

“EVOLUTION AND EXPANSION OF ORGANIZED POLICE COOPERATION”

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On behalf of

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Protocols

I want to express gratitude for the privilege to address the 83rd **INTERPOL General Assembly and Ministerial Conference** on the topic “Evolution and Expansion of Organized Police Cooperation”. For one thing, the Government of Nigeria has benefitted greatly from transnational police cooperation to the country’s advantage in various ways.

2. Much has been written by scholars on the evolution of international police cooperation and INTERPOL, the largest transnational police cooperation edifice in the world today, which, I do not in this presentation intend explore unduly. It suffices to note, in my view that the practice of transnational police cooperation in combating transnational crimes evolved overtime in response to the growth of society and the spread of criminality.

3. The evolution of international police cooperation as we have today dates back to the 19th century. In his account of the history of International Police Cooperation, Mathieu Deflem (2005) reported that “during the 19th century, United States police institutions did not play any significant role in international police practices. However, in Europe, the forms of international police cooperation that existed were oriented at protecting established autocratic political regimes and the fight against anarchism. Deflem further reported that “International police organizations with broad international representation were not formed until police institutions had become sufficiently autonomous from the political centers of their respective national states to function as relatively independent professional bureaucracies. When this structural condition of institutional autonomy was fulfilled, police institutions began to collaborate across the borders of their respective national states on the basis of shared conceptions concerning the development and enforcement of international crime”.

4. 100 years ago, this beautiful and inspiring city, Monaco, in the reign of Prince Albert I, hosted some police officers, lawyers and magistrates from 24 countries in the first international criminal police congress to discuss arrest procedures, identification techniques, centralized international criminal records and extradition proceedings. Those processes and procedures are the bedrock of efficient and effective policing in all jurisdictions all over the world, and the cogs in the wheels of international police

cooperation across jurisdictions, today. Monaco, therefore, will forever occupy a special place in the annals of the foundation principles of international police cooperation.

5. Accordingly, the first 20th-century initiative to formally establish an international police organization on matters of a non-political nature was taken at the First Congress of International Criminal Police in Monaco in 1914 attended by police officers, lawyers and magistrates from 24 countries, even though they were not empowered to act on behalf of their governments. For this reason and the fact that the meeting was not organized by police officials but by politicians who were out to exact justice on crimes committed against them, the Congress could not institute an acceptable International Police organization. The Congress however, laid a foundation for the future as it deliberated on critical issues bothering on information exchange among the national police forces in ordinary criminal matters, the issues of central registration system, harmonization of extradition procedures, and distribution of search warrants. Further progress on the resolutions of the Monaco Congress was alleged to have been frustrated by the outbreak of World War I that followed the assassination of Archduke Francis Ferdinand of Austria in Sarajevo.

6. The post-World War I era witnessed a leap in transnational crime, and the near-absence of cooperation among the national police forces worked to the advantage of criminals. Concerned on this development, Johannes Schober, the Police President of Vienna in that era, was reported to have organized a congress in September 1923 called the "Second International Criminal Police Congress to revisit, re-examine, and implement the ideas put forward by the Monaco Congress". This congress was attended by 131 representatives from 17 countries including China, Czechoslovakia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Latvia, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Sweden, Switzerland, and Turkey. The outcome of the Conference gave birth to the International Criminal Police Commission (ICPC) which, in 1956, came to be known as INTERPOL. Today, membership of INTERPOL has risen to 192 countries. Right from its inception, the Commission was set up without the ceremonial signing of international treaty or legal document.

7. The rapid expansion in international transportation and tourism, improved communications systems buoyed by advancements in information communication technologies, and rapid global population growth in the face of deepening poverty, encouraged transnational criminal activities. In this regard, law enforcement efforts within national jurisdictions merely entailed the gathering of information and intelligence, apprehension of criminals and their prosecution. This meant that once an itinerant fugitive criminal manages to escape abroad, an active investigation runs into a brick wall.

8. In spite of the acknowledged global achievements of INTERPOL in transnational crime management, world over, the rate of crime and criminality has in the last two decades been in the upswing. Financial crimes, armed conflict, terrorism, armed robbery, etc., have got to the digital stage where perpetrators now employ the use of digital technology, which transcends national geography, to succeed in their quest. Whilst motivating institutional and technological advancements within INTERPOL, the situation also gave rise to the emergence of continental and regional policing cooperation agencies such as the European Police Office (EUROPOL), South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), Nordic Police and Customs Cooperation, etc. On the continent of Africa there are the East Africa Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization (EAPCCO), Southern Africa Regional Police Chiefs Cooperation

Organization (SARPCCO), and the West African Police Chiefs Committee (WAPCCO), the Inter-Governmental Action Group against Money Laundering in West Africa (GIABA), etc.

9. A recent addition in Africa under the aegis of the Africa Union is the African Police Cooperation Organization (AFRIPOL). In establishing AFRIPOL, the Seychelles Police Chief Commissioner Ernest Quatre said that “while **INTERPOL** remains the world’s largest police organization, **AFRIPOL**, which will be similar to other continental bodies like Europe’s Europol, will allow better networking and faster flow of information when dealing with criminality in Africa. It will not be only EAPCCO, SARPCCO, WAPCO or other regional bodies. AFRIPOL will help us to come together to share information faster and know each other better. Each country has its own jurisdiction, the laws may not necessarily be the same but when it comes to addressing criminality we have the same goals and the same objectives,”

10. Judging by these developments, it would appear that expansion of transnational police cooperation is being pursued through a multiplicity of continental and regional approaches. Thus, it would seem that national resources geared towards supporting international policing cooperation are being spread too thin to make any meaningful impact. To be beneficial, it would be appropriate to consider the strengthening of a central platform for transnational police cooperation while continental arrangements into which regional bodies should fuse would be established to coordinate and strengthen national efforts. In this way, adequate attention will be given to tailored training programmes to build capacities of each national police as well as provide adequate operational equipment to empower the national police in the discharge of their responsibilities.

