UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF FLORIDA

Case No. 08-CR-60099-ZLOCH

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

vs.

BRADLEY BIRKENFELD,

Defendant.
_____/

PLEA AGREEMENT

The United States of America and **BRADLEY BIRKENFELD** (hereinafter referred to as the "defendant") enter into the following agreement:

1. The defendant agrees to plead guilty to the one count Indictment which charges a conspiracy to defraud the United States, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 371. The defendant understands the maximum statutory sentence under Title 18, United States Code, Section 371 is a period of up to five years in prison, to be followed by a maximum term of up to two years supervised release and a fine of up to $250,000. The defendant further understands and acknowledges that, in addition to any sentence imposed, he will pay a Special Assessment in the amount of $100.00. The defendant agrees that any special assessment imposed shall be paid at the time of sentencing.

2. The United States agrees that after the defendant has entered a plea of guilty to the offense identified in paragraph 1, that the defendant will not be charged with any non-violent criminal offense in violation of Federal law which was committed by the defendant prior to the execution of this agreement and about which the United States Attorney's Office for the Southern

District of Florida or the Tax Division of the Department of Justice was aware of prior to the execution of this agreement.

3. The defendant is aware that the sentence will be imposed by the court after considering the Federal Sentencing Guidelines and Policy Statements (hereinafter "Sentencing Guidelines"). The defendant acknowledges and understands that the court will compute an advisory sentence under the Sentencing Guidelines and that the applicable guidelines will be determined by the court relying in part on the results of a Pre-Sentence Investigation by the court's probation office, which investigation will commence after the guilty plea has been entered. The defendant is also aware that, under certain circumstances, the court may depart from the advisory sentencing guideline range that it has computed, and may raise or lower that advisory sentence under the Sentencing Guidelines. The defendant is further aware and understands that the court is required to consider the advisory guideline range determined under the Sentencing Guidelines, but is not bound to impose that sentence; the court is permitted to tailor the ultimate sentence in light of other statutory concerns, and such sentence may be either more severe or less severe than the Sentencing Guidelines' advisory sentence. Knowing these facts, the defendant understands and acknowledges that the court has the authority to impose any sentence within and up to the statutory maximum authorized by law for the offense identified in paragraph 1 and that the defendant may not withdraw the plea solely as a result of the sentence imposed.

4. Although not binding on the probation office or the court, the United States and the defendant agree that, except as otherwise expressly contemplated in this Plea Agreement, they will jointly recommend that the court neither depart upward nor depart downward under the Sentencing Guidelines when determining the advisory sentencing guideline range in this case. Both parties are

allowed to argue for a variance to the sentence pursuant to the factors in Title 18, United States Code, Section 3553(a).

5. The United States reserves the right to inform the court and the probation office of all facts pertinent to the sentencing process, including all relevant information concerning the offenses committed, whether charged or not, as well as concerning the defendant and the defendant's background. Subject only to the express terms of any agreed-upon sentencing recommendations contained in this agreement, the United States further reserves the right to make any recommendation as to the quality and quantity of punishment.

6. The defendant is aware that the sentence has not yet been determined by the court. The defendant also is aware that any estimate of the probable sentencing range or sentence that the defendant may receive, whether that estimate comes from the defendant's attorney, the government, or the probation office, is a prediction, not a promise, and is not binding on the government, the probation office or the court. The defendant understands further that any recommendation that the government makes to the court as to sentencing, whether pursuant to this agreement or otherwise, is not binding on the court and the court may disregard the recommendation in its entirety. The defendant understands and acknowledges, that the defendant may not withdraw his plea based upon the court's decision not to accept a sentencing recommendation made by the defendant, the government, or a recommendation made jointly by both the defendant and the government.

