

16th Annual INTERPOL Symposium on Terrorism

Lyon, France - October 22-23, 2001

Opening Remarks by Mr Willy Deridder, Executive Director of INTERPOL

INTERPOL is uniquely positioned to contribute substantially to the success of all law enforcement efforts aimed at combating global terrorism. In this respect, Resolution [AG-2001-RES-05](#), on the September 11 terrorist attacks, unanimously adopted last month at INTERPOL's [70th General Assembly](#) in Budapest, must be seen as a strong expression of INTERPOL's willingness to foster international police support and cooperation, in order to address the terrorist problem.

By referring to earlier adopted resolutions, namely the Cairo Declaration Against Terrorism of 1998 and the Resolution on Financing of Terrorism of 1999, the Budapest Resolution underlines the sustained effort of this organization to deal with one of the most deadly criminal activities.

The recent reorganization of INTERPOL's General Secretariat, creating a Public Safety and Terrorism Sub-Directorate, as a component of the Specialized Crimes Directorate, emphasizes the same professional concern. The events of September 11 have also triggered the early creation of a permanence, or 24-hour duty, a new INTERPOL Command Center, and an internal Task Force. Hence, the General Secretariat is now able to handle all requests from our Member Countries on a 24-hour, 7 days a week basis. This illustrates the commitment of the organization to be a full-fledged police organization.

Additionally, during the immediate crises, the United States INTERPOL National Central Bureau (USNCB) agreed, for almost a day, to allow their messages to be routed to the General Secretariat in order to relieve them of unnecessary message traffic at such a critical period in time. This experience can be repeated in the future, and if the need arises, with other partners and in other circumstances.

Since the attacks of September 11, the General Secretariat has issued more than 55 Red Notices for terrorists who have committed, or were connected to, global terrorist attacks. These [Red Notices](#), issued for terrorists, continue to be INTERPOL's highest priority. The General Secretariat thinks that the issuance of [Blue Notices](#) should also become more important in the future. I am specifically referring here to the Blue Notices of the 19 presumed hijackers issued with the consent of the USNCB and placed on our improved web site.

In addition, many searches in the ICIS database were conducted on the initiative of the General Secretariat Command Center, or at the request of one of the [Member Countries](#) participating in the investigation.

The General Secretariat also coordinated arrangements for the deployment of national '[disaster victim identification](#)' (DVI) teams in the event of a request for assistance from US authorities. These teams, although fully prepared and ready to respond, were eventually not deployed.

Finally, INTERPOL's Criminal Analysis Sub-Directorate began a 24-hour coverage and prepared daily intelligence reports used to provide briefings to the Secretary General and the senior staff.

Despite all of these activities however, important topics remain to be tackled in the fight against global terrorism. In this respect, I would like to challenge each of you to identify and to come to agreement on

what INTERPOL should be doing to foster the increased police cooperation necessary to address the terrorism problem. We are hopeful that proposals regarding data bases, necessary forums, and international conventions fostering international cooperation will come out of this symposium.

Let us focus on some of these topics:

First, we need to prevent and dismantle the financing of global terrorism. This area provides a huge niche for INTERPOL to fill, namely the coordination of operational activities and the development of a more proactive role in combating the financial flows linked to terrorism. In addition, INTERPOL can also respond to needs such as determining structures and operations related to money laundering. In this regard, qualitative studies regarding alternative remittance systems can be carried out. Examples of this are: A report entitled *The Hawala Alternative Remittance System and its Role in Money Laundering* was disseminated in January 2000. Also, another study on *Sub-Systems of Ethnic Money Laundering in INTERPOL Member Countries on the Asian Continent*, is about to be released.

International Organizations such as the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) have, in the area of financing of terrorism, a leading role to play in setting standards and effecting the necessary changes in legislation and the political outlook. The Secretary General of INTERPOL will address the FATF Plenary Session on these issues on the 29-30 of October 2001, in Washington, DC. In anticipation of that meeting, this symposium is asked to formulate the tools we expect from the FATF, in order to be able to do our own job better.

Just as a reminder of how complicated this can be, global terrorism is now funded differently as compared to its funding mechanisms 25 years ago. Terrorists now use complicated networks that are not specific to them. Globalization and new technologies have created beneficial opportunities for them as well. In addition, completely legal donors can fund terrorist groups through perfectly legitimate-looking charity donations that ultimately end up in the hands of terrorists.

Additionally, this symposium is the first stage of a sequence involving two already-scheduled meetings with financial institutions that will occur next month, and a third meeting to be organized in early 2002. It is our intention to organize this third meeting as a seminar/colloquium of world experts to study the financial channels of terrorism to discern patterns and provide guidance to financial institutions. Another desirable outcome of such a seminar/colloquium is to establish the way forward in dealing with the issue of alternative remittance systems such as Hawala/Hundi. The General Secretariat looks forward to receiving your thoughts and recommendations on this most important topic.

Another most important topic is the *exchange of information* between the General Secretariat and our Member Countries. It cannot be over-emphasised that the support the General Secretariat can give to our Member Countries depends greatly upon the information it receives from them. In an area such as terrorism, just as it is in other criminal areas, the flow of information from our Member Countries to the General Secretariat is insufficient. A presentation by our criminal analysts will highlight this point.

At the General Secretariat, we are fully aware that the information supply of the General Secretariat depends on many different factors, amongst which is the cooperation between law enforcement agencies, between the latter and intelligence services, and on relations with magistrates. These are all issues that need to be treated at a national level. In the meantime, however, it would be useful if you could help us by providing guidance on how to organize our database to assist us in providing and managing improved terrorism-related data, including nominal data, and helping to determine exactly what our position should be on maintaining data not directly related to criminal activity, but which could be useful for prevention strategies against terrorism.

In addition to looking at the financing of terrorism and information sharing, proposals for fostering police cooperation are expected. Without being exhaustive, I shall mention only a few:

We need to improve and strengthen *controls at external borders*. As part of the already mentioned Budapest Resolution, the General Secretariat has been invited to establish a new international

database of stolen, counterfeit, and forged identity documents. What are the thoughts of this symposium on this issue?

Further, *air safety and security need to be improved*. Should INTERPOL create a special aviation safety database on our secure website, containing data useful to preventing future terrorist hijacking scenarios?

Finally, is there a need to review the *cooperation rules* that govern how and from where the General Secretariat may accept information, and to whom may we pass this information (feedback to financial institutions). And, should we review [Article 3](#) of INTERPOL's Constitution?

So, as you can see, we have a lot of important issues to discuss. I hope that this symposium will result in a series of concrete issues and recommendations for police cooperation on the issues already enumerated above.

I wish you all a successful symposium.