

MINISTERIAL MEETING - PANEL #1.4 – MALAYSIA

SPEECH BY THE HONOURABLE DATO' SERI DR AHMAD ZAHID BIN HAMIDI

MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS MALAYSIA

AT THE 83RD INTERPOL GENERAL ASSEMBLY, MONACO

3-4 NOVEMBER 2014

THE EVOLUTION & EXPANSION OF ORGANIZED POLICE COOPERATION

The President of Interpol, Madame Mireille Ballestrazzi,
Interpol Secretary General, Mr. Ronald K. Noble,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies Gentlemen,

It is indeed a pleasure for me together with the Malaysian delegation to be among friends here in the lovely city of Nice, Monaco for this auspicious event. First and foremost, allow me to congratulate the Interpol, for this year, marks the 100th Anniversary of its formation and through its tireless efforts, significant development to policing have been made worldwide.

We in Malaysia are proud to be part of the Interpol evolution. Much has been done, but moving forward, much more strategies needs to be explored and implemented, in the face of an ever changing landscape of crime in the new era. Criminality in this new century has expanded its target beyond private citizens. Criminality in this age affects communities, governments, and even nations.

The South East Asia Perspective and the Malaysian Position

In the context of Malaysia, the Royal Malaysia Police has participated in numerous multilateral platforms that have been initiated in our regional effort in combating crime. The Royal Malaysia Police, being a police force of more than 200 years, have enough experience to know that

MINISTERIAL MEETING - PANEL #1.4 – MALAYSIA

cooperation at all levels is the ultimate weapon in controlling crime. Whether in intelligence, investigation skills, exchange/repatriation of fugitives, overall capacity building or setting up of task forces, it is a serious reflection of our international efforts to develop a regionally effective justice and security institution, and to continuously promote international cooperation in addressing various trans-national crime problems.

Distinguished delegates,

Ladies and Gentleman,

Role of ASEANAPOL

The Association of South East Asia Nations or ASEAN have long realized the need to have a regional body, to serve as a coordination and communication mechanism in combating trans-national crime. With trans-national crime expanding and becoming more organized, ASEAN's Leaders have called for a comprehensive and coordinated approach in combating crime at the regional level. For almost any type of crime, trans-national crimes such as terrorism, air and sea hijacking, and drug smuggling are serious concerns that beg for a cooperative international response. Multinational collaboration is essential in this context. Cooperation often starts with neighbouring countries, their common borders not only presenting the problem of inter-country crime but also provides both reason and opportunity to do something about it.

In terms of cooperation, the last few years have shown the effectiveness of the ASEANAPOL collaboration in implementing various resolutions adopted during its conferences. Even though ASEANAPOL is yet to be an operational entity like the Interpol, serious consideration is given to eventually adopt this approach in the near future.

In 2010, a permanent ASEANAPOL Secretariat was established to ensure a proper and effective implementation of resolutions adopted at annual ASEANAPOL Conferences. Malaysia was given the honour to have the Secretariat to be established in Kuala Lumpur. The establishment dignifies the strong commitments of the Malaysian Government to ASEANAPOL.

Furthermore, this firm and continuous commitment is to be expanded by considering a bigger and better office premises to the ASEANAPOL Secretariat, to help them expand their operations and contribute effectively, in order to carry out its mandate for the benefit of member countries in the South East Asian region.

MINISTERIAL MEETING - PANEL #1.4 – MALAYSIA

Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and Gentleman,

Islamic State (IS)

I would like to stress here that Malaysia is not and will never be a hub of militant or terrorism activities. With the advent of the Internet, namely the social media, ideologies are spreading out widely and easily. We understand that militant activities in this era are far reaching and we will continue to denounce any extremist movements. More recently, our concern and efforts are focused on the activities and linkages to the Islamic State (IS) movement. I would also like to reiterate what was stressed by our Malaysian Prime Minister at the recent 69th United Nations General Assembly, that the world must tackle the ideas that spawn groups such as the Islamic State, instead of only meeting the extremism with force. To date, 40 arrests of suspected local would be 'recruits' was made under the Malaysian Security Offences (Special Measures) Act 2012 or SOSMA.

Appointment of Malaysia as United Nation Non-Permanent Security Council (UNSC) Member

With the appointment of Malaysia as a United Nation Non-Permanent Security Member for the year 2015-2016, Malaysia will continue to advocate mediation:

- as an approach to conflict resolution,
- advance moderation globally,
- promote UN peacekeeping operations,
- facilitate the peace-building process in strife-torn countries; and
- Pursue deliberations on the UNSC's comprehensive reformation.

These are among the five priorities outlined by the Prime Minister of Malaysia, Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak as a respond to Malaysia's success in securing the seat, which is also a sign of approval on Malaysia's principle based of foreign policy, by most UN member states.

The Way Forward

ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime (AMMTC)

MINISTERIAL MEETING - PANEL #1.4 – MALAYSIA

Realising the complexity and emerging threats of transnational crime, Malaysia remains fully committed and has taken concrete steps in various areas such as institutional capacity-building and training of its law enforcement agencies as well as improving its domestic legislative and regulatory framework to enhance its capacity and capability to combat trans-national crimes. Malaysia decided to implement a whole of Government approach which the challenges and solutions are equally shared among relevant stakeholders. As the lead shepherd on anti money laundering and maritime safety, Malaysia has made great strides in areas providing technical assistance, training and capacity building in the region.