7. The United States agrees that it will recommend at sentencing that the court reduce by two levels the sentencing guideline level applicable to the defendant's offense, pursuant to Section 3E1.1(a) of the Sentencing Guidelines, based upon the defendant's recognition and

affirmative and timely acceptance of personal responsibility. If at the time of sentencing the defendant's offense level is determined to be 16 or greater, the government will make a motion requesting an additional one level decrease pursuant to Section 3E1.1(b) of the Sentencing Guidelines, stating that the defendant has assisted authorities in the investigation or prosecution of his own misconduct by timely notifying authorities of his intention to enter a plea of guilty, thereby permitting the government to avoid preparing for trial and permitting the government and the court to allocate their resources efficiently. The United States further agrees to recommend that the defendant be sentenced at the low end of the guideline range, as that range is determined by the court. The United States, however, will not be required to make this motion and this recommendation if the defendant: (1) fails or refuses to make a full, accurate and complete disclosure to the probation office of the circumstances surrounding the relevant offense conduct; (2) is found to have misrepresented facts to the government prior to entering into this plea agreement; or (3) commits any misconduct after entering into this plea agreement, including but not limited to committing a state or federal offense, violating any term of release, or making false statements or misrepresentations to any governmental entity or official.

8. The defendant agrees that he shall cooperate fully with the United States by:

(a) providing truthful and complete information and testimony, and producing documents, records and other evidence, when called upon by the United States, whether in interviews, before a grand jury, or at any trial or other court as needed;

(b) appearing at such grand jury proceedings, hearings, trials, and other judicial proceedings, and at meetings, as may be required by the United States; and

(c) it is further understood that the defendant must at all times give complete, truthful and accurate information and testimony. Should it be judged by the United States that the defendant has intentionally given false, misleading or incomplete information or testimony or has otherwise violated any provisions of this agreement, this agreement may be deemed null and void by the United States and the defendant shall thereafter be subject to prosecution for any federal criminal violation of which the United States has knowledge including but not limited to perjury and obstruction of justice. Any such prosecution may be premised upon any information provided by the defendant during the course of his cooperation and such information may be used against him. Also the defendant's previously entered plea will stand.

9. The United States reserves the right to evaluate the nature and extent of the defendant's cooperation and to make the defendant's cooperation, or lack thereof, known to the court at the time of sentencing. If in the sole and un-reviewable judgment of the United States the defendant's cooperation is of such quality and significance to the investigation or prosecution of other criminal matters as to warrant the court's downward departure from *the advisory sentence* calculated under the Sentencing Guidelines, the United States may at or before sentencing make a motion consistent with the intent of Section 5K1.1 of the Sentencing Guidelines prior to sentencing, or Rule 35 of the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure subsequent to sentencing, reflecting that the defendant has provided substantial assistance and recommending that the defendant's sentence be reduced from the advisory sentence suggested by the Sentencing Guidelines. The defendant acknowledges and agrees, however, that nothing in this Agreement may be construed to require the United States to file any such motion(s) and that the government's assessment of the nature, value,

truthfulness, completeness, and accuracy of the defendant's cooperation shall be binding insofar as the appropriateness of the government's filing of any such motion is concerned.

10. The defendant understands and acknowledges that the Court is under no obligation to grant the motion(s) referred to in paragraphs 9 of this agreement should the government exercise its discretion to file any such motion. The defendant also understands and acknowledges that the court is under no obligation to reduce the defendant's sentence because of the defendant's cooperation.

11. The United States and the defendant agree that, although not binding on the probation office or the Court, they will jointly recommend that the Court make the following findings and conclusions as to the sentence to be imposed:

a. Tax Loss: The relevant amount of actual, probable, or intended tax loss under Section 2T1.1 of the Sentencing Guidelines resulting from the offense committed in this case and all relevant conduct is more than $7,000,000, but less than $20,000,000, resulting in an offense level 26.

b. Sophisticated Means: The offense involved sophisticated means, which results in a two-level offense increase.

