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OPENING ADDRESS

BY

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9TH ANNUAL HEADS OF NCB CONFERENCE

STRENGTHENING NCBs TO DEAL WITH NEW CRIME CHALLENGES

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Ladies and gentlemen, dear colleagues,

Before opening this meeting and delivering my remarks, I would like to dedicate a few words to someone who is not here this morning, but whose legacy of leadership and vision will always be with us in the years to come.

Last month, Italy and the rest of the INTERPOL family mourned the loss of Chief of Police and Director-General of Public Security Antonio Manganelli, who left us in the same fashion as he had spent a life in the service of justice: as a fighter, until the end.

'Il Capo' – as officers throughout Italy used to refer to him – will always be remembered as a legendary adversary to organized crime in Italy and abroad; as the leader of a great police agency; as an innovator and true champion of international police cooperation; and as a dear friend to myself and many of us at INTERPOL and in police services around the world.

Antonio, you are missed!

Madame La Présidente,

Distinguished Chiefs of Police;

INTERPOL Executive Committee members;

Dear Heads of INTERPOL National Central Bureaus;

Dear Colleagues from INTERPOL General Secretariat, Regional Bureaus and Liaison Offices and member countries worldwide,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Bonjour, Good Morning, Buenos Dias, As-Salaam Alekoum.

As always, it is an absolute pleasure to be here with all of you, the leaders of our National Central Bureaus, especially as this conference registers the record number of 280 participants from 156 countries.

Our warmest welcome goes to those of you who were appointed as Heads of NCB over the past year – I believe there are about 40 of you here this morning. Again, welcome.

You are now part of a great, global family. Somewhere in this room might be the officer who assisted your NCB in international investigations, and whom you'll be finally able to thank in person.

But as you step out of this building, please do keep your eyes open.

If you see the man whose image is now being displayed for you, please contact immediately INTERPOL's Command and Coordination Centre, or our colleagues from INTERPOL Paris.

You are looking at Redoine 'Doc' Faid, perhaps France's most famous active armed robber and also a ruthless criminal with a taste for both violence and celebrity.

His background features high-stake armed robberies, the alleged masterminding of a heist that left a 26-year old police officer murdered and the direct involvement in the attempted murder of a French gendarme.

Unsurprisingly, when the moment came to face justice, Faid chose the violent way out. Last Saturday, he became France's most wanted fugitive after blasting through five prison doors with explosives and cowardly using human shields while breaking free from a detention centre in northern France.

But Faid also likes to cross borders: in the past, to avoid justice he reportedly sought refuge in Israel and Switzerland, and he is now possibly heading for any one of your countries.

In a nutshell, Redoine Faid is exactly the kind of shrewd, mobile and violent criminal our National Central Bureaus have become so good at identifying, tracking down and apprehending.

We were reminded of this right here in Lyon, exactly a month ago.

Officers from the French Services de la Police Aux Frontieres (SPAF) were screening passengers ready to board a flight to Dublin, Ireland. Two of them presented British passports that – to the trained eye – showed indicators of having been fraudulently altered.

Checks in INTERPOL's Stolen and Lost Travel Documents database and extraordinary coordination between INTERPOL France and INTERPOL UK rapidly confirmed those suspicions. The two passports had been stolen, trafficked and later altered.

Even more troubling was the account the two international travellers gave of how they had reached France.

The journey had started in Kabul, Afghanistan. With their own Afghan passports, they had travelled by air to Dubai, UAE, where they stayed for 20 days before leaving for Bamako, Mali.

There – in a country whose stability has been recently threatened by terrorist groups – the network that facilitated their journey in exchange for USD 60,000 provided them with the two stolen UK passports.

A full month later, with new, fraudulent identities, they flew to Portugal. Two days later, they were on a train headed to Lyon via Spain.

This single journey involved a total of six INTERPOL member countries; three continents; five international flights; two land border crossings and thousands of dollars earned by international crime.

