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REMARKS

by

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INTERPOL Secretary General

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European Regional Conference**

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Malta

Mr KHOO Boon Hui, INTERPOL President,

Special Guest, Mr. Minister of Internal Affairs for the Ukraine,

Mr John RIZZO, Commissioner of Police of Malta,

Mrs Mireille BALLESTRAZZI, INTERPOL Vice-President for Europe,

Messrs Petter DYHRE, Francisco GIL MONTERO, and Süleyman ISILDAR, INTERPOL Executive Committee Delegates for Europe,

Dear Chiefs of Police,

Dear Heads of NCBs,

Dear Representatives of International Organizations and Observers,

INTERPOL's Special Representative to the European Union, Pierre Reuland,

My dedicated INTERPOL Staff,

Dear colleagues,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning.

I am very happy to be with you today, here in beautiful Malta, for this 40th INTERPOL European Regional Conference.

I take this opportunity to thank our Maltese hosts for their outstanding hospitality. As the President mentioned, It is the first time that I have had the chance to visit Malta, and I must say that already I am most impressed by the kindness of its people and by the country's amazing beauty and cultural richness. I want to take a moment to recognize Malta's Commissioner of Police, John Rizzo, and his colleagues for having done such a wonderful job in organizing this conference and for their warm reception of us upon arrival.

We know that a significant number of our countries from the European Region of INTERPOL belong to the European Union and share the same currency. I want to share a little known fact about the Euro. Bridges were chosen to appear on the Euro notes to express the fact that Europe is this unique mix of cultures whose history is of one country being perpetually linked to another.

Malta is an island connected to Europe and the rest of the world by a series of invisible bridges. It is an antique island where the cultures of Europe have been mixing with, for example, the Arab cultures of the Southern Mediterranean basin for more than a thousand years.

But the situation of Malta also puts it on the frontline, with the neighbouring Italian island of Lampedusa, on the route of the thousands of migrants and asylum seekers who try to reach European shores.

The recent surge of migrants since the beginning of what many are calling “the Arab Spring” highlights a reality that we cannot ignore. This Arab Spring has presented Europe with profound challenges in the area of border management and immigration policy. We heard Malta's Minister say that they received the equivalent of a hundred thousand asylum seekers, when one considers the small size of this country's population of around 400,000. The fact that these migrants do not only come from countries experiencing political turmoil, but also from Somalia, Eritrea, Sub-Saharan Africa and even Southeast Asia tells us just how complex this phenomenon is.

Meeting in Malta is particularly timely, as the profound changes that are taking place in the Arab world are affecting and will continue to affect Europe in a number of ways, including security.

When we met in Montenegro last year, I believe very few of us were expecting that the surrounding environment of Europe was about to change so dramatically.

But in fact, this is just one of many events that have re-shaped the European security environment in the past year.

A little more than a week ago, U.S. President Barack Obama announced that Osama bin Laden had been killed in Pakistan. His disappearance as the operational and symbolic leader of Al-Qaida is yet another unsuspected high-impact event affecting the security landscape of Europe and the entire world.

It is too soon to tell how Al-Qaida, those inspired by Al-Qaida and other jihadist movements will react and evolve following bin Laden's death, but we can be sure that violent extremism targeting innocent citizens will not vanish with the mass murderer of muslims and non-muslims alike who had become the global poster child of terror and suicide terrorist attacks.

On the contrary, we need to keep our guard high and be more vigilant than ever, as Al-Qaida-affiliated or Al-Qaida-inspired terrorists may attempt to carry out reprisal attacks, as they explicitly threatened to do in the communiqué released by Al-Qaida last Friday acknowledging the death of their leader.

The recent terrorist attack in the Moroccan city of Marrakesh, that took the lives of 16 people, including 12 European nationals, is a cruel reminder that terrorism is far from dead and that Al-Qaida franchises such as Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb, believed by Moroccan authorities to be behind the attack, continue to pose a serious threat to our security.

As you recall, the parcel bombs using powerful explosives concealed in toner cartridges that targeted US-bound cargo planes last October were the action of Al-Qaida in the Arabic Peninsula, another Al-Qaida franchise. At the time, INTERPOL circulated Orange Notices to all 188 member countries detailing the features and components of the improvised explosive devices in order to warn police against this threat and allow police services and other law enforcement agencies to take all appropriate measures to identify potentially lethal devices.

So, we are living in a time of extraordinary change, and the 21st century and technology adds so many new twists to type of crimes we in law enforcement must confront. For example, one possibly unforeseen consequence of Osama bin Laden's death is the recent wave of malicious codes using bin Laden's death as a trigger. Simply click the link that invites you to look at images of Osama bin Laden, of his compound or of the raid that ended his life, and you invite malicious codes into your computer and network. This is yet another reminder that security threats to our countries and organizations are polymorphous and require a flexible law enforcement response capacity.

Just think of the recent large-scale prison escape in Afghanistan that led to the escape of nearly 500 dangerous prisoners, including members of the Taliban. INTERPOL has been diligently and patiently gathering information so as to be able to publish an Orange Notice with the names and photographs, not to mention fingerprints and DNA, of all the escapees. In 2011, we should have been able to do this instantly, but bureaucracy and the over classification of information has made the fast exchange of information impossible.

Efficient policing has always meant being able to anticipate threats and to be able to quickly react. In the 21st century, anticipation and reaction need to be internationally coordinated.

This is why failing to quickly share information internationally, as in the case of the Afghan prison escape, amounts to a global security gap that threatens our collective security. We need to do better, and I believe that we can do better.

