be recorded in the ASF when there were reasonable grounds for suspecting that they had been used in connection with criminal activities.

In response to a question from the French Delegate, Mr McQuillan reminded the Committee that the 1994 General Assembly session had approved the principle whereby non-personal information concerning stolen motor vehicles could be entered into the ASF directly by countries, without a manual interface at the General Secretariat. Whilst details of suspect vehicles, etc., would often be linked operationally with personal data, data protection considerations required the two to be separated as far as entry in the ASF was concerned. Personal data was checked for compliance with Interpol's regulations before it was recorded at the General Secretariat.

The Saudi Arabian Delegate raised the question of using the X.400 system for the transmission of messages in Arabic. Mr McQuillan replied that in 1997-1998 the General Secretariat would introduce Microsoft software for the use of the Arabic language. He stressed that whilst the General Secretariat would then have the possibility of sending messages in Arabic to NCBs where that was the preferred language, Arabic was not an official language of the Organization (it was only an official language of the General Secretariat and General Assembly) and so messages should not be sent in Arabic to NCBs whose personnel did not have the necessary language skills.

Answering a question from the Cameroonian Delegate, Mr McQuillan confirmed that countries benefiting from the Regional Modernization Programme would receive the equipment to use ASFMail in addition to the X.400 telecommunication system.

The Iranian Delegate congratulated the Technical Support Division on the work done to implement the modernization programme and called for continuous monitoring of the use and performance of the system. Mr McQuillan, emphasizing the success of the X.400 system, assured delegates that every assistance would be given to help overcome any difficulties that arose and reminded those present that a Help Desk had been established at the General Secretariat for that purpose. The Technical Support Division would follow up the issue directly with the Iranian Delegation.

Mr Saphos (United States), Chairman of the ad hoc Committee, confirmed that Preliminary Draft Resolution No. 17 was in conformity with the Constitution. The text was duly put to the vote by the Chairman and adopted unanimously.

## The ASF system

Mr Suc (Technical Support Division) outlined the major developments that had occurred on the Interpol network such as image transmission, formatted messages and the Windows version of the encryption software.

He reported on the status of the ASF project and said that the launching of ASFMail on 1st July 1994 had made it possible for nearly 60 NCBs to be able to consult the ASF database using their X.400 equipment. Currently 76 NCBs could access the database by ASFDirect of ASFMail and were using a total of 157 workstations. He gave a presentation on the stolen works of art program, which had been finalized; the MRRB and ASA departments had begun data entry and digitization of colour photographs of stolen property (paintings, carvings, furniture, etc.).

There were no plans for NCBs to store data at local level, since they would have access to the database via ASFMail (X.400).

Mr Suc also gave a status report on the stolen vehicles program, as well as comprehensive details of the various technical configurations proposed for NCBs. He presented the timetable for the project and explained the role of the eight NCBs which and been chosen as pilot sites. He illustrated his presentations on the stolen works of art and stolen vehicles programs with slides.

## Regional Modernization

The situation regarding implementation of these projects at the end of June 1995 was summarized in the following terms:

### South America

The contract was signed on 30th December 1993 and installation began after the equipment had been technically approved. The Buenos Aires Regional Station was installed and tested in November and December 1994. It began operating on 19th December 1994, and was quickly followed by the national stations in Montevideo, Asunción, Santiago and Lima on 26th December and then, between January and March 1995, by those in Brasilia, Quito, Caracas, Georgetown, Bogotá and La Paz.

Between December 1994 and March 1995, therefore, the South American Region had been fully equipped with high-performance X.400 electronic message-handling systems which also gave it access to the ASF system via the ASFMail service. This pilot project for the regional modernization strategy was a complete success thanks to the efforts of all concerned: the Buenos Aires Regional Station and the NCBs for organization and local preparation of the project, the General Secretariat's Technical Support Division for management and co-ordination, technical decisions and implementation, and the SCITOR/SITA/ITS Company which demonstrated its ability to install, set up and maintain the equipment and the network throughout the Sub-Region.

The strategy proposed and adopted during the 60th General