The two cases that I have just described involve just three individuals out of the ocean of seven billion inhabitants of our world. Such is the reality and the astonishing scale of the challenge we must face together.

Yet over the past year, INTERPOL, you – our National Central Bureaus – and our member countries, have responded no less forcefully to this challenge.

In 2012, together, we made sure that with regard to one out of every seven citizens, somewhere in the world, a law enforcement officer could conduct a search of a suspect, a vehicle, a piece of evidence against INTERPOL databases, in order to contribute to their country's and our collective security.

In other words, in a single year, we reached and even passed a record number of 1 billion checks in INTERPOL's global databases.

This figure speaks volumes about what INTERPOL can do today, and about how far we've come in our common journey towards a safer world.

Back on 17 April 2003 we had fewer than 40 member countries connected to our global secure communication network; we were looking at fewer than 400,000 searches in our databases in the first four months of the year, while in 2013 they have already exceeded 280 MILLION searches.

But if we were to travel back to the early days of the deployment of the I-24/7 network, we would witness the dawn of a vision that today we call our reality.

That vision stemmed from a simple question: *what if...?*

What if... the unique skills and experiences of each of our National Central Bureaus could be linked together?

What if... we could empower them with real-time access around the clock to millions of police records at their fingertips?

The answers are in the successes achieved every day in the field by our National Central Bureaus and by your law enforcement colleagues worldwide. Successes that make your countries and INTERPOL so proud.

Yet in no way, can those results be considered surprising. Not to those who know and live the reality of international policing each and every day. To their eyes – to our eyes – INTERPOL and our National Central Bureaus are natural, powerful and irreplaceable allies.

Your duty, as pivotal components of your national police forces, is to prepare your countries for the international criminal threats of the next hour.

INTERPOL's duty, as an international police organization, is to make police forces worldwide ready for the global crime challenges of the next hour, and of the next decade.

We were bound by mission at birth, just like we are bound today by the criminal threats of tomorrow. And it is around those threats, that INTERPOL has been shaping itself.

Less than 48 hours ago, the world stood once again in horror at the view of images of a terrorist attack.

While far too many countries suffer even worse terrorist attacks, what made the Boston marathon attack especially powerful was that the act and its aftermath were broadcast live on television, streamed via Internet, shared by bloggers and re-tweeted worldwide within minutes.

Cheers of joy turning into screams of horror and fear;

The sweat of athletes turning into the blood of many innocent victims;

A day of happiness converted into a memory of terror. Forever.

I know for a fact that the events that occurred on Monday at the finishing line of the city marathon and at JFK library in Boston brought the same thought to all of our minds: "*This could happen again, anywhere in the world*".

Over the next eight weeks, across some 40 member countries, more than 150 marathons will take place, each of them carrying the impossible task of securing 42 kilometres of streets surrounded by crowds and under constant media coverage...in other words, perfect terrorist targets.

But nevertheless, that task will see police in each of these countries try to turn the impossible into real security for the tens of thousands of innocent participants and spectators.

It was in thinking about how to help you, our member countries, better secure major international sporting events, that last November INTERPOL and the Qatar 2022 Supreme Committee entered into a multi-million dollar, 10-year agreement aimed at enhancing your capacity and training in this area.

But as we work toward that objective, we also need to act now to prevent any future attacks.

History tells us that copycats are often ready to strike in the aftermath of well publicized crimes. Therefore INTERPOL asks all of you to share any information or intelligence on possible threats to upcoming sporting events, so that this information can reach as rapidly as possible the responsible law enforcement authorities.

But needless to say, securing major sports events is only one of the daunting tasks awaiting us all.

Last year, you heard how INTERPOL had become the target of a failed massive cyberattack by the Anonymous hackers' group.

Back then, INTERPOL successfully repelled that attack thanks to the skills and tools available to our Information Security staff.

But what if you were to receive news that a major financial institution or critical infrastructure in your country were being attacked by cybercriminals right now...Can we say with absolute

confidence that every single country represented here today would know what to do, or whom to call?

