



# Speech

by

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INTERPOL President

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Singapore

Honourable S. Iswaran, Minister representing the Government of the Republic of Singapore,

Honourable Ministers,

Your Excellencies, the Ambassadors,

Members of the Executive Committee,

Secretary General of INTERPOL,

Chiefs of Police and Heads of INTERPOL National Central Bureaus,

Representatives of international and regional organizations and institutions,

Partners, representatives of the security technologies industry and exhibitors,

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure for me to be here with you today to open the very first INTERPOL World international forum.

On behalf of INTERPOL, I would like to welcome you to this event which has been organized with the support of the Singaporean authorities, and particularly that of the Singaporean Minister of Home Affairs.

It is a tremendous honour to be here with the Minister, Mr S. Iswaran. In this year marking the 50th anniversary of Singapore's independence, your presence among us, Mr Minister, is testimony to your country's ceaseless commitment to international security and its invaluable support for the initiatives of the Organization of which I am proud to be the President.

All the continents are represented here today to take part in this important event, which will provide an opportunity for technological innovation to converge with the strategies of security professionals.

Such a strong showing is already a first success for this forum and reaffirms both the interest and the expectations of public and private sector stakeholders to be able to meet the demand for technologies and capacity building in the area of security worldwide.

The exponential growth in the movement of people and the exchange of goods in today's globalized world, combined with the rapid development of new technologies, have brought us into the era of mobility and interconnection. Some three billion people – more than 40 per cent of the world's population – have access to Internet.

The magnitude of these developments is unprecedented, offering real opportunities for interaction between citizens, for creation, and for access to information and knowledge – all sources of development, innovation and growth.

But this revolution has also made our societies and our economies heavily reliant on our new modes of behaviour and on the use of technologies, with serious consequences for security: the use of Internet to propagate hate and violence by terrorist organizations for recruitment and radicalization purposes; cybercrime; identity and personal data theft; hacking of information systems to paralyze services or critical infrastructures; traffic in illicit goods; and the porousness of borders benefiting organized crime.

Individuals, businesses, administrations, security forces and governments are all targets of these increasingly sophisticated criminal acts that are capable of causing immeasurable damage.

Our actions today will lead to successes tomorrow.

This forum is therefore a unique opportunity to mobilize countries, international and regional organizations, and public and private partners, by sharing expertise and experiences, and thereby play a role in identifying and developing innovative initiatives to confront global security challenges.

I would like to commend the high level of the experts who will be speaking at the round tables over this three-day forum, to address four key areas in security:

The first is cybersecurity.

The dramatic rise in the number of attacks and risks have driven governments to take into account threats related to cyberspace, while businesses and administrations are increasingly investing in protection for their information systems to preserve sovereignty, security and competitiveness.

As in the fight against other forms of crime, international cooperation has been firmly established on the intergovernmental, regional and global levels. The INTERPOL Global Complex for Innovation, which was inaugurated yesterday right here in Singapore, represents an important stage in the global efforts led by our Organization and its member countries to avail ourselves of leading experts and state-of-the-art equipment. I would like to gratefully acknowledge the support of INTERPOL's member countries and especially the decisive role played by the Singaporean authorities who, along with my predecessor, Mr Khoo Boon Hui, made it possible for this project to become reality.

The second key area at the core of the challenges being addressed at this forum is border management at a time when the movement of people and goods has never been easier. Effective border management is a vital component in combating terrorism and transnational crime. I salute INTERPOL for its integrated border management initiative to ensure the security and the safety of all national borders by coordinating the implementation of global tools, operations, capacity building and training. It is crucial for there to be close coordination between all the parties concerned, and this collective effort must include the establishment of partnerships between the public and private sectors represented today.

Safe cities is another key area that we will be closely examining over these three days, in light of the current context in which attacks against strategic and critical infrastructures are increasingly common and extensive. The challenges are considerable. If any part of a critical infrastructure is disrupted or, worse yet, deactivated, it will undermine the trust of citizens, weaken a country's economic power or competitiveness, or even reduce its ability to defend itself. It is therefore of the utmost importance to harness the skills and energy of all partners to identify the most appropriate means of defence. INTERPOL will be contributing actively to the forum's discussions and initiatives in this area.

The fourth key area that I would like to mention is supply chain security. Our countries depend on international trade for their economic development, but find themselves exposed to the threats that go hand-in-hand with this activity, such as terrorism, piracy, theft and the illicit trade in goods. This forum will enable us to make strides in the protection and security of the supply chain, through innovative solutions and actions that INTERPOL and its partners are implementing to enhance security. I would like to highlight the extremely positive outcomes achieved by operations – conducted jointly by INTERPOL, law enforcement agencies, regulatory authorities and national agencies, representatives of the private sector and regular citizens – to combat cross-border criminal activities, such as the traffic in illicit goods or counterfeit medical products.

In this crime area as in any other, our success in meeting the challenges that our governments and our businesses face is conditional on our capacity to cooperate.

While cooperation between the law enforcement agencies of our 190 member countries is at the heart of INTERPOL's action, partnerships with the private sector, coupled with safeguards for integrity, independence and transparency, also play a pivotal role. The knowledge, skills and creativity of the private sector, manufacturers and research and development specialists are essential to enhancing our capacities to prevent and react to threats.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Countering terrorism and the illicit activities of increasingly well-structured criminal networks demands a collective response.

That is what this forum is about – providing us with the opportunity to address the difficult task facing each and every one of us, in order to take up the challenges to worldwide security together.

I am delighted to be able to contribute personally to this event, and I wish the INTERPOL World forum all the success this new initiative for a safer world deserves.

Thank you for your attention.