One of the landmark achievement implemented by the Government of Malaysia in addressing transnational crime is the amendments to Prevention of Crime Act (POCA) 1959. The Act came into effect on the 2nd of April this year, respond to series of serious crime waves that occurred in the country since 2011. Another Act that complements POCA and created to equip Malaysia in tackling current and future threats of serious and organised crime including terrorism, is the Security Offences (Special Measures) Act 2012, aptly acronym SOSMA. Under these two Acts, the Royal Malaysian Police have established elite squads in 2013 to counter illicit trafficking of narcotic drugs and organised crime, known as Special Tactical Intelligence Narcotics Group (STING) and the Special Task Force on Organised Crime (STAFOC).

STING is tasked to identify drug trafficking black spots involving triads and to stop drug entrance and smuggling through airports, land and sea routes. STAFOC is tasked to eradicate serious crimes encompassing gangsters, gambling, prostitution and human trafficking.

Distinguished delegates,

Ladies and Gentleman,

On the aspect of trafficking in persons, Malaysia continues to strive for better improvement pertaining to the protection elements. The Government of Malaysia has announced the implementation of a Pilot Project on “Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) Supported Shelter Home” for victims of trafficking in persons. The project has been operating since 21 April 2014 and is managed by the Department of Women Development, under the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development, in collaboration with the appointed NGOs.

Malaysia would strive to work together with other ASEAN Member States towards the elimination of this crime due to the severity of this issue which is complex, multi-faceted and cross-border in nature. This could be realised through two important ASEAN document namely ASEAN Convention on Trafficking in Persons (ACTIP) and Regional Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons (RPA) that are still in drafting stage.

MINISTERIAL MEETING - PANEL #1.4 – MALAYSIA

Cybercrime And Online Issues

The main issues when dealing with cybercrime or other online cases are interjurisdiction cooperation and differences in laws and policies. We believe these issues are not exclusive to Malaysia but are common to most countries. Traditional ways of international cooperation in these cases are often too slow, which leads to the loss of evidence data. For investigations involving the Internet, the time factor plays a decisive role due to the lack of data retention in several states and in most cases, countries. From our intelligence, cybercriminals know about these advantages that are open for them to exploit for their personal benefit, such as deliberately using several networked intermediary systems in different countries for any internet communications.

As mentioned earlier, jurisdictional issues presents a challenge, particularly when the criminal is in another country, but more and more government entities are recognizing the harm that cybercrime does to their citizens. Countries are now more willing to cooperate to adopt consistent laws, and forming inter-jurisdictional task forces to deal with cybercrime that crosses state and national boundaries. Malaysia too believes each and every country has put their best domestic efforts in combating cybercrime that can be complemented by specific forms and channels of international cooperation. This is more so in the face of crime being facilitated globally, with potential consequences in any part of the world. The last 3 years have shown an encouraging developments of cybercrime related investigation collaboration, between enforcement agencies within our region. Between 2011 and 2013 there were 4 joint operations conducted between the Commercial Crime Investigation Department (CCID) and the National Police Agency, Chinese Taipei pertaining to Online Financial Fraud in four states in Malaysia. 220 suspects were arrested from various locations throughout the country. All of them were deported back to the respective countries for further investigations.

As exemplified by the cases mentioned earlier, we are facing a growing and ever more complex threat. But our response to it has grown too. And our ambition is to go further. All of these activities — to prevent, disrupt and investigate online crimes will need us to reach way beyond our national boundaries. We need to work with a wide range of multilateral institutions and arrangements. We need to build stronger partnerships and information sharing relationships with fellow enforcement agencies, industry-players, intelligence agencies and others, while supporting a transformational change in law enforcement's mainstream cyber capabilities. Only through these changes, will we expect to see a more targeted response to the most serious online crimes.

MINISTERIAL MEETING - PANEL #1.4 – MALAYSIA

Conclusion

To conclude my speech, the sub-region of South East Asia has taken steps and emulates good practices such as the European Police Office (EUROPOL) in the context of police cooperation. As I had indicated earlier, policing is a major factor in improving the living conditions of our people to a better standard, apart from fulfilling a sense of attaining peace and tranquillity.

In working towards this objective, Malaysia will continue to build strong relationships with police agencies in other countries, and forging new bonds with nations where we have not previously had agreements. This is helping to pave the way for joint investigations and programs that will stop criminal syndicates from being successful in our region.

Before I end, I would like to quote a passage from an article entitled 'Transnational Organized Crime In Asia' that I wrote earlier this year in the Journal of Public Security and Safety Vol.2 No.2/2014, 'There is now a compelling sense of urgency about the risks of widening governance gaps and the region's capacities to disrupt, prevent and reduce harms generated by transnational crime. Unless we recognize that we do indeed live in 'communities of shared fate', the risk of a slow deterioration in both national and regional civility is now greater than ever. It is therefore necessary to integrate national responses into international strategies.'

Thank You, Merci, Gracias, Syukran.