juris doctorate in 1997 from University of Miami School of Law. From 2009 to December 2010, she was in private practice in Miami. From 2002 to 2009, she worked for the Church World Service as director of the Miami Office, Immigration and Refugee Program. From 2000 to 2002, Judge Perez-Guzman worked as a program administrator for the Department of Justice, Office of Violence Against Women. From 1997 to 2000, she was director and founder of Lucha: A Women's Legal Program at the Florida Immigrant Advocacy Center. Judge Perez-Guzman is a member of the Florida Bar.

Aviva L. Poczter, Immigration Judge, New York Immigration Court

Attorney General Eric Holder appointed Judge Poczter in December 2010. Judge Poczter received a bachelor of arts degree in 1996 from McGill University, Montreal, Quebec, Canada and a juris doctorate degree in 1999 from American University, Washington College of Law. From 2002 to December 2010, she worked for the Department of Justice (DOJ), Office of Immigration Litigation, as a trial attorney from 2002 to 2005, and as a senior litigation counsel from 2005 to December 2010. From 2000 to 2002, she served as an attorney advisor for the DOJ, Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR), Board of Immigration Appeals. From 1999 to 2000, she was a judicial law clerk for EOIR's Boston Immigration Court. Judge Poczter is a member of the State Bar of Massachusetts and the New York State Bar.

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Rachel A. Ruane, Immigration Judge, Los Angeles Immigration Court

Attorney General Eric Holder appointed Judge Ruane in December 2010. Judge Ruane received a bachelor of arts degree in 1997 from Wesleyan University and a juris doctorate in 2001 from Emory University School of Law. From October 2003 to December 2010, she served as deputy chief counsel for the Department of Homeland Security, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Office of the Chief Counsel in Los Angeles, Calif. From 2002 to 2003, she was an attorney advisor for the Department of Justice, Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) in Los Angeles, Calif. From 2001 to 2002, she worked as a judicial law clerk for EOIR in Boston. Judge Ruane is a member of the State Bar of Massachusetts.

Andrea H. Sloan, Immigration Judge, Portland Immigration Court

Attorney General Eric Holder appointed Judge Sloan in October 2010. Judge Sloan received a bachelor of science degree in 1982 and a juris doctorate in 1986, both from Santa Clara University, Santa Clara, Calif. From 1998 to October 2010, she worked for the Office of Administrative Hearings, Salem, Ore., in various capacities, including administrative law judge, interim chief administrative law judge and executive/deputy chief administrative law judge. From 1987 to 1991, Judge Sloan served as deputy district attorney, Humboldt County District Attorney's Office, Eureka, Calif. Judge Sloan is a member of the Oregon State Bar and the State Bar of California.

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The Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) is an agency within the Department of Justice. Under delegated authority from the Attorney General, immigration judges and the Board of Immigration Appeals interpret and adjudicate immigration cases according to United States immigration laws. EOIR's immigration judges conduct administrative court proceedings in immigration courts located throughout the nation. They determine whether foreign-born individuals — whom the Department of Homeland Security charges with violating immigration law — should be ordered removed from the United States or should be granted relief from removal and be permitted to remain in this country. The Board of Immigration Appeals primarily reviews appeals of decisions by immigration judges. EOIR's Office of the Chief Administrative Hearing Officer adjudicates immigration-related employment cases. EOIR is committed to ensuring fairness in all of the cases it adjudicates.