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General Assembly 65th session Antalya



23rd-29th October 1996

FORMAL OPENING CEREMONY

The 65th session of the ICPO-Interpol General Assembly was held in Antalya, Turkey, from 23rd to 29th October 1996.

Mr Eriksson, President of Interpol, chaired the formal opening session which was held in the presence of Mr Mehmet Agar, Turkish Minister of the Interior, and Mr Alaadin Yüksel, Director General of the Turkish Police.

The full texts of the speeches given on this occasion appear below.

Speech by Mr Eriksson, President of the ICPO-Interpol

Mr Minister, honourable delegates, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen

Turkey has been a member of Interpol ever since the Organization was founded, with a short break in the years around World War Two. Turkey has always been an active member, as was already evident in 1955 when the General Assembly met in Istanbul. On behalf of Interpol I should like to express our appreciation to the Turkish Government for the great commitment Turkey has shown by once again hosting Interpol's General Assembly. I know that the preparations have been going on for a long time with great care and I am certain that this General Assembly session will be a success. I should also like to extend special thanks to the Head of NCB Ankara, Mr Dalda, who has been a prominent Turkish representative in Interpol for a total of 13 years. Mr Dalda has done tremendous and important work in preparation for this General Assembly.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is an honour for me to welcome all of you at the opening ceremony of the 65th General Assembly session. This is the last time that I shall have the privilege of addressing you in an opening speech in my capacity as President of the ICPO-Interpol. I will return to some of my conclusions from this period later in my speech.

Focusing on this General Assembly session, we shall have to decide on a number of important and complicated issues on the agenda. Some of those decisions will involve important matters affecting day-to-day law enforcement. Other decisions will involve important strategic issues for the functioning of our

Mr Eriksson, President of Interpol, making the opening speech.



Organization. My hope is that we will have constructive and fruitful discussions before the decisions are taken.

Some of us may think during this discussion and decision-making process that it is too time-consuming and slow. Some may not be happy with certain decisions. These views that some of you may have are perfectly understandable. But I do urge you to remember that this is an intercontinental organization with 176 member countries which represent different cultures, religions and different systems of government. Interpol is one of the largest international organizations in the world. Despite this — or because of this — the Interpol of today is an organization ready to step into the 21st Century.

Let us be proud: that we have a Constitution that has enabled us to institute law enforcement co-operation on a practical level across all continents; that we have well-trained professional officers in our NCBs and at the General Secretariat who are dedicated to the fight against crime; that we have the technology for telecommunications and computers which is well adapted to the demands of the 21st Century; that we are well under way with the implementation of the Regional Modernization Plan which will eventually provide all member countries with advanced technology; that we can see a dynamic pattern of closer regional co-operation in all continents; that we have advanced techniques and knowledge in conducting crime analyses.

These facts and many others show that for many years the General Assembly has lived up to its responsibility to develop an organization which serves the vast

majority of the people in the world against the small minority who commit crime. Let us follow this line at this General Assembly session as well and keep it in mind when we deal with issues on the agenda.

Crime development

Sadly, crime figures are rising all over the world. As well as traditional types of crime there are new types such as environmental crime, sex abuse of children and women, and computer crime.

Another trend is that organized crime is becoming more and more intercontinental. Crime syndicates tend to expand their business, cooperating with other crime syndicates in other countries and other continents.

Organized crime has even become a threat to the development of countries, to democracy and to fair competition in business life.

This is of course something we cannot accept as citizens or law enforcement officers.

Political development

The situation which I have described is of course of great concern to the politicians of the world. They are taking this situation seriously and they are also prepared to take steps in order to counter this tragic development.

This could be noticed at the 50th anniversary of the United Nations when the heads of governments from all over the world made it clear that the fight against organized crime should be on top of the agenda for the coming years.

Strong decisions in this direction were also taken by the Heads of State in the G7 group at their last meeting in June this year. It should be noted that in their declaration they congratulated our Organization and the World



A view of the official platform during the opening ceremony

Customs Organization on our work and recognized both organizations as partners for cooperation.

Members of the Executive Committee, myself and the Secretary General have also noticed a growing interest in combating international crime from our talks with various ministers in different countries.

I have noticed this during the visits I have made this last year to Hong Kong, the Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand, Ukraine, Russia, Jamaica, Haiti, Barbados, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Poland.

I want to emphasize that all the ministers with whom both I and the Secretary General have discussed this, have stated that they consider Interpol to be a very important tool in the combat against criminality.

