

Message to INTERPOL General Assembly from Nelson Mandela

Rio de Janeiro, 19 September 2006, 75th General Assembly

Thank you for inviting me to address you on this occasion of your General Assembly. When criminals perpetrate their crimes against their victims, they violate the fundamental right of every person to live in dignity. It is therefore a great moment that we all join together in this collective effort by INTERPOL to protect this shared right.

INTERPOL's mission is to foster cooperation among the world's law enforcement agencies. This is a most worthy pursuit. At the heart of every successful human endeavour lies a unity of purpose and action -- people working hand-in-hand toward the common good. This is especially critical in the area of law enforcement. Criminals are becoming increasingly organized, forming an insidious global web of interconnected networks.

INTERPOL provides a platform through which police can communicate, share information, and work together worldwide, enabling them to lock arms in confronting the global criminal plague and destroying the networks of organised crime syndicates. We congratulate you on your achievements thus far but urge you to return home after your deliberations here as ambassadors for INTERPOL, fighting the ever existing challenges that lie ahead.

We realise that in achieving the goals of INTERPOL what is needed the most now is new headquarters, [President Selebi](#) the Executive Committee and [Secretary General Noble](#) are launching a drive to raise funds for a new building which will provide the facilities that are essential for the organization to carry on its work properly. We plead with you to call upon your officials to provide the funding needed for this new building

We ask that you all join together in helping INTERPOL raise the money that is needed to build a new home, we trust this will be the dawn of a new era of police brotherhood one that is even stronger and more committed than ever before. There is no finer gift we can give of ourselves no greater calling we can answer than to make the world as safer a place for our children and for future generations. I thank you.