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REMARKS

by

Ronald K. NOBLE

Secretary General

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‘Match-fixing: The ugly side of the beautiful game’

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Dear chairman,

Distinguished colleagues,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Good afternoon.

Over the past few days, we have covered a lot of ground in understanding the fight against match-fixing, its difficulties, challenges and possibilities. We have looked at the importance of cooperation between law enforcement and sports associations on the national and international levels. We have examined the role that the betting market plays in driving match-fixing, and the role it can play in preventing it. And we have examined the role that good governance in sports associations can play in the fight against match-fixing.

There is much to be proud of in the infrastructure that has been built and the initiatives that have been taken. But nevertheless, there is an element in our fight against match-fixing that distresses me, and I think should distress every person who cares about football and about the well-being of society in general. It is this:

while transnational organized crime groups are using modern technology to coordinate communication, transportation and betting options to their advantage, 21st century police, prosecutors and judges of virtually every country are forced to use centuries-old law, rules and practices to fight crime.

As a result, we keep falling behind, and we fail to work together as effectively as we could.

Let me give you an illustration. Let's look back to just over two weeks ago, to Europol's recent press announcement about the results of the Joint Investigation Team, codenamed Operation Veto, involving investigations in a number of countries across the European Union. The results of Operation Veto revealed to the public the existence of 300 "new" suspicious matches in Africa, Asia and South and Central America...new according to the European investigators. Operation Veto showed that one cartel based in Singapore allegedly has been linked to fixed matches in 60 different countries throughout the world. The hard work by conscientious investigators like Friedhelm Althans in Germany and his counterparts in Finland, Hungary, Austria and Slovenia is the type of police work that we want to see continue, and brings credit to the field of law enforcement. I

congratulate the investigators throughout the European Union for their excellent work.

But Operation Veto shows us that we are far behind the match-fixers, and I mean far behind. While Operation Veto's review began in 2011 and concluded just last month, the 300 new matches suspected by the Europeans of having been fixed took place, for the most part, between 2009 and 2011. Half of these matches have significant leads, and the other half are suspicious matches where the evidence has not yet been compiled.

Let me ask you: if talented, dedicated investigators throughout the world are working hard to collect physical and digital evidence, to find and interview witnesses, and to locate suspects-- if these investigators are given "new" cases that are in fact between two and four years old, how do you think that is going to affect the success of their investigations?

You guessed right. Years after the fact, evidence disappears, witnesses die, disappear or have their recollections fade, while suspects hide and manoeuvre even

more effectively. In the meantime, crime thrives, two to four years ahead of law enforcement's investigation.

We are not just behind; we are also not properly prepared to work together. This is a fact!

Many of us were quite impressed by the press announcement of 680 cases discovered by European investigators. Certainly the global media was impressed. But imagine our surprise when the very next day, the lead German investigator emphasized that all of the new cases discovered were outside of the European Union.

Why were the impressive results of a European investigation that related directly to another region of the world not shared with the countries concerned? Europol's Director Rob Wainwright stated that 'we make demands for international arrests of other citizens outside of Europe, and then we must follow due process in law and wait for that due process to complete itself, and that's exactly what we have done through the INTERPOL channels'.

Rob Wainwright will go down in history as one of the greatest directors of Europol. He got it right. Each country must follow the due process of law of its country, not of another country. For example, does the European Union automatically arrest European Union nationals based on the arrest warrants of non-European Union countries? Of course not.

I have traveled to 160 countries as INTERPOL Secretary General, and I can assure you that the super-majority of countries in the world do not trust the judgment of police, prosecutors or judges of other countries to decide cases against their nationals. This is another fact verifiable empirically by anyone who wishes to do what I have done.

Europol Director Wainwright is correct that INTERPOL connects police agencies around the world, but for the reason that I just articulated, it is not just a matter of 'making demands for international arrests'. Police investigators in Europe must share this information with INTERPOL and the countries concerned in order for those countries to make their own independent judgments as to whether the evidence deemed good enough for the European Union satisfies their countries' standards. In other words, in order for those countries to take timely action, to

investigate these allegations and to make arrests, other regions, such as the European Union in the case of Operation Veto, must share that information with INTERPOL and all relevant countries as soon as the information becomes available.

Two to four years after the event is too late, and it is not coordinated enough.

Is there anyone who disagrees with me on this point?

Worse yet, to date, the information and evidence of alleged criminal conduct discovered by European Union investigators and prosecutors in the context of Operation Veto has not yet been shared with either INTERPOL or the countries involved. It is getting even later.

While some might choose to take my words as criticism, they are not criticism.

They simply highlight how old laws, rules and practices can undermine the rule of law, not reinforce it.

Therefore, on a broad level, better coordination by investigators and prosecutors requires that we change both our laws and our mentality. When crime was primarily local or national, we could think only locally or nationally. In today's world of global crime, the police forces and law enforcement authorities of other countries are not just our counterparts, but our colleagues. To that end, we must avoid counterproductive behaviour that contradicts the global perspective that we need.

It is counterproductive to make it appear, even inadvertently, that only one organized crime group located in one country is primarily responsible for all match-fixing throughout the world. This is especially true when the country is from a different region, and it is especially counterproductive when we know that transnational crime groups all over the world are involved in match-fixing and illegal betting.

It is counterproductive to focus on another country as the source of transnational criminal conduct without giving that country the evidence upon which the conclusion is based.

It is especially counterproductive because when countries or regions isolate one another for criticism, even inadvertently and even with the best of intentions, they undermine international police cooperation. Our perspective at INTERPOL is formed from our embrace of 190 member countries. From that perspective, we see these effects firsthand.

