

OPENING CEREMONY

The General Assembly of the ICPO-Interpol held its 57th session in Bangkok, Thailand, from 17th to 23rd November 1988.

The meetings took place in the Dusit Thani Hotel and were chaired by Mr. John R. Simpson, the Organization's President. The session was attended by delegates from 127 member countries, the Secretary General and a number of his staff, and by Observers from twelve international organizations. The opening ceremony was held in the Napalai Ballroom, with His Excellency General Chatichai Choonhavan, Prime Minister of Thailand, in the chair. Police General Pow Sarasin, Director General of the Royal Thai Police Department, addressed the delegates as follows:

"Your Excellency the Prime Minister, Honourable Guests, Mr. President of ICPO-Interpol, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Royal Thai Police Department I would like to express my deepest appreciation and grateful thanks to His Excellency the Prime Minister for having honoured us with his presence to preside over the Opening Ceremony of the 57th ICPO-Interpol General Assembly session this morning.

The Royal Thai Police Department has been affiliated to the ICPO-Interpol since 1951. In 1982, we were given the honour of hosting the Fifth Interpol Asian Regional Conference which proved to be very successful in reaching a number of valuable conclusions.

This General Assembly session is the first world event that the Royal Thai Police Department has ever had the honour to host. We shall try our best to make this session a successful one. It is our earnest hope that this General Assembly session will fulfil its objectives and be a really beneficial event for all participants.

I extend a very warm welcome to all the distinguished delegates, representatives from various international organizations and agencies to this General Assembly session and I wish you all a pleasant and enjoyable stay in Thailand.

Thank you."

Mr. John R. Simpson, President of the Organization, then delivered the following speech:

"It is an honour for me to welcome all Interpol representatives — and our guests — to Interpol's 57th General Assembly Session. On behalf of our entire membership, I would also like to thank our hosts for welcoming us to their beautiful country. From my previous visits to this fascinating city, I know the kindness and hospitality of the Thai people will make our stay in Bangkok a memorable experience.

Before we begin our work for this session, I would like to speak to you for a few moments about some of the major issues facing us in this General Assembly Session and in the coming year. And I want to bring you up-to-date on some of the work in progress since last we met.



The Dusit Thani Hotel where the General Assembly session was held.

As you know, our primary concern for many years has been the modernization of this entire Organization.

At the very heart of this programme is the establishment of a world-wide telecommunications network of Interpol member countries. It is impossible to over-emphasize the importance of this goal — because it grows increasingly more critical with each passing day. Certainly, in the last few years, we have made progress toward modernization, both in the area of data management and in communications.