

18th INTERPOL Asian Regional Conference

Manila, Philippines 16 March 2004

Welcome address given by Police Director General Hermogenes E. Ebane Jr,
Chief of the Philippine National Police

'Mabuhay' and good morning to all the delegates and guests to the eighteenth INTERPOL Asian Regional Conference.

On behalf of the men and women of the Philippine National Police, I am honoured to welcome all of you to the Philippines, as we host this most timely and most important conference of the leading lights of the international network of police organisations.

Now, more than ever, the conference theme 'Building strong police links' is truly the order of the day. In recent days we have been witness to two more incidents of terrorism that underscore our interdependence on each other for information and for support. Never has the adage 'no man is an island' been so relevant and so true.

As we in the ASEAN regional have experienced, the sharing of information and expertise has been the biggest factor in the progress we have made as a collective force against terrorism and other crimes that threaten individual lives and national sovereignty.

The need to work together and the importance of building linkages with each other and building partnerships with our communities and sectors are the keys to preventive and deterrent action in the challenge that will continue to be posed by terrorists and criminal organisations.

In the Philippines, linkages between and among all concerned government agencies under the national law enforcement co-ordinating council have borne results in various areas, ranging from anti-terrorism to border concerns.

In the ASEAN region, interaction and intelligence networks have been critical factors in the arrest of suspected members of international and local terrorist organisations.

In the global village, the collective determination and the intense drive to build linkages and strengthen partnerships will continue to ensure that our war against terror and our fight against crime will reap results that benefit all our countries and all our peoples.

In the Philippines, working together is a value that has been handed down from generation to generation.

This spirit of 'bayanihan' or communal effort has been the guiding force for our own national efforts to prevent the scourge of terrorism and the malady of crime from doing any further damage to our country and our people.

I am confident that this spirit of 'bayanihan' is the same guiding force that applies to all freedom-loving people. This is the spirit that will enable every country that is part of INTERPOL and every stakeholder in the work for peace and progress to build stronger linkages, whether as police organisations, as sectoral movements or as a collective community of nations determined to win against crime and terror.

May this conference be productive in the truest sense of the word, as you work towards making the conference theme even more tangible and real in the days and months to come.

It is my pleasure to welcome you all and to wish you a productive conference and a pleasant visit to the Philippines.

'Mabuhay' and good day!