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Remarks

By

Mr Khoo Boon Hui

INTERPOL President

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Ms Annamaria Cancellieri – Minister of Interior of Italy;

Honourable Ministers;

Mr Ronald K Noble, INTERPOL Secretary General;

Mr Antonio Manganelli – Chief of Police/ Director General of Public Security of Italy;

Members of the INTERPOL Executive Committee;

Distinguished Delegates and Guests of the 81st INTERPOL General Assembly;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

Buongiorno

Welcome

Benvenuti a Roma. Welcome to Rome. With your presence, this landmark 81st INTERPOL General Assembly has broken several records in our Organization's history – the best attendance of Ministers at a law enforcement conference, the highest number of delegates at a General Assembly, the largest representation from member states, and the greatest interest in candidates offering their services on the Executive Committee. Some of our colleagues were speculating whether this overwhelming response is due to INTERPOL's growing stature or the appeal of the venue. With this hall filled to capacity, I can only conclude that it is both INTERPOL and Rome that has brought so many of us here. Just like in ancient times when some of the most passionate debates took place in the forums here, Rome once again witnesses a spirited discourse – this time involving 167 countries. On behalf of the entire INTERPOL community, I would like to express our deep appreciation to our Italian colleagues for making all this possible, and for their warm

hospitality and gracious hosting of the 81st INTERPOL General Assembly in the “Eternal City”. Indeed, Rome is one of the most beautiful and historic cities in the world, bursting with artistic flair and cultural heritage. I am sure that we are all looking forward to exploring its attractions at the end of our proceedings.

Yesterday, we successfully concluded the ministerial meeting, attended by around 100 ministers. The ministers acknowledged the need for innovation and international collaboration to address the challenges for police facing contemporary criminal violence, and issued a strong Ministerial Outcome Declaration. Looking back, it has indeed been my honour and privilege to attend the only two dedicated ministerial meetings that INTERPOL has organized. The first was in my home country of Singapore in 2009, which was also the first General Assembly I chaired, and the second was yesterday as I prepare to hand over the Presidency to a most worthy successor. I am heartened that this year’s ministerial meeting was on a much bigger scale with many insightful interventions. This demonstrates the growing reputation and recognition of INTERPOL as the trusted global player in the fight against crime and terrorism.

Increasingly, the international community and industry players will look to us as the voice of reason and the agent of change to make the world a better place. For example, our Secretary General had a seat with Heads of States, at the March 2012 Nuclear Security Summit in Seoul. As you will hear over the next few days, many organizations, both in the private and public sector are approaching us to partner them to drive safety and security initiatives.

As we step up and take on these greater responsibilities, we must try to understand the changes in our surroundings, and the driving forces behind them. This allows us to recalibrate our crime-fighting strategies and priorities that would help us accomplish our mission.

Within our adult lifetime, we have witnessed the invention of the World Wide Web, the 9/11 terrorist attacks, and more recently the Occupy Movement, Arab Spring, and the effects of climate change. Technological advances in manufacturing, telecommunications, the Internet and transport systems have accelerated change socially, politically, economically and environmentally. Our people, societies and markets are now more intricately connected and interdependent than before. What this means for us in the law enforcement community is that our operating environment has changed drastically. We now face an increasingly complex crime landscape.

Already, we are facing challenges dealing with transnational crime. This is because criminals are exploiting the same technologies that have allowed businesses to expand and shift their activities internationally. The criminal networks are now elastic in form, with the ability to move quickly, transform and operate from different locations to avoid investigation and prosecution.

Furthermore, different types of crime also often come together. For example, profit-driven organized crime groups are increasingly working with other groups to explore new areas of collaboration. They are good at adopting best, or rather, from our perspective, worst practices. This is clearly illustrated in drug trafficking syndicates copying the most extreme forms of violence perpetrated by terrorists. With the Internet enhancing everyone's capacity to learn, we cannot expect criminals to always behave in a pre-determined manner, with predictable cause and effect. Worse, we may be increasingly faced with networked groups of criminals with no clear allegiance to an organization or defined hierarchy, yet working effectively in concert.