I am calling upon investigators, prosecutors and judges to make a change in worldview supported by modern legislation, to make the move from thinking about police and law enforcement in other countries as just counterparts, to thinking about them as colleagues.

We must work with our colleagues from other countries on a real-time basis to investigate and bring to justice the criminals involved in match-fixing. And we must work globally as well – with our colleagues in law enforcement and with sports associations throughout the world – to prevent match-fixing in the first place through education, capacity building and deterrence.

Global match-fixing investigations, as we have seen, are very complex and time consuming. Even with maximum cooperation, our investigations by definition will always be about crimes and actions that have been committed in the past. To get ahead of the problem, we must make working together on prevention our collective priority.

Today, the criminals cooperate globally. The only effective response for us is to cooperate globally.

What should we be doing next? How can we move as fast as the criminals? How can we coordinate as well as they do?

The short answer is that we must use the same means that enable criminals to flourish transnationally: the quick transfer of information. Criminals flourish internationally because they use real-time communication to coordinate and magnify their efforts, allowing, for example, a local agent to report live on a game in South America to a betting outfit in Asia that is on a one-minute broadcast lag.

We must share information with each other in real time so that our operations target the match-fixers while we can move against them most effectively.

Sharing information on a real-time basis will enable police in Italy, for example, to learn from Singapore's Police Force that a suspect wanted for arrest by Italy is about to board a plane.

My example is not a theoretical one. It is a real, live example. Last night when I landed here at 23:05, I learned that Italy, Singapore and INTERPOL were coordinating the potential arrest of a charged match-fixer. Singaporean police, immediately upon learning that the wanted match-fixer was about to board a plane, notified INTERPOL Rome and the INTERPOL General Secretariat headquarters in Lyon, France.

As I speak, the suspect, charged with being a member of a transnational criminal organization allegedly headed by Tan Seet Eng, is on a flight from Singapore to Milan scheduled to land this afternoon. His presence on the flight has been confirmed by Singaporean police authorities, and the flight is currently being

monitored by Italian authorities and INTERPOL's Command and Coordination Centre. We will know upon the arrival of the flight in Milan if Italian authorities choose to arrest him immediately or simply to interview him.

This kind of case is not new to INTERPOL. We frequently monitor the international travel of wanted fugitives to help coordinate their arrests. And, it is something that we practice virtually every day when the Command and Coordination Centre monitors my travel worldwide.

Sharing information on a real-time basis will keep suspects from escaping.

Returning to the core of my remarks, imagine if investigators were not limited to hunting for disappearing evidence and fleeing suspects from matches fixed years earlier, but were able to access the evidence, the leads, and the information about suspects' identities and locations when that information was fresh.

If case files are created and managed with an eye towards sharing and cooperation, it will allow numerous countries to bring cases against criminals simultaneously,

making it harder for those same criminals to operate freely because they can face prosecution in many countries at the same time.

It will enable your police force to get the leads and the evidence that it needs to build a case against a suspect – leads and evidence that are only obtainable because your counterparts shared them with you.

Most countries do not yet follow the model of Germany or Finland, whose legal framework allows for international police-to-police cooperation and sharing with civil parties. But this is exactly what is needed in order to make our efforts against match-fixing effective. Police and prosecutors must be given the legal framework to share information that has a global impact in the midst of active investigations. If we want to make a global impact on fighting transnational organized crime groups, the days of thinking only about the secrecy of the investigation within each individual jurisdiction are over.

Imagine the possibilities if countries shared information with INTERPOL on a real-time basis even about match-fixing cases that they consider to be local. With the information received from 190 countries around the world, INTERPOL can make connections to evidence, leads and suspects that would otherwise not be available. Do the matches in China that made the news again a few days ago have connections to match-fixing in your country? Are match-fixers using new techniques or strategies that revealed themselves in that investigation? We can only know if we share information.

Imagine also the possibilities if law enforcement agencies were set up for sharing information with FIFA and with regional and national football associations. The Chinese Football Association's lifetime ban of 33 players and officials demonstrates the increased power of deterrence that the football associations could wield if they are given the information needed to act. It is in the interest of police to build the widest possible coalition against crime, and this must include football associations to be most effective.

Friedhelm Althans, the chief match-fixing investigator with Bochum police in Germany and spokesman for the Joint Investigation Team, has pointed out the next

step: we need to get the information about criminal activities outside of Europe to each country's police forces so they can move forward with their investigations.

I have already written to Rob Wainwright at Europol, asking that Europol share the information from the recent investigation so that it doesn't remain as mere statistics, so that we can put it to use internationally. We call upon Europol to forward this information so we can develop new techniques, operational targets and potential witnesses.

To that end, INTERPOL is expanding the mandate of its international match-fixing task force to include the efficient transfer and analysis of this information, and the prompt sharing of it with the police agencies around the world who need it right now.

Law enforcement authorities around the world need this information and are ready for it. The Singapore police are sending officers to INTERPOL to gather evidence and leads concerning match-fixing allegations linked to Singapore following the Operation Veto disclosures. I want to compliment the Singapore police for this.

They realize that they can only benefit from the operational knowledge shared by their counterparts around the world. I know that law enforcement agencies everywhere will benefit from this sharing.

The way before us is clear. INTERPOL remains ready to share information for the benefit of law enforcement worldwide, but to do so, national police worldwide have to be willing to share information with each other. Yes, there are some obstacles in the way. Some are legal, others are cultural. But they must be overcome so that law enforcement anywhere can become truly effective because of its coordination with law enforcement everywhere.