12. The defendant is aware that Title 18, United States Code, Section 3742 affords the defendant the right to appeal the sentence imposed in this case. Acknowledging this, in exchange for the undertakings made by the United States in this plea agreement, the defendant hereby waives all rights conferred by Section 3742 to appeal any sentence imposed, including any restitution order, or to appeal the manner in which the sentence was imposed, unless the sentence exceeds the maximum permitted by statute or is the result of an upward departure and/or a variance from the guideline range that the court establishes at sentencing. The defendant further understands that nothing in this agreement shall affect the government's right and/or duty to appeal as set forth in

Title 18, United States Code, Section 3742(b). However, if the United States appeals the defendant's sentence pursuant to Section 3742(b), the defendant shall be released from the above waiver of appellate rights. By signing this agreement, the defendant acknowledges that he has discussed the appeal waiver set forth in this agreement with his attorney. The defendant further agrees, together with the United States, to request that the district court enter a specific finding that the defendant's waiver of his right to appeal the sentence to be imposed in this case was knowing and voluntary.

13. This is the entire agreement and understanding between the United States and the defendant. There are no other agreements, promises, representations, or understandings.

R. ALEXANDER ACOSTA
UNITED STATES ATTORNEY

Date: 6/18/08

By: _____
KEVIN DOWNING
SENIOR TRIAL ATTORNEY
MICHAEL P. BEN'ARY
TRIAL ATTORNEY
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
TAX DIVISION

Date: 6/18/08

By: _____
JEFFREY A. NEIMAN
ASSISTANT UNITED STATES ATTORNEY

Date: 6/18/08

By: _____
DANNY ONORATO
PETER RABEN
ATTORNEYS FOR DEFENDANT

Date: 6/18/08

By: _____
BRADLEY BIRKENFELD
DEFENDANT

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF FLORIDA
Case No. 08-CR-60099-ZLOCH

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_____/

STATEMENT OF FACTS

The United States Attorneys Office for the Southern District of Florida, the United States Department of Justice, Tax Division, and the defendant, Bradley Birkenfeld (hereinafter referred to as the "defendant Birkenfeld") and his counsel agree that, had this case proceeded to trial, the United States would have proven the following facts beyond a reasonable doubt, and that the following facts are true and correct and are sufficient to support a plea of guilty:

The Qualified Intermediary Program

Beginning in 2000, the Internal Revenue Services ("IRS") sought to increase the collection of tax revenues without raising tax rates. In furtherance of this mission, the IRS established the Qualified Intermediary ("Q.I.") Program. Pursuant to the Q.I. Program, foreign banks voluntarily entered into Qualified Intermediary agreements with the IRS pursuant to which these foreign banks agreed to identify and document any customers who held U.S. investments, which were generally marketable securities and bonds, or received United States source income into their off-shore accounts. In accordance with IRS requirements, foreign banks agreed to have their customers fill out IRS Forms W-8BEN, which required the beneficial owner of a bank account to be identified on the form, or IRS Forms W-9, which required United States beneficial owners of bank accounts to be identified.

Foreign banks further agreed to issue IRS Forms 1099 to United States customers for United States source payments of dividends, interest, rents, royalties and other fixed or determinable income paid into the United States customers' off-shore bank accounts. Alternatively, if a client refused to be identified under the Q.I. Agreement, foreign banks agreed to withhold and pay over a twenty-eight percent withholding tax on U.S. source payments and then bar the client from holding U.S. investments. In addition, the sales proceeds, interest and

dividends earned on non-United States investments, if the purchase or sale of the investment was made as a result of contact (in person, via email, telephone or fax) with the U.S. client in the United States, were subject to the Form 1099 reporting requirements or twenty-eight percent withholding. These transactions are referred to under the Q.I. Program as "deemed sales."

In January 2001, a large Swiss bank ("Swiss Bank"), entered into a Q.I. agreement with the IRS. Swiss Bank owns and operates banks, investment banks and stock brokerage businesses throughout the world, and has locations in the United States, with branch locations in the Southern District of Florida. This agreement was a major departure from historical Swiss bank secrecy laws under which Swiss banks concealed bank information for United States clients from the IRS. At all relevant times to this indictment, the Swiss bank represented to the IRS that it had continued to honor this Qualified Intermediary agreement.

