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Opening Address

by

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Secretary General

41st INTERPOL EUROPEAN REGIONAL CONFERENCE

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Tel Aviv, Israel

Mr KHOO Boon Hui, INTERPOL President,

Inspector General Yohanan DANINO, Commissioner of the Israeli Police,

Major General Yoav SEGALOVITZ, Head of Investigations and Intelligence Unit of the Israeli Police,

Mrs Mireille BALLESTRAZZI, INTERPOL Vice-President for Europe,

INTERPOL Executive Committee Delegates,

Dear Chiefs of Police,

Dear Heads of NCBs,

Dear representatives of international organizations and observers,

Mr Pierre REULAND, INTERPOL's Special Representative to the European Union, and all my dedicated INTERPOL staff,

Dear colleagues,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning.

Boker tov.

I am very happy to be with you here today in the amazing city of Tel Aviv, for this the 41st INTERPOL European Regional Conference.

I take this opportunity to thank our Israeli hosts for their outstanding organization and warm reception. This is the second time that I have had the chance to visit Israel as Secretary General of INTERPOL, and both times I have been most impressed by the commitment of the Israeli police to make sure that their guests' visit here was memorable and enriching. From the programme they have planned for us this week, I can assure you that you will have an unforgettable experience here.

Let me thank in particular Inspector General Yohanan DANINO, Commissioner of the Israeli Police, for having offered Israel, Tel Aviv and the Israeli Police to host this historic conference.

Tel Aviv is truly a fascinating city in an even more fascinating country.

Just the contrast between Jaffa, one of the oldest cities in the world, with roots going back as far as 3,500 years, and the UNESCO-protected modernist 'White City' of Tel Aviv, which contains the world's largest concentration of Bauhaus architecture, tells just how rich and diverse — and indeed inspiring — this city is.

But, let us reflect a bit more on the meaning of our being gathered here in the framework of the INTERPOL European Regional Conference.

Let me reinforce and complement the insight shared with us by Commissioner DANINO.

I'm sure it hasn't escaped anyone's attention that Israel is not geographically situated within Europe. Nevertheless, Israel was overwhelmingly accepted without controversy as a member of the European region by the delegates of the 2006 INTERPOL General Assembly in Brazil.

You've heard from Commissioner DANINO, who presented a brilliant case for Israel to become part of the European region during the 2006 General Assembly. I vividly recall how he argued that over two-thirds of Israel's international crime-related activities involved European countries. Israeli authorities' day-to-day operational cooperation was logically geared towards Europe, not the Asian region of INTERPOL. Consequently, remaining in that region did not allow optimal working relationships within our organization for the exchange of information internationally.

I recall then-Major General Yohanan DANINO's arguments and the subsequent General Assembly's decision to include Israel within the European region because of the same clarity of his arguments and the same passion and commitment that you've heard again this morning, underlying his and INTERPOL Israel's simple request of our Organization.

We must remember that INTERPOL's vision is to connect police for a safer world. It was therefore in all our interests that Israel become part of INTERPOL's European region.

We took the right decision in 2006 and we are reaping the benefits of this decision today.

The fact is that INTERPOL often enhances international police cooperation in very pragmatic ways, trying to identify solutions to enhance your operational capacity. And, while doing so, INTERPOL always remains fully independent and politically neutral. These are founding principles of our organization. This helps explain why INTERPOL and our National Central Bureaus are as strong and respected as they are today.

The 2006 General Assembly decision that made it possible to meet here today in Israel also highlights another important characteristic of INTERPOL — how we strive to adapt to our ever changing environment.

Our environment, as you know, is changing, changing faster than ever before.

Today, with the incredible growth of information and telecommunication technologies available to us, people, goods and ideas travel and affect the lives of men and women around the world with legal and illegal intentions with unprecedented ease and speed.

I certainly do not need to convince anyone in this room that crime has become inherently transnational and can touch our citizens from any country in the world where the Internet is in use.

In other words, the development of the Internet continues to add a totally new dimension to crime at breath-taking speed.

The President spoke of the emerging impact that cybercrime has had on our citizens' lives. Let me add to what he said. This is a crime problem that will continue to grow.

From distant havens, cyber-criminals defraud, develop new underground markets for illicit trade, and threaten critical digital infrastructures. Internet security company Symantec already estimates the total annual cost of cybercrime at 388 billion US dollars globally, a figure bigger than the global black market of marijuana, cocaine and heroin combined.

What is more, the Internet also facilitates the dissemination of violent, extreme and radical ideologies, enabling radical leaders to reach friendly ears right in our communities and in all corners of the world.

The heinous murder, this past March, of three children and a rabbi in a Jewish day school in Toulouse and French soldiers in Montauban, is one tragic example. We are honoured that Mr Frédéric Péchenard, Director General of the French National Police, will tell us in greater detail about this case tomorrow morning.

The so-called 'Döner Murders' that saw right-wing extremists kill nine immigrants and one policewoman in Germany between 2000 and 2006 is another. We are similarly honoured that Mr Jörg Ziercke, President of the German Bundeskriminalamt (BKA), will make a presentation on this case immediately after Mr Péchenard's presentation.

In addition, the challenges posed to law enforcement by the increasing transnational nature of crime, the rise of cybercrime and the worrying subterranean radicalization through the Internet come at a time when our economies are struggling to emerge from the global crisis, thus putting even greater pressure on our already-limited resources.

