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REMARKS

by

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Mr President, your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen:

Let me begin by thanking you Mr President and the Republic of Korea for the great organization and extraordinary security provided by the Korean National Police Agency and the Korean people.

Last September, Mr President, you emphasized it was now time to turn the message of the first Nuclear Security Summit into ‘action-oriented’ progress.

In INTERPOL’s view, acting for nuclear security means unified and deliberate action against non-state actors: namely, terrorists.

There is ample evidence that if presented with the opportunity, Al Qaeda would immediately deploy improvised nuclear weapons against us. They have boasted of this wish. Their spokesman has said, and I quote:

*“We have the right to kill four million Americans – two million of them children – and to exile twice as many and injure and cripple hundreds of thousands”.*

Yet history has shown us that their threat goes well beyond America. It is a global one. Far too many countries seated around this table know that all too well.

The risk that nuclear or radioactive material will fall into the wrong hands is real and present. Reports received by INTERPOL of almost 3,000 cases concerning 119 countries testify to this risk. A fraction of these reported cases involve highly enriched uranium. We are thankful to the IAEA for the close cooperation we enjoy with them on the sharing of information and the development of joint training initiatives in this context.

But what concrete actions can we take to prevent this harm?

We must first be willing to think about the unthinkable:

- A terrorist network deploying a single person abroad, armed with the material and the knowledge to detonate an improvised nuclear device or radiological dispersion device in one of your countries.

How do we stop that terrorist?

Having visited 152 INTERPOL member countries, including each of your homelands, I can tell you what your police and security officials need to get the job done.

First and foremost, they need timely, relevant and reliable information.

Next, experts to consult.

Finally, training and practice in preparing for the unthinkable.

This is why INTERPOL's Radiological and Nuclear Terrorism Prevention Unit was created.

This is why INTERPOL launched Operation Fail Safe, to allow your countries to track worldwide the movement of individuals suspected of smuggling nuclear and/or radioactive material.

Clearly, we must individually and collectively prepare ourselves for the day when locating and capturing that single terrorist on a mission of extreme destruction will decide whether any of our countries will face nuclear devastation.

Over the years, INTERPOL has successfully launched an increasing number of international manhunts to locate and apprehend dangerous fugitives.

In one case, we went from a nameless photo and unknown nationality ... to police officers arresting the suspect at his doorstep within 48 hours - thousands of miles away from where the search began.

We also turned our database of stolen and lost travel documents into a global tripwire to protect you. Last year, your countries consulted it approximately 700 million times – catching almost 40,000 individuals trying to cross borders using stolen or invalid passports. We need even more intensive reliance upon that database by many of your countries.

Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me now conclude with two concrete steps for you to consider taking once you return home, and with a pledge that INTERPOL will make to you.

The first step: making sure that in addition to securing all nuclear and radioactive material domestically, you need to track any illegal conduct linked to it so as to expose potential terrorists as early as possible.

Second, making sure that your police agencies know how to quickly communicate and collaborate globally if the unthinkable were to occur.

But how can you determine your country's readiness?

Simply ask the relevant police official face-to-face what immediate steps they would take if they were made aware of that single nuclear terrorist on the loose?

Whom would they contact? How would they react? Not in a day or a week, but in that moment of truth, right in front of you.

Their answer will tell you how close your country is to being able to prevent the unthinkable, if given the opportunity to do so.

Now, my pledge: To assist you, INTERPOL will relentlessly continue to expand our global network of 190 member countries' reach and strength, and if that day arrives when we have the name, the passport number, a fingerprint, a DNA profile or any other vital information about any terrorist threat, INTERPOL's network will make sure that all countries are made aware of this threat with lightning speed.

Armed with such knowledge, we can act in solidarity to ensure that the terrorist goal of killing millions of us will never be realized.

Thank you.