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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

RE: COCA-COLA – NYSE KO

**JEWISH EGYPTIAN FAMILY CHARGES IN COURT
THAT COCA-COLA IS “OCCUPIER OF STOLEN PROPERTY”**

After 12 years of preliminary court battles in which a federal court of appeals twice rejected technical jurisdictional contentions made by Coca-Cola, the lawyers for the Bigio family have finally been able to request a district court in New York to declare in a summary judgment that Coca-Cola must pay damages to the Bigios for occupying and exploiting property in a Cairo suburb that had been confiscated from the Bigios by the anti-Jewish regime of Gamel Abdel Nasser.

Between the 1940's and the 1960's, Coca-Cola had leased property in Heliopolis, a suburb of Cairo, from the Bigios and had contracted with them for the manufacture of Coca-Cola trays and bottle-caps. Coca-Cola knew that the Bigios were Jewish, and it stood by as the family was deprived of its property in religiously bigoted seizures by the Egyptian government between 1962 and 1965. When the property previously owned by the Bigios was “privatized” in 1994 and put up for sale by the Egyptian government, Raphael Bigio reminded Coca-Cola's General Counsel in a letter and by telephone that the company had leased the property from the Bigios before the Nasser regime confiscated it. Although Coca-Cola agreed to meet with the Bigios in May 1994 to discuss their claim, it concluded, before the scheduled meeting, a “joint venture” that is now using the Bigio property under the name “Coca-Cola Bottling Company of Egypt.”

In their motion, filed September 11, 2009, the Bigios called Coca-Cola's conduct “venal” and analogized it to a hypothetical case of a person who witnesses a murder and watches as the murderer strips the corpse of distinctive jewelry. A short while later, when the witness learns the murderer is selling the jewelry pillaged from the corpse, the witness, acting through an agent, purchases the distinctive jewelry.



The Bigios stated in an Introduction to their Motion (attached to this Release) that just like the witness in the hypothetical knew the jewelry had been stolen, so too did Coca-Cola know before it concluded the 1994 transaction that it would become the “occupier of stolen property.” The Motion claims that the laws governing aiding-and-abetting and receipt of stolen property make Coca-Cola responsible for trespass on the Bigios’ Heliopolis property by other members of the joint venture located in Egypt.

The Bigios are represented by Nathan Lewin and Alyza D. Lewin of Lewin & Lewin LLP of Washington, D.C., and by Sherrie R. Savett, Arthur M. Stock, Douglas M. Risen, and Shoshana M. Savett of Berger & Montague, P.C., of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Mr. Lewin said: “The District Court will finally have an opportunity to consider the equity and justice of the Bigios’ claim against an American company that decided to put profit ahead of conscience and to utilize property that it knew was stolen to facilitate its business in Egypt. We trust that an American court – the forum that Coca-Cola has feverishly been trying to avoid with its rejected arguments that the Bigios can sue only in the Egyptian courts – will see the fundamental justice of their claim and will, at last, accord justice to the Bigios.”

Refael Bigio added, “This is truly a case of David v. Goliath. Up until now Coca Cola has done its utmost to deny us our day in court. We are gratified to have the opportunity at long last to present the substantial merits of our case to the court and to demonstrate that Coca Cola has been occupying my family’s property and benefitting from the business and factories taken from my family, while all the time knowing that the property, business and factories were stolen from my family in violation of our human rights and international law.”

Coca Cola has until October 11 to respond to the Bigios’ motion. The Bigios’ reply is due October 30 and oral argument on the motion will be heard by the Court on November 10, 2009.

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