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OPENING REMARKS

by

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Willemstad, Curaçao

Your Excellency , Governor of Curaçao, Mrs Adele Pluim-Vreede,

Your Excellency , Prime Minister of Curaçao, Dr Ivar Asjes,

Your Excellency, Minister of Justice of Curaçao, Mr Nelson Navarro,

Your Excellency , Minister of Public Security of Panama, Mr Raul Mulino,

Ms Mireille Balestrazi President of INTERPOL,

Mr Ronald K. Noble, Secretary General of INTERPOL,

Members of the Executive Committee,

Heads of National Police Forces,

Heads of National Central Bureaus,

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning to all of you, muy Buenos dias a todos.

On behalf of all the brave man and women serving in the police force of Curaçao, I would like to give you a warm welcome to our beloved country, this paradise in the Caribbean, called Curaçao. Being part of this important conference as one of the member states of INTERPOL, and attending it in your own country, makes this day and the coming ones really special to us.

It is a real honor to me on behalf of our police force to address you this morning and to make the following remarks.

I would like to start by thanking everyone who, over a period of two years, has been involved in preparing and organizing this conference in our country. What I have experienced until now fills me with satisfaction and happiness. And I am sure that at the end of the day, everyone present here will share the same opinion I have. I already would congratulate all those who in one way or the other were involved, in the planning and executing of this conference, for a job well done.

Our world is changing rapidly. Changes that affect directly our local community, region and world. This means that there is also a constant shift in the criminal activities that take place in our countries, region and world.

Our police force is aware of these changing criminal activities, and therefore we understood the necessity, two years ago, to start a process to reorganize our police force completely, in order to be able to continue serving and protecting our local citizens and visitors, and also to be a trustful and combative law enforcement partner in our region and the world.

We have worked to become a process-oriented professional organization, where the strategies, information-led policing and community-based policing are leading, and where we are constantly monitoring our local and regional client needs. On top of that, we would add quality standards to all the products and services we provide to our customers daily. This is the direction we are heading to.

By walking this direction, it is important for us to indicate that investing in preventing crime is as important to our police force as combating criminal activities. We are convinced, due to our best practices, that if we as local, regional and global law enforcement agencies do not invest in the development of prevention strategies, the greater our daily efforts will have to be in combating, in a repressive way, all kind of criminal activities.

We are fully convinced that the future of law enforcement agencies, especially their strength in successfully preventing and combating crime in the upcoming years, has a correlation in how good and fast we will be able to form and maintain connections with other law enforcement agencies in our countries, region and the world. It is important that by doing so we maintained mutual respect for each other's autonomy and laws.

By doing so it is important that every member country can have access to each other's databases 24/7 as accorded, to be able to share real-time information with each other.

By coming together periodically to discuss in a professional way the aspects of mutual interest regarding our daily work, we will be able to build up trust and confidence, that is so important to base regional and global cooperation and collaboration on. We will be able to establish regional and global priorities that synchronize perfectly with our local, regional and global client needs.

Having this conference take place in our country is a strong indication for our region and the world that we are more than willing and ready to work together with all member states of INTERPOL, local and international law enforcement agencies, to make and maintain our country, region and world safe and

as free as possible from criminal activities – especially from illegal drugs and drug-related crimes, trafficking in illegal firearms, money laundering, human smuggling and trafficking, cybercrime and terrorism, among various other criminal activities. There is no doubt that together we stand, and divided we are weak and would fall.

I realize at this time that I only would have to have had to present to you with a word of welcome. That's why I would like you to accept my apologies, for getting somewhat passionate about this noble profession. But I would not finish without making these short closing remarks.

Most of you probably only have a few days to stay in our beloved country, and as you can already see it's a true paradise in the Caribbean. You are probably already in love with our country and would like to see and experience it all.

Let me close by saying, thank you very much for coming here, for attending this conference, and may God bless us all.

Thank you.