Defendant Birkenfeld's Employment

During the entire period from 1998 through 2006, defendant Birkenfeld was employed by various banks in Switzerland as a private banker primarily servicing United States clients. From 1998 through July 2001, defendant Birkenfeld was employed by Barclays Bank in Geneva, Switzerland. In 2001, Barclays Bank entered into a Q.I. agreement with the IRS. In order to comply with the terms of the Q.I. agreement, Barclays Bank decided to terminate its off-shore private banking business for United States clients that refused to complete an IRS Form W-9. Accounts owned by United States clients that refused to fill out IRS Forms W-9 were known in the off-shore banking business as "undeclared" accounts.

From 2001 through 2006, defendant Birkenfeld was employed as a director in the private banking division of a large Swiss bank ("Swiss Bank"), which owns and operates banks, investments banks, and stock brokerage businesses throughout the world, including the United States, with offices in the Southern District of Florida. A manager at the Swiss Bank assured defendant Birkenfeld that even though the Swiss Bank signed a Q.I. Agreement, the Swiss Bank was committed to continue to provide private banking services to United States clients who wished for their accounts to remain undeclared. Swiss Bank managers authorized and encouraged defendant Birkenfeld and other private bankers to travel to the United States to solicit new clients and conduct banking for existing United States clients. The Swiss Bank sponsored events in the United States where Swiss bankers met with U.S. clients, including Art Basel in Miami and the NASDAQ 100 tennis tournament in Miami. The Swiss Bank trained bankers traveling to the United States in techniques to avoid detection by United States law enforcement authorities, including training bankers to falsely state on customs forms that they were traveling into the United States for pleasure and not business. Defendant Birkenfeld, Swiss Bank managers and bankers knew that they were not licensed to provide banking services, offer investment advice or solicit the purchase or sale of securities through contact with clients in the United States.

The Tax Fraud Scheme

When the Swiss Bank notified its U.S. clients of the requirements of the Q.I. agreement, many of the Swiss Bank's wealthy U.S. clients refused to be identified, to have taxes withheld from the income earned on their offshore assets, or to sell their U.S. investments. To these clients, the Q.I. reporting requirements defeated the purpose of opening a Swiss bank account; to conceal their accounts from the IRS and to evade U.S. income taxes. These accounts were known at the Swiss Bank as the United States undeclared business. Rather than risk losing the approximately $20 billion of assets under management in the United States undeclared business, which earned the bank approximately $200 million per year in revenues, managers and bankers at the Swiss Bank, including defendant Birkenfeld, assisted these wealthy U.S. clients in concealing their ownership of the assets held offshore by assisting these clients in creating nominee and sham entities. These entities were usually set up in tax haven jurisdictions, including Switzerland, Panama, British Virgin Islands, Hong Kong and Liechtenstein. Defendant Birkenfeld, Swiss Bank managers and bankers and U.S. clients prepared false and misleading IRS Forms W-8BEN that claimed that the owners of the accounts were sham off-shore entities and failed to prepare and file IRS Forms W-9 that should have identified the owner of the account, the U.S. client.

Managers and bankers at the Swiss Bank, including defendant Birkenfeld, maintained relationships with Swiss and Liechtenstein businessmen, such as Mario Staggl, who would set up these nominee and sham entities for the Swiss Bank's U.S. clients and pose as owners or directors of these entities. By concealing the U.S. clients' ownership and control in the assets held offshore, defendant Birkenfeld, the Swiss Bank, its managers and bankers evaded the requirements of the Q.I. program, defrauded the IRS and evaded United States income taxes.

In order to further assist U.S. clients in concealing their Swiss bank accounts, defendant Birkenfeld, Mario Staggl, other private bankers and managers at the Swiss Bank and others advised U.S. clients to:

place cash and valuables in Swiss safety deposit boxes;

purchase jewels, artwork and luxury items using the funds in their Swiss bank account while overseas;

misrepresent the receipt of funds from the Swiss bank account in the United States as loans from the Swiss Bank;

destroy all off-shore banking records existing in the United States, and;

utilize Swiss bank credit cards that they claimed could not be discovered by United States authorities.

