



SPEECH BY KASIVISWANATHAN SHANMUGAM
MINISTER FOR LAW AND HOME AFFAIRS
REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE

79TH INTERPOL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

H.E. Sheikh Abdullah Bin Nasser Bin Khalifa Al Thani,
My fellow Ministers of Home Affairs, Interior and Justice,
President Khoo Boon Hui of INTERPOL and Secretary General Ronald K Noble,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
Good Morning;

Crime has become increasingly international

We live in a highly inter-connected world. Rapid advances in communications technology and the phenomenal penetration of the internet have made information travel even more freely than physical goods and people. Billions of dollars in digital currency are now changing hands multiple times on a daily basis globally.

Globalisation has brought untold benefits to the world. It has also brought with it several challenges. Businesses have exploited our interconnectedness to drive economic growth. Criminal organizations too have ridden the globalisation wave. Criminal activities can be directed from offshore bases, often beyond the jurisdictional reach of the targeted countries. As Asia experiences rapid

economic growth, Asian Organised Crime is also on the rise. It poses an increasing threat to the world. Cyber terrorism, financial fraud and identity theft are occurring more frequently.

INTERPOL plays a critical role in international police co-operation

To deal with new crimes and more sophisticated criminal operations, Police forces have to work smarter and be better equipped. INTERPOL plays a vital role in helping to build global capacity in police agencies, through training and establishing intelligence-sharing protocols for member states. These efforts have enabled police authorities all over the world to enhance their operations to prevent and interdict crime, as well as to carry out effective investigations. Police authorities, together with INTERPOL, should also partner the private sector in carrying out R&D to enhance capabilities further, especially in developing better and quicker ways to verify the identity of persons, as well as to accurately identify wanted criminals.

To deal with the global nature of criminal and terrorist operations which transcend national boundaries, it is also necessary that Police authorities co-operate closely with one another, by sharing intelligence, watching for international criminals and conducting joint enforcement actions. Working with other police services multiplies our effectiveness.

Here INTERPOL plays a crucial role as the largest police organization dedicated to improving co-operation, by bringing together 188 member countries and facilitating international police co-operation. Member countries are given platforms to share and to benefit from information on fugitives, terrorists, stolen goods, as well as stolen and lost travel documents. INTERPOL has also led and

co-ordinated successful operations to cripple the activities and operations of international criminal gangs.

Singapore benefits greatly from such enhanced international police cooperation. We are an open, cosmopolitan city, highly connected to the world. Through INTERPOL, wanted criminals and terrorists have been returned to Singapore to face justice. We also benefit from the use of the Mobile INTERPOL Network Database system to screen travel documents at checkpoints for stolen or lost passports.

Singapore is keen to contribute further through hosting the INTERPOL Global Complex

Singapore is committed to INTERPOL's cause. We have been doing our part in contributing to the international policing community. Apart from our involvement in joint operations, Singapore also actively provides training and expertise to INTERPOL on a regular basis. Though we are a small country, we believe that we can contribute to INTERPOL's success and help INTERPOL remain relevant to the challenges of tomorrow.

Thus the Singapore Government has accepted an invitation from the INTERPOL General Secretariat to host the proposed INTERPOL Global Complex. The intention is that the INTERPOL Global Complex will enhance INTERPOL's capabilities to strengthen global law enforcement, develop cutting-edge crime fighting tools and services, and provide sustainable business continuity solutions. It will also enhance INTERPOL's operational responsiveness. It will offer an additional platform from which Incident Response Teams can be deployed to assist member countries quickly. There is a need for long-term financial prudence. Thus the INTERPOL Global Complex will be

designed such that INTERPOL's operating budget is optimally utilized. The building will have "green" features and this will keep utilities costs down.

After the invitation from the INTERPOL General Secretariat earlier this year, the Singapore Government has set aside the necessary budget and a suitable plot of land in a prime location for the Global Complex, against competing needs. This shows Singapore's strong commitment to INTERPOL and the Global Complex. Singapore is prepared to construct a new and distinctive building, and provide it free of rental to house the INTERPOL Global Complex, if the INTERPOL membership endorses the initiative at this General Assembly. On this note, we would like to express our deepest appreciation to the Qatari Government for their generous contribution of USD 2 million to the INTERPOL Global Complex. There are three aspects to this gesture that I would like to emphasize. First it shows Qatar's strong commitment to INTERPOL. Secondly, it shows strong support for the idea that such a complex is needed to move strongly against international crime. And thirdly, it is an indication of strong support by the Qatari Government for the siting of the complex in Singapore. I thank H.E. Sheikh Abdullah and the Qatari Government for that support.

I am confident that member countries will take this opportunity for INTERPOL to build on its strong foundations and help make the world a safer place for all.

Finally, I would like to once again thank H.E. Sheikh Abdullah and the Qatari Government for organizing this event, which may possibly be the best INTERPOL event ever.

Thank you.