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REMARKS

by

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INTERPOL President

**40th INTERPOL
European Regional Conference**

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Malta

Dr Carmelo Mifsud Bonnici,
Minister for Justice and Home Affairs;

Mr Anatolii Mohylov,
Minister of Interior, Ukraine;

Mr Ronald K. Noble,
INTERPOL Secretary General;

Members of the INTERPOL Executive Committee;

Members of the INTERPOL European Committee;

Chiefs of Police from the INTERPOL European Region;

Delegates from the INTERPOL European Region;

Esteemed Colleagues;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

Good morning:

Welcome

I am pleased to welcome you to this important INTERPOL event. Today, we are celebrating the 40th INTERPOL European Regional Conference, a historic milestone for INTERPOL and European police co-operation. We are also fortunate to have this gathering here in the beautiful and historic state of Malta.

This is my first visit to this island nation and I, like you, am impressed with the rich culture and heritage it is endowed with. I must also say that it is the first time I am able to officiate in a country that is smaller than my own. I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to our host from the Malta Police led by Police Commissioner John Rizzo, for the warm hospitality accorded to all of us. I know how much effort it is for a small police force to host the 120 of so delegates from the European region and beyond. On behalf of all of you, please allow me to thank and congratulate our host for the excellent organization of this year's INTERPOL European Regional Conference.

INTERPOL's European region, consisting of 49 NCBs and one Sub-Bureau, is well known to be very active in terms of international policing. You have been guided by a clear strategy which was adopted last year at the 39th European Regional Conference in Budva, Montenegro. Through this, together with other past strategic plans, you have continued to make headway in making our Organization relevant and attuned to the security and policing priorities of the region. You have collectively worked to make INTERPOL the vital link between the European law enforcement community and the rest of the world. On behalf of the Organization, let me offer my appreciation to all of you for your support and belief in INTERPOL.

Let me also, on behalf of all of you, express my gratitude to the INTERPOL European Committee (IEC), so ably led by Mrs Anna Duarte, Head of NCB Lisbon, for its invaluable work and commitment to INTERPOL. The IEC has consistently provided high quality recommendations on issues and operational developments in the field of crime and crime fighting in the European region. It also has endorsed a roadmap aimed at developing an INTERPOL strategy for the European region. The IEC has, without a doubt, helped make INTERPOL what it is today – successful, dynamic and responsive to the needs of our member countries.

Fighting crime is more complex in a globalized world

In an increasingly inter-connected world, regional events not only affect their immediate vicinity but also have a global impact. We have seen how maritime piracy incidents in the Indian Ocean and elsewhere have affected the global shipping industry as well as countries relying on the export and import trade. Economists estimated that the total cost of maritime piracy worldwide last year was between USD 7 and 12 billion. These include ransom payments, insurance premiums, re-routing of ships, security equipment and deployment of naval forces. In the same manner, nearer home, the recent political upheavals experienced by some countries in Northern Africa and the Middle East have resulted in an influx of economic and political immigrants that may have social and security implications on developed countries, particularly Europe. And Malta being the country closest to the trouble spots is at the forefront of such potential turmoil.

Likewise, we are all well aware that terrorist organizations and organized criminal gangs will continue to take advantage of such situations. Despite the death of Osama Bin Laden, we all

know that terrorist attacks will continue to be attempted against targets globally. Furthermore, organized crime syndicates are getting more sophisticated and are taking advantage of less robust border control points and technology to diversify and establish new trans-shipment points for illegal drugs, refugees and migrants and firearms.

Clearly, the global law enforcement community is faced with more complex crime challenges today compared to when we started our careers in law enforcement. With the current security landscape, it is clear that collective and synergistic effort is critical in order to achieve policing success anywhere in the world. Modern day crime fighting requires us to look beyond our national borders. To ensure the safety and security of our own citizens, we need to systematically explore and interpret the external environment to better understand the nature of strategic trends and drivers of change, and their possible impact on crime and our security.

