

and a report on current Interpol projects in that field. She described the development of the Interpol ASF international stolen vehicle database which had been started in 1996. Only six countries were currently forwarding stolen vehicle data to the General Secretariat, although 38 countries had access to the system. Ms Good encouraged member countries to join the system as soon as possible. She also announced the imminent publication of the "Interpol Guide to Vehicle Registration Documents".

The Chairman expressed his satisfaction at the fact that a number of countries were already linked to the ASF stolen motor vehicle database, and that the United Nations had adopted a resolution on the subject. There were indications that vehicle theft incidents were on the decrease in some countries: he encouraged Interpol to continue its efforts in that regard. He concluded by saying that the "Interpol Guide to Vehicle Registration Documents" would be a very useful tool for member countries.

Red notices

The Director of Liaison and Criminal Intelligence introduced Report No. 8 on red notices.

He briefly described the background to the subject and announced the first results of a study aimed at expanding the legal recognition of red notices. He referred to the relevant international texts, which acknowledged the essential role played by Interpol as the institution through which requests for provisional arrest could be sent. He stressed the importance of keeping written records of all such requests, and recalled that provisional arrest was a judicial measure which was different from mere detention in police custody.

The General Secretariat had so far received a total of 91 replies in the context of the study he had



mentioned, including six from different countries' Ministries of Justice. Of the countries which had replied to the General Secretariat, 64 (75%) had stated that they could make a provisional arrest on the basis of a red notice issued by Interpol, whereas 24 had stated that they could not. The latter category included the North American countries, Russia, the United Kingdom, South Africa and Japan.

Mr Higdon then presented the new format for red notices which had been prepared by the General Secretariat with the aim of providing information that was as clear as possible to all the departments concerned (police and justice).

He urged countries to implement Resolution AGN/65/RES/12, demonstrating clearly that red notices in their current form contained most if not all the information member countries had said they needed in their replies to the Secretariat. He said he was convinced that combined implementation of the proposals contained in Report No. 8 and of the preliminary draft resolution currently being submitted, should once and for all give a legal basis to red notices in all member countries. He ended by saying that Professor Larnaud, a Frenchman, had made the same appeal in 1914.

The Delegates of Pakistan, Egypt, Switzerland, Armenia, Romania, Brazil, Syria, France, Azerbaijan, Argentina, Australia, India, Spain, Bangladesh and the United States gave their opinions on the matter and some of them proposed modifications to the text of the preliminary draft resolution.

The Director of Legal Affairs summed up those modifications by stating that there was an agreement in principle to the analyses and considerations contained in Report No. 8, provided that:

- Brazil's name is removed from the list of countries which indicated that a red notice has the value of a provisional arrest;
- in the report and on the form, a reference is added to the Convention on legal assistance and legal relationship in civil, family and criminal matters, concluded by the countries of the CIS, signed in Minsk in 1993;
- Section 5 of the report, entitled "Meetings of the Internal Working Party on red notices" is deleted and replaced by a statement to the effect that responsibility for continuing the work has been entrusted to the Secretary General;
- the General Secretariat sends the NCBs all the information in its possession on the wanted person;
- the possibility of using the Internet to circulate red notices is explored;