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Opening Remarks

Khoo Boon Hui

INTERPOL President

8th Annual Heads of NCBs Meeting

(Lyon, France – 13 March 2012)

Honourable Ministers

Mr Ronald K. Noble, INTERPOL Secretary General

Members of the INTERPOL Executive Committee

Chiefs of National Police

Heads of INTERPOL National Central Bureaus

Colleagues from the INTERPOL General Secretariat

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good morning,

Welcome

I am pleased to see all of you once again at our Annual Heads of NCBs Meeting. Thank you for taking the time to join us at this important INTERPOL event. I am also delighted to acknowledge the presence of esteemed members of the Executive Committee; Mrs Mireille Ballestrazzi, Mr Nobuyuki Kawai and Mr Timothy Williams. With 148 NCBs represented today, your presence here is a clear demonstration of your commitment to INTERPOL and its vision of connecting police for a safer world.

This vision for a safer world cannot be realized without the dedicated and tireless work of the INTERPOL General Secretariat led by our resolute Secretary General, Mr Ronald K. Noble. Allow me to express my appreciation for their unstinting efforts in ensuring the continued success of our Organization.

The deep strength of our Organization lies in our network of 190 member countries. It is the NCBs that nurture, bind and strengthen this network. You are at the frontline of INTERPOL's global fight against transnational crime. You are the driving force of our Organization and your ceaseless fight against crime all over the world ensures our Organization's success. I am happy that through the years, the NCBs have gained increasing recognition among police line units as an important resource in the investigation of serious international crimes and arrest of fugitives. Therefore, let me express my heartfelt appreciation to all the Heads of NCBs, and to all the men and women working at the NCBs. Your dedication in facilitating the exchange of police information and cooperation globally is a critical component of realizing our vision of a safer world.

Since I was elected as INTERPOL President in 2008, I have had the opportunity to visit and engage with numerous NCBs in the different regions of the world. I have been privileged to

witness first-hand the important functions and services that our NCBs deliver to make a tangible difference in facilitating police cooperation between local and foreign police counterparts. Through my interactions with our NCBs, I have learned the varied and complex challenges you face. Such engagements enhance INTERPOL's strategic planning process with the unique flavour of the NCB's operational needs from different parts of the world. Through visits and conferences like this, the Executive Committee and the INTERPOL General Secretariat can better systematically develop proactive actions that make our Organization more relevant and responsive to the needs and expectations of our member countries.

Last week, during our 173rd Session, the INTERPOL Executive Committee discussed various strategic and operational issues that will impact on the near and medium term objectives of INTERPOL. One of these is the current situation of the INTERPOL Regional Bureau in Abidjan. After careful deliberation, we have decided to re-open the INTERPOL Regional Bureau Abidjan as soon as practicable.

The Executive Committee also examined the issue of how INTERPOL should be funded in the longer term. We cannot just depend on member's subscriptions to sustain what we do and plan to do to better support our member countries; I believe that there is a need for all of us, including the NCBs, the General Secretariat, the Executive Committee and the General Assembly, to collectively find long-lasting pragmatic solutions to the ever increasing need for more funds. We need to grow to ensure that we stay ahead of criminals who will continue to exploit new technologies to pursue their illegal activities. This is why innovation and sound risk management will become an integral building block in our Organization's future. Over the next few years, the INTERPOL family will have to re-engineer its financial model and business processes to engage a wider community of private sector partners and endeavour to be more entrepreneurial in spirit. But all this has to be done cautiously and with proper governance in place.

The INTERPOL Global Complex for Innovation (IGCI) in Singapore will enable us to better engage private sector partners in developing solutions relevant to our needs. Indeed, a milestone will be reached next month with the appointment of Mr Noburo Nakatani of Japan as the Executive Director of the IGCI. As many of you are aware, Mr Nakatani was the former Director of Information Systems and Technology at the INTERPOL's General Secretariat. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Japanese Government for allowing Mr Nakatani to return to INTERPOL in order to take up this challenging and landmark position. Japan's strong commitment reflects the staunch support from an increasing number of member countries from all over the world to invest critical human resources in INTERPOL's drive for innovation to address emerging security threats. This is because we all recognize that research and development in the increasingly complex and challenging safety and security landscape will be the strategic driver for change and a force multiplier essential for INTERPOL's progress.

Looking ahead, INTERPOL will be ready to support our member countries which face new and emerging crime threats and non-traditional crimes. One of these new challenges is the increasing exploitation by criminals of the cyber space to commit online fraud, steal identity, launder money and perpetuate sexual exploitation of children, just to name a few. These criminals are not only targeting private individuals but have also attacked public institutions, including

INTERPOL. The recent Distributed Denial of Service attacks by the group 'Anonymous' against our Organization, as earlier described by our Secretary General, emphasizes the importance and the role of our NCBs in maintaining the security and sanctity of our critical infrastructure. Enhancing our cyber security should be everyone's concern. Our Organization cannot afford to have our I24/7 communication system compromised as the consequences are just unthinkable.

The next time we meet again in such a large group will be during the 81st INTERPOL General Assembly scheduled from 5 to 9 November 2012 in Rome. I have just been there to be briefed on what to expect and all I can say is that all of you should try your very best to attend. The Italian Police are planning for a high-level Ministerial Meeting which will be held on the first day of the General Assembly focusing on issues ranging from human trafficking to urban, youth and terrorist violence, and the role of police in tackling them. Let us all encourage our Ministers and Police Chiefs to participate. Also at this General Assembly, at least seven Executive Committee Posts, including mine, will become vacant when our terms end this year. I encourage those who are willing and able to offer yourselves as candidates to serve our Organization with your expertise.

In closing, let me re-iterate that today, we are here not only to be updated on INTERPOL's strategic initiatives and operational priorities but to also to exchange views on how our Organization can effectively support our people operating in the field. Your inputs, coupled with your experiences, would be invaluable in the implementation of effective and holistic support strategies and programmes. The conversations we have here can only make our Organization stronger and better able to meet the challenges we face. I look forward to spirited and enriching discussions during your plenary meetings as well as during the Regional Round-table sessions in the days ahead.

Thank you.