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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Downtown Alliance Applauds Justice Department Decision to Keep Terror Trials Out of Lower Manhattan**

**New York, NY (April 4, 2011)** — Alliance for Downtown New York Chairman Robert R. Douglass and President Elizabeth H. Berger issued the following statement today after U.S. Justice Department officials announced that the trial of Khalid Sheikh Mohammed and four other men accused of planning the September 11, 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center will be held in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

The Alliance for Downtown New York applauds the U.S. Justice Department's decision to try Khalid Sheikh Mohammed and other 9/11 terror suspects in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

"The Federal Courthouse in Lower Manhattan was never a wise first choice as a venue for the trials," said Robert R. Douglass, Chairman of the Downtown Alliance. "It is situated near some of the most densely populated business addresses and residential neighborhoods in America, and at the heart of a regional transportation network through which hundreds of thousands of people pass each day."

Within hours on the morning of Sept. 11, 2001, Lower Manhattan lost 2,749 lives, 60,000 jobs and 13 million square feet of office space. The community has spent the last nine years building back—with remarkable success. Its residential population has more than doubled, to 56,000, and Lower Manhattan is America's fourth-largest central business district—with 306,000 workers and more than 600 retailers.

"Lower Manhattan is back, but the trials would've slowed the momentum of our recovery," said Elizabeth H. Berger, President of the Downtown Alliance. "I commend the Obama administration and the U.S. Department of Justice for identifying a more suitable site for the trials, and I thank our local elected officials and business and community leaders for uniting in opposition to trials in Lower Manhattan."

*The mission of the Alliance for Downtown New York is to be the principal organization that provides Lower Manhattan's historic financial district with a premier physical and economic environment, advocates for businesses and property owners and promotes the area as a world-class destination for companies, workers, residents and visitors. The Downtown Alliance manages the Downtown-Lower Manhattan Business Improvement District (BID), serving an area roughly from City Hall to the Battery, from the East River to West Street.*

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