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PRESS RELEASE

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Australian Man Pleads Guilty to Accepting Payment as Reward For Steering \$15 Million in U.S.-Funded Contracts in Afghanistan - Defendant Accepted \$10,000 and Sought \$190,000-

WASHINGTON - A former senior construction manager who worked as an agent for an intergovernmental organization pleaded guilty today to seeking \$190,000 in payments as a reward for steering U.S.-funded contracts in Afghanistan, announced U.S. Attorney Ronald C. Machen Jr.; Assistant Attorney General Lanny A. Breuer of the Criminal Division; U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Inspector General Donald A. Gambatesa; Acting Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) Steven J Trent; and James W. McJunkin, Assistant Director in Charge of the FBI's Washington Field Office.

Neil P. Campbell, 61, of Queensland, Australia, pleaded guilty today before Judge Rosemary M. Collyer in U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia to one count of accepting an illegal payment as an agent of an organization receiving federal funds. Campbell was originally charged on Aug. 19, 2010. He was arrested in New Delhi, India, in October 2010, and extradited to the United States in February 2011. Campbell's sentencing is scheduled for Dec. 14, 2011.

According to court records, starting in January 2009, Campbell worked in Afghanistan as a contractor and acted as an agent for the International Organization on Migration (IOM). The IOM has received more than \$260 million from USAID since 2002 to construct hospitals, schools and other facilities.

In his plea, Campbell admitted that in July 2010, while in Afghanistan, he solicited a one-time cash payment of \$190,000 from a subcontractor in Afghanistan as a reward for funneling more than \$15 million in reconstruction projects to that subcontractor to build a hospital and a provincial teaching college. In August 2010, Campbell met an undercover USAID investigator posing as the subcontractor's representative and accepted a \$10,000 cash payment. Campbell counted the money and requested that the remaining funds come to him in one payment. In October 2010, Campbell traveled to New Delhi, India, where he believed he would be receiving

the remaining \$180,000. He was arrested at the New Delhi International Airport by agents of the Indian Central Bureau of Investigation.

“This conviction of an Australian citizen who was extradited from India for corruptly steering the use of U.S. federal dollars in Afghanistan shows the seriousness of our commitment to protecting the American taxpayer,” said U.S. Attorney Machen. “We will continue to deploy investigative resources around the world to ensure that criminals who exploit our generosity are held accountable in an American courtroom.”

“Mr. Campbell steered millions of dollars in taxpayer funds to a subcontractor in Afghanistan and sought illegal riches in return,” said Assistant Attorney General Breuer. “In the name of U.S. reconstruction efforts, he decided to try and cash in. The Justice Department will not tolerate this kind of flagrant corruption, and will continue to hold criminals like Mr. Campbell to account.”

“We will continue in our partnership with other law enforcement agencies to bring the full force of the government against those who seek private gain in the midst of such hard economic times,” said Inspector General Gambatesa. “There is zero tolerance for such abuse of federal funds.”

“Crimes like this divert money from legitimate uses and undermine the U.S. reconstruction effort,” said Acting SIGAR Trent. “SIGAR agents are proud to have participated in this case, which shows that those who defraud the United States in Afghanistan will be found and brought to justice.”

“In this case an overseas contractor thought that fraudulent activity would go unnoticed, permitting an illegal profit from the American people,” said FBI Assistant Director McJunkin. “Today’s plea is a reminder that taking fraudulent payments and misrepresenting U.S. interests has its consequences.”

Campbell faces a maximum penalty of 10 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine. Campbell also agreed in his plea to forfeiture of \$10,000, which represents the one illegal payment he received.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Matthew C. Solomon of the District of Columbia and Trial Attorney Ryan S. Faulconer of the Criminal Division’s Fraud Section. Substantial assistance was provided by former Assistant U.S. Attorney Vasu B. Muthyala, the Department of Justice Criminal Division’s Office of International Affairs, the FBI Legal Attaché and the Judicial Attaché Office in Kabul. The case is being investigated by the USAID Office of Inspector General, the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, the FBI’s Washington Field Office, and members of the International Contract Corruption Task Force (ICCTF).

The ICCTF is a joint law enforcement agency task force that seeks to detect, investigate, and dismantle corruption and contract fraud resulting from U.S. Overseas Contingency Operations worldwide, including in Kuwait, Afghanistan and Iraq.

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