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Remarks

By

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Mrs Annamaria Cancellieri, Minister of Interior, Republic of Italy

President of INTERPOL Mr Khoo Boon Hui

Secretary General of INTERPOL Mr Ronald Noble

Distinguished Ministerial Colleagues

Session Moderator

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good afternoon,

It is my pleasure to join you at this Ministerial conference to discuss Challenges for Police Facing Contemporary Criminal Violence. This is the second Ministerial conference organized by INTERPOL to enhance international law enforcement cooperation and collaboration at the highest level. Credit must be given to the leadership of INTERPOL, led by Mr Khoo Boon Hui and Mr Ronald Noble, for their strategic foresight and resilient endeavour to promote international policing.

The need for a multilateral platform such as INTERPOL in international security has never been more pronounced. We live in a highly globalized and connected world with an evolving security landscape. The challenges are becoming more complex, consistently fuelled by social, economic and technological developments.

In particular, transnational organized crime thrives on the global economy. This is indeed the new normal which threatens the stability of society, undermines the political process, affects businesses and destabilizes economies as much as it promotes these very same systems. Transnational crimes are serious crimes of cross-border nature perpetuated by organized syndicates. Human trafficking, drug smuggling and cybercrime are just a few examples. Currently, the proceeds from transnational crime is valued at a staggering USD 870 billion.

With the phenomenal growth of the world economy, this remains a very lucrative enterprise, supplemented by the growth of Asia in particular. This would likely spur the global reach, penetration and impact of transnational organized crime.

I believe that no member state is immune to this threat. As such, we do have a shared responsibility to respond. And we must respond collectively. Curtailing transnational organized crime must be a matter of international priority.

I have no doubt that there is robust political will across the globe to curtail transnational crime. The challenge will be translating political will into effective security policies that yield concrete results. Let me elaborate by way of introducing the 3 "Cs" towards an effective policy response.

The first “C” is connectivity. Transnational organized crime is a clear and present threat, yet it appears to be inadequately understood. There is a lack of information on transnational criminal markets or on trends that is accurate, complete and meaningfully comparable across jurisdictions. We therefore need to build our collective intelligence and regularly recalibrate our security policies to better respond to transnational organized crimes which are connected across our jurisdictions. We need to develop a collective framework with universally accepted standards and protocols on organized crime that will allow better security policy formulation and integrate our national responses into international policies and strategies. In order to do this, we need to improve our current ability to capture correct data that is needed for meaningful cross-jurisdictional comparisons.

I propose that we tackle specific areas of greater concern such as drug trafficking, trafficking in persons, cybercrime and economic crime even though police forces around the world continue to use national crime rates based on a basket of crimes that are statistically significant. By doing this, we have a window to view trends of significant transnational crime data and develop a better picture of the drivers of transnational crime. Not only will these common indicators reflect the efforts of each of our enforcement agencies, they will also allow us to develop more accurate insights and a more reliable diagnosis of where we should invest our limited enforcement resources and develop an accurate policy response. We must use our networks to share these data to develop a collective awareness of the nature and growth of transnational crime.

Without a global perspective, there cannot be evidence-based policy to substantiate our hypothesis. We need to continue to learn from one another. An international forum such as this is therefore a very useful platform to learn and share trends, emerging threats and practical experiences in combating transnational crime. This brings me to the next “C” - connectedness.

We should tap into existing regional and sub-regional enforcement networks which share a common mission to combat transnational crime. For example, in Southeast Asia such efforts are coordinated through the framework of the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime (AMMTC). Through the AMMTC, ASEAN law enforcement agencies meet regularly and work together in tackling the threat of transnational crime.

Collectively, these international and regional platforms will help us develop an international perspective to sharpen the relevance and effectiveness of our security policies. Our policing, policy responses and legislation must be coordinated so that there is greater connectedness that will narrow the terrain for transnational crime to operate.

Let me now address the last “C”, which refers to concerted action. Our security policies must shape and encourage downstream action that will enhance our operational edge on the ground and keep us prepared for future challenges. In particular, the threat posed by cybercrime deserves specific attention. Cybercrime threatens vital infrastructure and state security and we must be alive to its evolving nature. The Internet is a convenient tool that will continue to be exploited by transnational criminals.

This is where I would like to highlight the mission of the new INTERPOL Global Complex for Innovation, or IGCI. The IGCI is positioned to be a centre for strategic futures. It aims to support the development of capabilities of INTERPOL member countries in future methodologies and tools through its core functions. The IGCI is envisioned as a shared platform for global stakeholders to collaborate on perspective-sharing and innovative research into new threats and challenges that will plague the security environment. It will be a beacon for law enforcement's preparedness for the future.

My optimism about the IGCI stems from an already ongoing development – the planned creation of an INTERPOL Digital Crime Centre, or IDCC, within the IGCI. The IDCC will collaborate not only with law enforcement agencies and governments, but also the private sector and academia to conduct research and development to support cybercrime investigation. It will therefore serve to augment and synergize global efforts to combat this escalating threat.

I am pleased to note that Singapore is well placed to nurture the IDCC initiative. Singapore invests heavily in information and communications (infocomm) so that our people and businesses are well connected to the world. We have a world-class and robust infocomm infrastructure that allows our people to leverage on emerging technology for strategic development. With the number of Internet subscribers at almost double our population, we have one of the highest Internet penetration rates in Asia and the world. Singapore's strategic location and connectivity also make us a gateway to the region, as well as the rest of the world. This, together with Singapore's strength in research and development, offers a deep international talent pool for the IDCC.

I would like to conclude by reiterating the importance of a collective effort from governments and law enforcement agencies in making our world a safer place.

We need to be bold but pragmatic in shaping security policies with changing times. I have suggested doing so by establishing the 3 "Cs": the connectivity of transnational crime across borders; achieving greater connectedness in our policy responses; and finally concerted action to be future ready. This will go some way in sharpening our security policy response to the multifaceted dimensions of transnational crime. INTERPOL's effort in capacity building is therefore highly regarded and valued. In this regard, the INTERPOL Global Complex for Innovation represents an important move by INTERPOL. It is a global platform that will help us all better prepare for the future. Singapore is committed to this collective journey into the future with all of you and all INTERPOL stakeholders.

I look forward to exchanging useful ideas on how to make the world an even safer and more secure place for our citizens at this conference. To close, I thank our gracious host, the Italian National Police, for their warm hospitality and excellent arrangements in this wonderful city of Rome.

Thank you very much.