As the world's largest international police organization with 190 member countries, meeting those challenges has driven INTERPOL to strengthen its cooperation with other international institutions working against crime to pool our resources and achieve a greater combined impact.

The partnership between INTERPOL and Europol in fighting maritime piracy achieves exactly that goal — taking advantage of INTERPOL's global reach and of Europol's analytical capability, the two organizations obtained impressive results, including the successful

investigation on the hijacking of Belgian-flagged ship *Pompei* by Somali Pirates, which led to the identification and arrest of two individuals following positive fingerprint matches.

INTERPOL's Maritime Piracy team is also about to launch an historic partnership with NATO, becoming the first law enforcement organization with whom NATO will share operational information. Being given access to this information for criminal investigative purposes will assist all of our member countries.

INTERPOL is cooperating with FRONTEX in securing European borders. The latest example is Operation Hammer, which took place this past November, in the framework of which INTERPOL provided its support to FRONTEX by making its Stolen and Lost Travel Document database available at Italian airports for the special FRONTEX operation targeting the use of fraudulent documents to enter the EU.

In parallel, we are working on cooperation agreements with the European External Action Service and with EUROJUST to strengthen our ability to work together.

Finally, I have recently met with Mr Giovanni Kessler, the Director General of the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF), and will soon meet with Mr Kunio Mikuriya, the Secretary General of the World Customs Organization, to further reinforce our cooperation in the area of combatting the trafficking in illicit goods by transnational organized crime groups.

INTERPOL remains aggressive in getting additional sources of revenue to fund core activities.

One example was to reach out to member countries not currently facing the economic crisis, such as Singapore, Canada and Qatar and to ask them to support INTERPOL and our activities in substantial ways.

This support will assist us in opening the state-of-the-art INTERPOL Global Complex for Innovation (IGCI), within budget and on time in Singapore in 2014.

This IGCI will include an 'Innovation, Research and Digital Security' component that will develop innovative cooperative solutions to tackle cybercrime globally. It goes without saying that the INTERPOL Global Complex will look forward to working hand in hand with the future European Cybercrime Centre to be housed at EUROPOL.

Of course, we are also reaching out to the private sector for financial support as has been recommended by our General Assembly since as far back as 1998.

In this regard, I have recently met with representatives of manufacturers of generic pharmaceuticals in India and with several heads of major pharmaceutical companies from around the world to obtain support for our activities in combating the trafficking of counterfeit and illegal pharmaceuticals.

We are also at an advanced stage in negotiating with a major tobacco manufacturing company, with the objective of launching a ground-breaking 10-year programme to fight the international trafficking in illicit goods, including tobacco products.

Trafficking in illicit goods is of course not a new phenomenon, and INTERPOL has been active in this crime area for quite some time through its Intellectual Property Crime and Counterfeit Medical Products units.

But we are increasingly worried to see the growing links between this criminal activity and organized crime and terrorism and the loss of precious tax revenue by our member countries during the economic crisis faced by many of them.

The reason is simple — this criminal activity generates enormous revenues with relatively small risks of getting caught and being prosecuted, making it appealing for larger-scale criminal organizations, including historical crime syndicates and terrorist organizations eager to improve their cash flows.

It should not come as a surprise, then, to see a major syndicate like the *Sacra Corona Unita* in Italy involved in cigarette smuggling across the Adriatic Sea, or financial proceeds from counterfeit brake pads earmarked to support Hezbollah in Lebanon.

I believe that it is the right time to demonstrate our long-term commitment to fighting this criminal activity and to hit hard at the transnational criminals and terrorists involved in this criminal business.

Trafficking in illicit goods can be a threat to the rule of law, to economies worldwide, a major loss in tax revenues for governments, to the health of patients and citizens and, as I just explained, to global security through its links with transnational organized crime and terrorist organizations. We must and can do more to combat it in a sustained way.

This upcoming July, I will participate in a Summit hosted by Google Ideas and the Council on Foreign Relations in Los Angeles, where I will lead one of the discussion panels on the theme of disrupting and exposing illicit networks. At this event, and if all goes according to plan with our private sector partners, we will also unveil the INTERPOL Global Register — a new tool that INTERPOL is developing in cooperation with Google to help law enforcement and the general public differentiate legitimate products from fake or illicitly traded products by using unique product identifiers.

Dear colleagues,

The times we are living in are very challenging, both in terms of security and crime threats, as well as the financial resources available to fight and protect our citizens.

INTERPOL is adapting its business model to these threats and the economic environment in which we find ourselves today.

We are forging new partnerships and developing innovative tools to assist you better in fighting crime while remaining true to our principles of independence and neutrality and without increasing your mandatory statutory contributions.

Our strategy is not only consistent with our priorities and will contribute to keeping your citizens safe and secure in the 21st century, but it will also minimize the financial burden on your NCBs and countries.

As I viewed the highlights of what we've achieved and where we've been over the years in the European region as reflected in the video before my remarks, and as I realize that we are holding our 41st European Regional Conference here in Tel Aviv, Israel, I am reminded that at INTERPOL no challenge is too great for us to overcome in order to make the world a safer place.

I wish you all a great conference

Thank you very much.

Toda.