On one occasion, at the request of a U.S. client, defendant Birkenfeld purchased

diamonds using that U.S. client's Swiss bank account funds and smuggled the diamonds into the United States in a toothpaste tube. Defendant Birkenfeld and Mario Staggl accepted bundles of checks from U.S. clients and facilitated the deposit of those checks into accounts at the Swiss Bank, Liechtenstein and Danish banks.

The Billionaire U.S. Real Estate Developer

Defendant Birkenfeld's largest client was a billionaire real estate developer whose initials are I.O. (hereinafter identified as "I.O."). I.O. had residences in Southern California and in Broward County, within the Southern District of Florida. On several occasions, defendant Birkenfeld, Mario Staggl and Swiss Bank managers met with I.O. in Switzerland and in the United States. It was well-known at the Swiss Bank that I.O. was a U.S. citizen, that the income earned on his accounts was subject to Q.I. withholding and reporting requirements, however, during the period from 2001 through 2005, the Swiss Bank issued no Forms 1099 to I.O., nor did the Swiss Bank report any Form 1099 information to the IRS or withhold or pay over any taxes to the IRS.

From at least 2001 through the date of the Indictment, defendant Birkenfeld conspired with Mario Staggl, an owner and operator of a Liechtenstein trust company, I.O., additional private bankers and mangers employed by the Swiss Bank, and others to defraud the United States by assisting I.O. in evading income tax on the income earned on $200 million of assets hidden offshore in Switzerland and Liechtenstein. In order to circumvent the requirements of the Q. I. Agreement, the defendant and others conspired to conceal I.O.'s ownership and control of the $200 million of assets hidden offshore by creating and utilizing nominee and sham entities.

Defendant Birkenfeld, Mario Staggl, I.O, additional private bankers and managers employed by the Swiss Bank, and others committed numerous overt acts in Broward County in the Southern District of Florida, Central District of California, Switzerland, Liechtenstein, and elsewhere in furtherance of the conspiracy, including the following:

On or about June 21, 2001, I.O. caused to be sent completed bank account opening documents for an account at the Swiss branch of a large bank based in London to defendant Birkenfeld, including a Form W-8BEN, Certificate of Foreign Status of Beneficial Owner for United States Tax Withholding that falsely and fraudulently claimed that the beneficial owner of the newly opened account was a shell corporation located in the Bahamas.

On or about July 26, 2001, defendant Birkenfeld caused to be sent an email to I.O. and others that the large bank based in London was terminating North American clients, travel and resources, and that his new employer, the Swiss Bank, had a superior network, product range and

management, and had recently acquired a large United States securities brokerage house in order to enhance United States investment expertise.

On or about October 19, 2001, defendant Birkenfeld caused to be sent via facsimile to I.O. at a United States facsimile number Swiss bank account opening documents from the Swiss Bank, including a form entitled "Verification of the beneficial owner's identity." This form, executed by I.O., falsely and fraudulently stated that I.O. was not the beneficial owner, and that a nominee Bahamian corporation was beneficial owner of the account. The application further listed I.O. as a signatory to the account.

On or about December 4, 2001, Mario Staggle recommended to I.O. that in order to further conceal I.O.'s ownership of off-shore assets, in addition to setting up Liechtenstein trusts and Dutch holding companies, I.O. should set up an entity in the British Virgin Islands, Panama or Gibraltar that "would lead to another 'safety break' in a tax and anonymity aspect."

On or about December 19, 2001, Mario Staggl caused to be executed a "Letter of Intent," which stated that New Haven Trust Company Limited, trustee of The Landmark Settlement, intended to hold the trust property for the benefit of I.O., and, after his demise, for his children.

On or about March 13, 2002, defendant Birkenfeld caused to be sent a facsimile to I.O. at a United States facsimile number listing $15 million of bonds that an investment manager at the Swiss Bank had purchased for I.O.