11. The importance of increased transnational police cooperation to stem the rising tide of transnational crimes cannot be over-emphasized. As posited by Blazer (1996) success in transnational police cooperation should meet four conditions namely:

- a. a perception shared by all of the participating parties of a serious, threatening crime problem;
- b. the involvement of experienced career law enforcement personnel who help define the problem and propose practical solutions;
- c. the involvement of political officials who formulate, enact, and defend enabling laws and budgetary support; and
- d. regular communication between, and among law enforcement professionals and political officials throughout the whole process.

12. However, sovereignty, diversity of Police systems, differences in our legal procedures, divergence of national interests, etc., could constitute obstacles to achieving meaningful global Police Co-operation. It would be appropriate for participating countries to pay adequate attention to this.

13. Having said this, I want to state that over the years, Nigeria has gained a lot from INTERPOL and from actively participating in international peacekeeping operations. Under the INTERPOL platform, personnel of the Nigeria Police Force have benefitted greatly from robust international training and exposure in general policing, leadership, police operations, counter-terrorism and joint response operations with other countries in specialized crimes.

In one particular instance, and I wish to reiterate Nigeria's tribute here, to international police cooperation under the aegis of INTERPOL and the Sudan National Police for the successful apprehension and extradition Aminu Sadiq Ogwuche, a Boko Haram terrorist declared wanted, through the issuance of an INTERPOL Red Notice, in connection with a bomb blast at Nyanya, Abuja, Nigeria that resulted in the loss over 100 lives and injuries to countless others.

14. To emphasise, the efforts of our Government in frontally combating the current wave of terrorism militating against public security, peace and progress of our people would have come to naught without the platform of international police cooperation coordinated by the INTERPOL.

15. Before I conclude this address, I want to seize this opportunity to highlight some of the contributions of the Nigeria Police Force to international Peace Keeping efforts.

16. The involvement of the Nigeria Police in Peacekeeping dates back to 1960 when a Formed Police Unit led by the first indigenous IGP, Mr. Louis Edet (a Commissioner of Police at the time), was deployed to the then Congo, now Democratic Republic of Congo, on UN Peacekeeping Operations. From this beginning, over 13,000 personnel of the Nigeria Police Force have participated in various United Nations peacekeeping operations, including the United Nations Mission in Congo (MONUC) 1960, United Nations Assistance Group in Namibia (UNTAG) 1989 – 1990, United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) 1992 – 1993, United Nations Protection Force in Yugoslavia (UNPROFOR) 1992 – 1996, United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM I, II, III) 1991 – 1998, United Nations Operations in Somalia (UNISON) 1993 – 1994, United Nations Mission for Referendum in Western Sahara (MINORSO) 1991 – 1994, United Nations Operations in Mozambique (UNMOZ) 1993 – 1994, United Nations Mission in Rwanda (UNMIR) 1993 – 1996, United Nations Mission in Bosnia-Herzegovina (UNMIBH) 1992 – 1994, United Nations Mission in Croatia (UNCRO) 1995 – 1996, Macedonia (UNPREDEP) 1995, the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) 1999 – 2009, United Nations Mission in Liberia, United Nations Mission in Mali, United Nations Mission in Somali, and ECOWAS Mission in Guinea Bissau. Nigeria's commitment to participating in peacekeeping efforts anywhere in the world continues till date.

17. In order to complement other initiatives of our government in addressing the nagging security challenges confronting us as a nation, the Ministry of Police Affairs is working in concert with other stakeholders to evolve a home grown policy that would enhance public safety and security. When completed, the policy document will address observed gaps in the administration and management of matters pertaining to public safety and security and will contribute in no small measure to complementing international efforts at attaining a safe and peaceful global community. As we expect more from global policing initiatives spear-headed by INTERPOL, we expect, and will gladly give better account of ourselves as a nation and a global partner in combating transnational crime.

18. On the whole, our country values all the benefits we are deriving from our membership of INTERPOL and look forward to our continued cooperation and success with other States.

19. Your Royal Highness, Mr. President, Your Excellences; The successful apprehension and extradition from the Republic of Sudan to Nigeria of a terror fugitive in July 2014, few days after an INTERPOL Red Notice was published, aptly evinces the fact that, today, 100 years since the world convened in Monaco to combat international crime, that there is no longer any hiding place, in any part of the world, metropolitan or rural, for any criminal. The terrorist activities of the Boko Haram group in the North Eastern part of Nigeria has unleashed a wave of terror on the country resulting to the death of over 13,000 persons, the kidnap and maiming of many, including the 200 Chibok Girls in a single sweep, created a large population of internally displaced persons, and damaged properties worth billions of Dollars. The impact of the nefarious exploits of Boko Haram extends to neighboring Cameroon, and Nigeria continues to count on the support of people and organisations of goodwill, such as INTERPOL.

20. I thank you all for your generous attention.

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