Building organizational resilience and readiness with strategic planning

The various INTERPOL Regional Conferences, such as this one here in Malta for the European region, allow our Organization to look at region-specific crime and security concerns with a global lens. Together with the Annual Heads of NCB Meeting, these regional conferences form part of the over-arching strategic planning process of INTERPOL to better align INTERPOL's priorities with global trends and very importantly, the needs of our member countries.

To complement the valuable input from these forums, the General Secretariat has also rolled out the INTERPOL Environmental Scan initiative for the global law enforcement community to better appreciate and anticipate future threats and opportunities in our collective fight against crime.

In order to bring the widest and most complete input into the INTERPOL Environmental Scan, the INTERPOL General Secretariat will convene a Strategic Planners Meeting in Lyon within the next few weeks to discuss the findings of the 2011 INTERPOL Environmental Scan and ponder the implications for international policing. This meeting will also provide an opportunity to review and provide feedback on the execution of INTERPOL's business plans for 2011 and exchange best practices related to strategic planning in law enforcement.

Strategic partnerships strengthen the Organisation

Today, no single country, region or institution can effectively face the threats of transnational crime and terrorism alone. INTERPOL recognizes this reality and has relentlessly sought to foster operational and strategic partnerships with relevant stakeholders all over the world. This gives us more robust law enforcement muscles and better outreach, thereby minimizing gaps that criminals can exploit to perpetrate their illegal activities. I am happy to note that in the European region, our Organization has developed closer partnerships with the different European Union bodies as well as with other international and regional organizations. We not only have very close co-operation with EUROPOL, but are also actively engaged with the South-Eastern Police Chiefs Association (SEPCA), the Task Force on Organized Crime in the Baltic Sea Region (BSTF), and FRONTEX. Through these partnerships, we create a synergy that enhances our individual strengths and minimizes our weaknesses, in tackling complex international crimes within and beyond the European region.

Another major strategic initiative of INTERPOL, to better support all our member states, is the establishment of the INTERPOL Global Complex (IGC) in Singapore. As you already know, the IGC, which was endorsed by the 79th INTERPOL General Assembly in 2010, will complement the General Secretariat headquarters in Lyon, France. Among its various roles, the IGC will also serve as a platform to establish more partnerships with both the private and public sector, thereby allowing INTERPOL to leverage the strengths of both sectors for the benefit of all its 188 member countries.

I am happy to report that the design consultant for the building has been selected. After a very competitive bidding process, INTERPOL and the various Singapore authorities all agreed that the winner not only provided the best concept design but turned out to be also the cheapest.

The strategic impetus and value of the IGC have also gained traction with member countries and other stakeholders. This was evident from the unanimous support this initiative received at the last General Assembly in Doha. Tangible contributions over and above what Singapore is contributing in terms of land and building are also forthcoming. The government of Qatar's generous donation of USD 2 million towards the project last year set

the tone. On Monday, you would have learnt from the Secretary General's message, and the extensive media coverage that followed, that the world's soccer governing body, FIFA, has agreed to contribute a total of EUR 20 million over the next 10 years. INTERPOL will with this contribution create a FIFA Anti-Corruption Training Wing within the IGC in Singapore enabling us to play the lead enforcement role in cleaning up the world's most popular game. With the co-operation of our members we will also be dealing a decisive blow to match-fixers and the links they may have to transnational organized crime groups.

Conclusion

Indeed, as an Organization, we have come a long way but we must not rest on our laurels. With the ever evolving security landscape, we must be relentless in enhancing regional and global police co-operation and strengthening global law enforcement mechanisms. We must continue to support effective national policing and facilitate the seamless transition to international policing. I am confident that through your commitment and support, INTERPOL will continue to be a relevant, dynamic and proactive global police organization that is ready to support its member countries in all the regions of the world.

I wish you a fruitful and enriching experience over the next few days. Thank you and good day to all.