On or about March 25, 2002, I.O. caused to be sent a facsimile to defendant Birkenfeld authorizing defendant Birkenfeld to issue five credit cards from the Swiss Bank to I.O. and others.

On or about April 16, 2002, I.O. caused to be sent a letter to defendant Birkenfeld authorizing the wire transfer of $80 million from one account at the Swiss Bank to another account at the Swiss Bank.

On or about April 23, 2002, Mario Staggl caused to be sent an email to I.O. in the United States with instructions for I.O. to transfer a portfolio, worth approximately $60 million, containing United States securities from a brokerage house in London to an account in the name of a Danish shell corporation at a Liechtenstein bank.

On or about April 25, 2002, an unindicted co-conspirator caused to be sent an email to I.O., with a copy to Mario Staggl, that recommended that in addition to the Liechtenstein trusts

and Danish holding companies, I.O. should set up United Kingdom companies to act as nominee shareholders. As stated in the email, "... the partners appear to be U.K. companies and Liechtenstein does not appear to be connected.... The role of the U.K. companies is simply to act as nominee shareholders."

On March 25, 2002, I.O. caused to be sent a fax authorizing defendant Birkenfeld to wire transfer $39 million from one account at the Swiss Bank to another account at the Swiss Bank.

On or about May 7, 2002, Mario Staggl caused to be sent a reply email advising I.O. not to put his name on any Liechtenstein accounts because doing so could "jeopardize the structure," and reminded I.O. that he had executed blank account signature cards that Mario Staggl could use.

On or about April 15, 2003, I.O. filed his United States Individual Income Tax Return, Form 1040, for the 2002 tax year, listing his address as Sanctuary Cove, Florida that fraudulently omitted income earned on off-shore assets.

On or about May 19, 2003, Mario Staggl caused to be sent an email to I.O., with a copy to defendant Birkenfeld, that stated that Mario Staggl's lawyers in Gibraltar told him "that everything is now in order to proceed with the application to transfer ownership to Gibraltar" of I.O.'s 147 foot yacht.

On or about March 24 and March 25, 2004, defendant Birkenfeld traveled to the Southern District of Florida to meet with I.O. and a banker from the Swiss Bank's New York branch in order to solicit I.O. to take out real estate loans with the Swiss Bank using his undeclared off-shore assets as collateral.

On or about April 15, 2004, I.O. filed his United States Individual Income Tax Return, Form 1040, for the 2003 tax year, listing his address as Lighthouse Point, Florida that fraudulently omitted income earned on off-shore assets.

On or about April 15, 2004, I.O. filed his United States individual income tax return, Form 1040, for the 2003 tax year, listing his address as Lighthouse Point, Florida that fraudulently omitted income earned on off-shore assets.

On or about April 15, 2005, I.O. filed his United States Individual Income Tax Return, Form 1040, for the 2004 tax year, listing an address in Lighthouse Point, Florida that failed to report the income earned on off-shore assets.

On or about June 12, 2005, defendant Birkenfeld and Mario Staggl met with I.O. at a Liechtenstein bank and advised him to transfer all of his assets held by the Swiss Bank to a Liechtenstein bank because Liechtenstein had better bank secrecy laws than Switzerland.

The tax loss associated with the conspiracy involving the evasion of income taxes of the approximate $200 million I.O. concealed offshore is $7,261,387 million, exclusive of penalties and interest.

Respectfully submitted,

R. ALEXANDER ACOSTA
UNITED STATES ATTORNEY

Date: 6/10/08 By: _____
KEVIN DOWNING
SENIOR TRIAL ATTORNEY
MICHAEL P. BEN'ARY
TRIAL ATTORNEY
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
TAX DIVISION

Date: 6/13/08 By: _____
JEFFREY A. NEIMAN
ASSISTANT UNITED STATES ATTORNEY

Date: 6/10/08 By: _____
DANNY ONORATO
PETER RABEN
ATTORNEYS FOR DEFENDANT

Date: 10/06/08 By: _____
BRADLEY BIRKENFELD
DEFENDANT