

2nd International Symposium on Fingerprinting

Lyon, France, 24 - 26 October 2001

Opening speech by Mr [Ronald K. Noble](#), Secretary General of INTERPOL

Good morning Ladies and Gentlemen. It is my pleasure to welcome you to the INTERPOL General Secretariat and to open the [2nd International Symposium on Fingerprinting](#).

As you are all aware we are traversing a difficult time in the world's history. INTERPOL is playing a very active role in the fight against international terrorism and I am sure that this is also the case in your respective countries. The latest international disaster of September 11 has shown the important role that the science of fingerprints can play in the identification of individuals and the control of their movements.

We have seen the need to identify persons quickly and efficiently and INTERPOL's AFIS (Automated Fingerprint Identification System) fingerprint service will soon allow the exchange of fingerprint information in a rapid and professional manner. The era of countries keeping information for themselves is over. We must share this information amongst our different police services if we are to win this fight against international terrorism. You will see how this system works over the next three days of the conference and I trust that you will take full advantage of this service when it is installed.

Upon taking up my position as Secretary General of INTERPOL, I decided to carry out a reorganisation process, of INTERPOL and created within the new structure a Forensic and Technical databases sub directorate. This sub directorate is composed of [Fingerprints](#), [DNA](#), [DVI](#) and Counterfeit and Security documents in order to offer full forensic services to our [member countries](#). The Identification Branch that includes fingerprint services has been given the responsibility of organizing this conference and the working groups that you will hear about today. INTERPOL, through these working groups develops projects that are needed by our member countries.

One of these groups, the Monitoring Group on Fingerprint Training is responsible for overseeing the INTERPOL basic fingerprint course which is offered to countries who are not in a position to carry out this type of training themselves. At present this course is being offered in Europe but I am sure that many of you from other parts of the world would be interested in such a training. One of the aims of this conference is to find out if there is a need to create similar working groups to look at these issues in other regions of the world . So, if you believe that this may be the case, please bring this to the attention of the conference.

INTERPOL has two other working groups twhich are responsible for creating basic courses in the photographic and scenes of crime fields. These two groups should be in a position in 2002 to publish their recommendations on the basic requirements for a training course and to start offering this training at one of the INTERPOL accredited European training centers.

Standards are very important in fingerprints and the exchange of fingerprint images electronically is vital. The INTERPOL AFIS expert group which is comprised of 12 countries (Australia, Brazil, Canada, France, Germany, Japan, Mexico, Norway, South Africa, Spain, United Kingdom, the United States of America and Europol as an observer) has developed the [INTERPOL implementation](#) of an already agreed standard for the exchange of fingerprints. This INTERPOL implementation is regularly updated by the group and is a standard that is recognized by the major AFIS vendors. Countries that do not have AFIS technology at

present and who wish to purchase one in the future should make sure that the system they select is compliant with the INTERPOL implementation.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the vendors for accepting the invitation to attend this conference. They will be present throughout the conference and will be displaying some of their latest developments, as well as having the opportunity to make a presentation.

I am pleased to see from the [draft agenda](#) that this conference is not only concentrating on INTERPOL's work over the last three years but is also looking to your future needs . A presentation on the new holistic approach to identification which has recently been introduced in the United Kingdom will be made ,and I am sure that it will be of interest to many of you and provoke animated discussion. The economics of AFIS will be developed and again in times where we are all looking at ways of reducing costs and improving efficiency this will be most welcome. As you know, many countries are not equipped with AFIS technology and this presentation will show the savings that can be made by implementing an AFIS. These are only two presentations that I mention but they show that even after over 100 years of existence in police forces around the world the fingerprint field is constantly changing to meet the future needs of the customer.

I welcome this opportunity for INTERPOL to be able to promote our work and the future work that still needs to be undertaken. I see from the draft agenda that you will have the opportunity to visit the Identification Branch and particularly its fingerprint services.,Please take the time to visit this service and to learn from the staff about their daily work.

In closing I wish you a very informative and successful conference and I am confident that the knowledge you will gain from this conference, and the AFIS suppliers, will be of benefit to you and your countries.