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Statements by Head of the Civil Rights Division Vanita Gupta and U.S. Attorney Preet Bharara of the Southern District of New York on the Filing of the Proposed Settlement Agreement Regarding Rikers Island

Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General Vanita Gupta, Head of the Civil Rights Division, issued the following statement today in connection with the filing of the proposed settlement agreement among the parties in *Nunez v. City of New York*:

“The unprecedented reforms announced today further the Civil Rights Division’s goals of protecting youth from unconstitutional conditions of confinement, whether in the juvenile or criminal justice system. This proposed consent judgment is unprecedented in the detail and comprehensiveness of its use of force remedies. Those remedies are highly appropriate, given the breadth of Rikers Island’s operations and the culture of excessive use of force that we found there. In addition, the prohibitions restricting the use of isolation and reforming the disciplinary system for inmates under the age of 19 provide essential protections for the complicated, and often underserved, population of youth charged in the adult criminal justice system.”

U.S. Attorney Preet Bharara of the Southern District of New York issued the following statement today:

“Today marks another important step toward meaningful and lasting reform at Rikers Island. The parties have executed, and we have submitted for the court’s approval, a 63-page agreement establishing a detailed and comprehensive framework of practices, systems and policies designed to reduce violence in the jails and to keep inmates and correction officers safe. This agreement reflects the commitment of all involved to dismantle the culture of violence that has for too long denied those at Rikers Island the protections of the Constitution. We look forward to the court’s approval of this landmark agreement, and through its vigilant enforcement, ensuring that the city lives up to its promises.”
