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Press Release

In Memoriam: Judge Raymond L. Acosta (1925-2014)

San Juan, PR, December 23, 2014: In the early morning hours of today, December 23, 2014, Judge Raymond L. Acosta, a member of the Bench of the United States District Court for the District of Puerto Rico from 1982 to 2010, died peacefully in his home in Chapin, South Carolina, after a long and valiant battle with cancer. He was 89 years old.

Judge Acosta had a long and illustrious career in the Government and private sectors. He served in the United States Navy from 1943 to 1946, during World War II, and participated in the D-Day Invasion of Normandy (Utah Beach) on June 6, 1944. He entered the private practice of law in 1953 in the New Jersey Bar. A year later, he served as a Special Agent of the Federal Bureau of Investigations and in 1958 became an Assistant United States Attorney in the District of Puerto Rico. He became a private practitioner in 1961, specializing in banking and trust litigation, holding several board positions at Banco Banco Crédito y Ahorro Ponceño, Banco Popular de Puerto Rico, the Puerto Rico Bankers Association, and the United Fund of Puerto Rico.

In 1962, Judge Acosta was appointed by President Lyndon B. Johnson as an alternate delegate to the U.S. Puerto Rico Commission on the Status of Puerto Rico (STACOM); he also served as a member of the Governor's Special Committee to study the structure and organization of the Puerto Rico Police Department.

In 1980 he was appointed by President Jimmy Carter as the United States Attorney for the District of Puerto Rico, serving until September 1982, when he was appointed by President

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Ronald Reagan as a United States District Judge. He assumed Senior status in 1994 and retired in 2010.

For the younger generation, Judge Acosta will be best remembered for having presided over the litigation of the DuPont Plaza Hotel arson during which 98 persons were killed and 140 injured on New Year's Eve 1986. Judge Acosta's masterful and innovative handling of the complex mass disaster litigation that ensued is a benchmark in the annals of complex mass tort litigation. His able management led to the commencement of trial only 27 months after the fire, and approval of a \$220 million settlement of the lawsuit which involved 2,400 plaintiffs and 250 defendants, after three trial phases over the course of 19 months.

Most recently, the 2013 Federal Bar Association's (FBA) Annual Meeting featured the video "The Modern Day Courtroom" narrated by Judge Acosta as guidance for future generations of attorneys. In the video, Judge Acosta shared his insight concerning the complex logistics involved in the DuPont Plaza litigation. The video's release at the FBA's Annual Meeting was most fitting, considering that Judge Acosta was one of the founders of the then-called Antilles Chapter of the Federal Bar Association, and served as its first president in 1967. In fact, the Puerto Rico Chapter of the Federal Bar Association was renamed "The Honorable Raymond L. Acosta Puerto Rico Chapter of the Federal Bar Association" in 2008, at which time he was elevated to Life Fellow of the Foundation of the Federal Bar Association.

On a more personal note, Judge Acosta, will be remembered as an avid tennis player. Significantly, endurance, one of the main attributes of a successful tennis player, is a quality which "Ray" mastered in both the sports and legal "courts." A testament to the legacy of Judge Acosta, family man, attorney, soldier, civil servant, judge, always a gentleman in the true sense, is evocative of the words of poet James Russell Lowell in that, "Endurance is the crowning quality, and patience all the passion of great hearts."

In a recent communication to friends, Judge Acosta's character of endurance prevailed. He said, "I feel very fortunate to have lived a full life and to have shared it with so many wonderful people along the way. I wish all you fellow travelers a good and rewarding journey."

Rest in peace, Raymond L. Acosta, a gentle soul and a gentle man.

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