Further compounding this complexity is speed. Are we able to share information as quickly as the criminals seem to do? Will we be able to discover and secure evidence before it is

wiped out? Will we be able to detect malicious rumours and defuse negative sentiments, to prevent the violence and social unrest that may arise before they go viral?

Technological advances coupled with great marketing often lead to consumer products that all of us embrace to enjoy a better quality of life. However, they also lead to new and complex threats. The growing number and variety of devices connected to the Internet is augmenting both the potential and impact of cybercrime. As we become more intricately networked and dependent on our connected technologies and devices, the potential of high-impact cyberattacks increases. The scope of what needs to be protected will also expand considerably.

I have raised a number of issues that each of us alone may not have answers to. But collectively, I am confident that we can do better, and come up with insightful perspectives and innovative responses. Indeed, our packed agenda over the next few days will provide various opportunities for us to share experiences and best practices on a whole range of issues, from border security to organized crime to terrorism. We will also have the opportunity to discuss a new priority focus for our strategic framework – that of building robust cybercrime support for our member countries in cooperation with international stakeholders. This underscores the reality that our problems cannot be solved in isolation in this interconnected operating environment.

INTERPOL has recognized the need to collaborate with a whole range of partners in the public and private sectors to deal with emerging threats, such as environmental crime, counterfeiting and trafficking. Some of these will extend INTERPOL's reach beyond the law enforcement community to the very public we serve. The INTERPOL Global Register initiative will literally place an INTERPOL tool in the hands of the consumer. With the use of a downloadable app for his smartphone, a consumer will be able to determine whether a product has been registered as genuine. If the product has not been registered, relevant

information will be transmitted to the manufacturer for analysis and subsequent enforcement follow up. This will aid their fight against the scourge of counterfeit products.

We can expect even more innovative ideas to surface, and through collaborative research and development, more and more new technology will be made available for our use. This will be given a boost when the INTERPOL Global Complex for Innovation in Singapore is open for business in 2014. Designed to create a global law enforcement hub that combines innovation, capacity building, and potential synergies with the private sector, it will prepare our Organization for the future, with the ability to evolve, innovate and adapt to the ever-changing security landscape. It will be a key force multiplier to ensure that our Organization remains strategically relevant and operationally effective in the complex environment we face.

We are already receiving numerous offers of support, in terms of external funding, expertise and technology. At the same time, we realize the need to guard our Organization's reputation by strengthening our procedures to enhance governance, transparency and due diligence when dealing with such offers. We will have the opportunity to discuss our evolving funding model over the next few days.

The challenges we face arising from the growing complexity of crime are opportunities for us to prove our mettle as the world's largest police organization. We have the systems, processes, databases, innovative tools and partnerships in place, with prospects of more effective ones to come. Above all, we have the one critical element that will bring INTERPOL to its next level of success, and that is all of us – a committed and united group of member countries, NCB officers, and staff who understand the nature of the threats, and who share our Organization's vision as their own. We will be having our Executive Committee elections on Thursday as part of our renewal process. I will be one of the seven members stepping down. I am sure I speak for my retiring colleagues as to what an honour and privilege it has been for us to serve you on the EC, and to thank you for all the support

you have provided us. We will again be making history on Thursday, when we will have our first ever female President. I am confident you will continue to support her and the new EC as they work with the secretariat and member countries and NCBs to make this great Organization an even greater one.

In conclusion, all of us are confronted with complex crime and policing challenges in an increasingly interconnected and dynamic operating environment. These complexities make law enforcement an unenviable task. But we must not be daunted by these challenges. We must continue to share with each other, collaborate with our international network of counterparts and private sector partners, and engage the communities we serve.

My fellow law enforcers, I stand here today as excited about the future of INTERPOL as when I was elected as your President four years ago. I am confident that with the right mindset, systems and people in place, INTERPOL will only grow from strength to strength. I believe that we will continue to be the Organization to make a difference in the safety and security landscape of the future.

With this in mind, I invite you to share freely, your invaluable insights and best practices over the next few days. I look forward to facilitating your discussions.

Grazie. Thank You.