In 2010, our membership endorsed the establishment of the INTERPOL Global Complex for Innovation in Singapore exactly for this reason. To make sure that all of our member countries and your law enforcement services could soon answer this question with a yes.

And the only possible way to achieve this, is to forge alliances with the world's foremost entities confronting this type of crime on a daily basis.

Today, we will hear why one of the world's largest private companies providing endpoint cyber-protection solutions – currently defending more than 300 million users worldwide – chose INTERPOL as a partner. You will hear about our joint future role in the development of the first-ever INTERPOL Cyber Alert system.

And most importantly, you will hear it in person from its brilliant founder and CEO, Eugene Kaspersky – a recognized world leading thinker and doer in enhancing cybersecurity.

Yet the cyberspace is far from being the only region in need of enhanced security.

Two years ago, at this very meeting, I spoke of a wave change coming at an astonishing pace throughout Africa and the Middle East, but also having great impact on the security of the member countries affected. Today, INTERPOL is helping those nations enhance their security at a key moment in their history.

Libya is a case in point. Last month, while visiting Tripoli as Secretary General, I witnessed firsthand the challenges bravely faced by the local INTERPOL staff and by their police colleagues. As in INTERPOL's tradition, we wanted to re-shape those challenges into new strengths and opportunities.

That is why through project Relinc, INTERPOL is now on the ground, supporting Libyan authorities in re-building their police and border security capacity, in what promises to become a new model for post-conflict security re-construction.

But this initiative gives other insights into the new, the emerging INTERPOL.

It speaks of a request for assistance from a member country. A request that INTERPOL would have never been able to satisfy by relying only on its statutory contributions, and without the generosity of the European Union and member countries such as Singapore, Canada and Qatar.

It speaks of an organization that – without finding sustainable, alternative funding mechanisms – will likely wither away into irrelevance, despite soaring global demand for its services.

Unless we continue to innovate. Unless we continue to evolve.

In 2013 alone, INTERPOL will be able to rely on EUR 19.4 million in funds from external donors – ranging from government agencies to private industry. Of these, close to EUR 4.5 million were raised just in the past five months alone.

Indeed, we are innovating and we are evolving. We are getting better at attracting international partners eager to share our vision and eager to invest in INTERPOL.

But paradoxically, our success at raising funds externally presents us with new challenges internally.

INTERPOL is a powerful, complex machine – created and designed at a different time in history, with rules written for a police organization very different from those serving nationally in our member countries.

Therefore, understandable concerns emerged in some member countries as to how INTERPOL should better regulate this mounting inflow of external funds. These voices were embraced by me and the rest of the organization, and have become the engine for rethinking INTERPOL's rules and regulations on external revenue generation.

Last month, representatives from 17 member countries gathered for the first meeting of the Working Group on INTERPOL's Evolving Funding Model.

Under the leadership of Dr Jürgen Stock, Vice-President of Germany's BKA, they will advise me and INTERPOL's Executive Committee as we work on the amendments to its extra-budgetary resource management system. Our goal is to submit a new set of rules and regulations to the upcoming General Assembly session in Cartagena, Colombia, next October.

Yes, the time has definitely come to radically re-think how we should finance our activities, and whether vital access to our tools and services should still be so dependent on member country statutory contributions.

For instance, last Sunday we saw Somalia and its citizens once again targeted by heinous terrorist attacks, resulting in the death of some 30 innocents. As I speak, as we sit here this nation is fighting literally at the forefront of the battle against international terrorism.

But what does it say about INTERPOL and the international community as a whole, that this same country remains under Article 52 penalties because of its inability to pay its mandatory statutory contributions to INTERPOL's budget? Looking at our core principles and mandate, can we seriously consider limiting Somalia's access to our services at this time in history?

I say no. Which leaves us with two options. Either INTERPOL acts as the family we know it is, finding one or more countries willing to pay Somalia's dues; or I, as Secretary General, will submit a request to have that debt cancelled.