For example, when maritime piracy off the coast of Somalia became a major global concern three years ago, we immediately saw the importance of international co-ordination in tackling the problem. We created an INTERPOL Maritime Piracy Task Force, headed by Pierre St Hilaire and worked with our partners at the United Nations, the European Union, with NATO and with Europol to address the issue of efficient information sharing. Efficient sharing of information is now taking place on a regular basis with Europol, as well as with the European Union's Atalanta naval force through NCB London.

Following the investigation on the hijacking of Belgian flagged ship Pompei by Somali Pirates from April to September 2009, the first INTERPOL Red Notice for maritime piracy was issued, containing fingerprints of suspects, and which led to the location and arrest in the United Arab Emirates of a man believed to have played a role in the negotiation and ransom payment phase. A second fingerprint hit was recently made after fingerprints shared by the Seychelles Police appeared identical to prints found on the Pompei. Belgian authorities are expected to request the man's extradition.

INTERPOL's role in fighting maritime piracy has been recognized by the United Nations Security Council, which invites states to work with INTERPOL in enhancing the collection, preservation and transmission of evidence to competent authorities.

In today's world, this type of efficient international co-ordination can no longer be the exception, but must rather be the norm.

This was underlined yesterday again at a G-8 and Ministers from around the world meeting on cocaine trafficking in Paris. The Ministers present recognized the need to enhance international co-operation and in particular information sharing between competent

organizations, including INTERPOL, Europol, UNODC and all the countries concerned — origin, transit and destination.

In fact, INTERPOL has already established a similar partnership in addressing the issue of the growing transit of cocaine through West Africa. As you know, as much as a quarter of the cocaine consumed in Europe transits through West Africa from South America.

Dear colleagues,

In a world where security challenges are becoming increasingly complex, the need to develop co-operative and innovative solutions is more pressing than ever. And for this, forging the right partnerships, including with the private sector, should be a crucial part of our strategy.

As the President mentioned on Monday, FIFA and INTERPOL signed an agreement whereby FIFA will donate to INTERPOL EUR 20 million over ten years to create a dedicated FIFA Anti-Corruption Training Wing within the INTERPOL Global Complex in Singapore. The first two instalments (this year and next year) will be EUR 4 million each so we can get started on funding the design and building of this training wing.

The General Secretariat will be able to use part of FIFA's substantial financial contribution to cover appropriate infrastructure, maintenance and staff costs associated with the INTERPOL Global Complex which will help prevent an increase in mandatory statutory contributions being linked to the creation of the Complex. We will also deliver training from our offices around the world and we will of course take advantage over the International Anti Corruption Academy (IACA) to deliver some the European based courses.

One of my primary goals as Secretary General will be to continue to make sure that mandatory statutory contributions stay at minimum. I and my team will work hard to identify opportunities where we can raise funds based on sound programmes and projects that can benefit Europe and the world.

But despite the EUR 20 million donation, INTERPOL still needs Heads of State and Government to become fully aware of the importance of our Organization remaining a neutral, apolitical organization. It is only by remaining neutral and apolitical that we can help all INTERPOL member countries keep their citizens safe.

This limitation is a strength because it enables INTERPOL to facilitate International Police Co-operation even where Diplomatic relations do not exist between particular countries or are poor.

You may recall that Osama bin Laden was first sought for arrest through INTERPOL by Libya back in 1994 for the murder of two German nationals. This was a time that Libya was not fully integrated into the International Community. But the Red Notice issued by INTERPOL at their request benefited the entire world.

We must do our utmost to keep politics out of INTERPOL. Unfortunately, we do not always succeed. For example, today, due to a European Union visa ban, Belarus' First Deputy Minister for Internal Affairs could not be here to brief us about the deadly terrorist attack that hit the Minsk metro on 11 April.

This attack on European citizens in a European city caused the death of 12 innocent people and injured more than a hundred. The similarities between this attack and the attacks against the Madrid and London metros are striking. Moreover, seized evidence from Bin Laden revealed that Al-Qaida was planning attacks on subways and trains in the United States. So, it would have been helpful to us all and our countries and organizations to have heard and seen what our police colleagues from Belarus uncovered.

A detailed briefing by the First Deputy Minister for Belarus would have permitted us to understand the nature of the attack, the methods used, and helped us determine whether there are links to other European cities.

We also could have helped the UN Security Council which has condemned the deadly bombing in the Belarus capital, and which called it an "apparent" terrorist attack. We at INTERPOL who received a detailed briefing from the Head of NCB Minsk in the margins of the Heads of NCBs Meeting last month are in the position to confirm that the attack was in fact terrorist.

So, I repeat that it is a real loss for this INTERPOL European Regional Conference that we cannot be briefed on this important terrorist investigation.

To make sure that the doors of co-operation between Belarus and INTERPOL remain open and active, I will fly to Minsk tomorrow to be briefed by the First Deputy Minister and his police colleagues on that deadly terrorist attack. I will travel with the goal of persuading Belarus to enter as much information about that terrorist attack and other related terrorist attacks in INTERPOL's databases so that it may one day help us save lives in a country in this region or elsewhere.

In my mind, we still live in a world with ever more difficult challenges, and the INTERPOL family must stand as one against these criminal threats and challenges.

Mr President, dear colleagues, I close by once again thanking our gracious hosts, all of you for your participation in this conference and my staff for their never ending support of INTERPOL and its vision of a safer world.

I wish you all a very fruitful and productive conference.

Thank you very much