Ladies and gentlemen, dear colleagues,

No doubt, the moment we are living as an Organization is far from easy. Yet if we make the right decisions and continue to work together and evolve, it could be among the finest in our history.

The same history that taught us where to look for the foundation of our future.

That is, right in front of us today. In you – our National Central Bureaus.

It is a fact that at every turning point in our history, INTERPOL felt the need to re-affirm the pivotal role of OUR National Central Bureaus as it moved forward.

As far back as 1947, in the early stages of INTERPOL's re-birth after perhaps its darkest years, then Secretary General Louis Ducloux said it unequivocally: *"without the National Bureaus (...) our organization cannot live"*.

A decade later, as INTERPOL adopted the core principles of our Constitution, the General Assembly unanimously rejected even the hint of a suggestion that the National Central Bureaus should not be cited in Article 5, as a fundamental component of INTERPOL.

The truth in those statements resonates to this day. Strengthening our National Central Bureaus must be the first, fundamental step towards a stronger INTERPOL. Therefore, INTERPOL will continue to work relentlessly to further empower you and your officers.

First, by ensuring you are always connected to our network; by strengthening our infrastructure with a brand new Datacenter providing the foundation of our data-cloud; and by extending the reach of INTERPOL's data to the remote users you have identified and authorized.

Secondly, we want the strongest skills for your staff. We will make it a priority to always have NCB staff among those benefiting from our capacity building initiatives, which in 2012 alone involved more than 8,100 officers worldwide.

Finally, we will make sure that your voice will always be heard, whenever INTERPOL needs to take important decision.

This is my commitment to you today: when INTERPOL's 10th Heads of NCB Conference will be held in 2014, one century after the idea of INTERPOL was born, it will be as a formally recognized INTERPOL statutory meeting. INTERPOL owes it to its National Central Bureaus.

I have had the privilege to serve as INTERPOL Secretary General for the past 12 years. I won't be seeking a fourth mandate in this capacity, but there is no doubt in my mind that INTERPOL will remain in incredibly capable hands.

I say this, having witnessed on a daily basis as Secretary General the dedication of your NCBs, and having met in person NCB staff from 164 of our member countries.

And we know this is true, because of what we witnessed last November in Rome, Italy, as some 100 Ministers of Interior and Justice gathered for the largest ministerial meeting in history under INTERPOL's banner. And they did so for one main reason.

Because they saw true, lasting value in INTERPOL for your countries. A conviction not based on theory or common sense, but forged through the dedication and hard work of their respective National Central Bureaus – in other words, by the ambassadors of INTERPOL to each of our member countries.

The same applies to the unique staff INTERPOL is lucky to have and I am lucky to lead at our General Secretariat here in Lyon and in our regional bureaus, liaison and representative offices around the world. Please join me in recognizing them.

But while celebrating the work of our NCBs and dedicated international staff, our last General Assembly also gave another powerful message to the world – one about leadership and progress. It was the moment our 190 member countries were called upon to choose a leader for INTERPOL.

They did so, by selecting an officer who at the age of 20 had already chosen a life dedicated to policing, no matter what; who made leading men and women in uniform into the field a *raison d'être*; and who always saw the job not about being equal, but about being better.

Someone who knows, like only frontline police officers know, what it means to experience '*la misère et la richesse; la générosité et la mesquinerie, la beauté et l'horreur, l'admirable et le sordide, et souvent...la vie et la mort.*'

It was the moment INTERPOL chose – for the first time in our history – a woman as our leader.

It was the day Mme Mireille Ballestrazzi from the French Judiciary Police was elected our President.

And in recognition of that historical moment, today Mme Ballestrazzi will become the first person ever to receive the second-generation INTERPOL Passport. Produced by our partner Morpho, it embodies state-of-the-art security features, including the world's first and only three-dimensional passport photo.

In delivering it to Mme Ballestrazzi, our hope is that the next border she will cross as President, will also bring INTERPOL one step closer to its vision, and to how we see our National Central Bureaus in the future.

Strong. Connected. Ready for the next challenge.

Thank you.