Interpol's development

In the light of what I have just described, I should like to draw your attention to where our Organization stands today.

We have an advanced, fast and secure communications network, together with a computer system

which stands second to none compared to other systems in the world. At present and in the next few years most member countries will be guaranteed this technology and equipment by means of the Regional Modernization Plan. Interpol has also developed highly effective crime analysis methods. This technology and these methods are not only necessary, I would say that they are a prerequisite if we are to be successful in our efforts. Implementation of the Service Standards also means that Interpol is meeting our users' demands for a fast and efficient service.

Last but not least, we have well-educated and highly motivated officers both at the General Secretariat and at our NCBs.

Ladies and gentlemen, in connection with describing Interpol's enormous achievements in the technology field I ought to take the opportunity on behalf of the ICPO-Interpol to express condolences to Mrs McQuillan and her family because of the tragic loss of Mr Paul McQuillan. Mr Paul McQuillan has done invaluable work for Interpol and I do not hesitate to say that Interpol would not be such a successful organization without

him. He will leave a great gap in the Organization.

Ladies and gentlemen, as the President of the ICPO-Interpol I am very proud to announce that at its General Assembly last week, the United Nations decided to grant Interpol Observer status in the United Nations. The Secretary General and myself participated in the UN General Assembly Session when the decision was taken. We both felt that this was not only a milestone for our Organization but also for the global joint effort in the fight against international criminality.

I would like to take this opportunity to express the ICPO-Interpol's sincere gratitude to the Swedish UN delegation, which prepared the draft resolution adopted by consensus, and to the member countries that have representatives on Interpol's Executive Committee and have done so much to promote the Organization's Observer status within the United Nations General Assembly.

This decision by the UN is something we should be very proud of, because it means that Interpol has been recognized by the UN as a key organization in combating crime. The Secretary General and myself have already been invited to the UN to discuss joint efforts on issues such as drugs, organized crime and sex offences against minors. Accordingly, our new position means much greater responsibility for Interpol and we must now proceed and decide how to use this position in the best possible way in order to make our combat against crime even more effective. This will be emphasized by a resolution which will be presented during this General Assembly session. My belief is that we must strive for an agreement between our General Secretariat and the UN General Secretariat. Interpol should also have some representation within the UN General Secretariat. Annual meetings should also take

place at the highest level in order to co-ordinate and enhance the two organizations' joint efforts.

The G7 countries have also recognized Interpol as a key organization and are therefore using our Organization to implement the G7 declarations against organized crime. In October this year the G7 working group had a meeting in our Headquarters in Lyons.

In different regions of the world, countries are implementing regional initiatives in order to cooperate more closely in the law enforcement field. Most of these initiatives are taken and developed with the co-operation of our Organization. This co-operation with Interpol is of course positive for the Organization because it shows that the countries concerned have realized that Interpol has the best capacity in this field. I do not hesitate to go even further and state that this development also is in the best interest of the overall common concern to fight crime in the most effective way. If Interpol is involved from the beginning in these new initiatives the countries concerned will have access to the best knowledge and equipment in the law enforcement field. This is

the case in regions such as South America, Africa and Asia. We have seen another pattern in Western Europe in the European Union. However, I would now describe the situation as one where the co-operation between Interpol and Europol, within the European Union, has reached a more constructive stage, and we hope that we can look forward to an agreement between the two organizations on the basis of which we can develop fruitful and dynamic co-operation.

Ladies and gentlemen, this strength, knowledge and competence that Interpol has today is something that we must treasure with great care. But it is also our responsibility towards all law-abiding people to make sure that Interpol is used to its maximum capacity in the global fight against crime.

I also consider it to be my duty as outgoing President not only to summarize my term of office, but also to share my visions about the future of Interpol. I assure you that I do this with pleasure because I believe in Interpol and its future role.

I have summarized some of my conclusions and underlined some

The General Assembly sitting in plenary session



important strategic questions in my President's Report which will be presented during this General Assembly session. By presenting this report I am continuing an initiative which was taken up by one of my predecessors and I hope that my successor will continue this tradition.

As an organization Interpol has changed over the years in order to adapt itself to the demands of its users. The pattern of changes will be faster in the coming years due to changes in the political geography, in technology, in the behaviour of criminals, and so on. If Interpol intends to respond to these changes in order to serve its users, I foresee that it will have to change even faster.

In order to describe my visions I would like you to imagine how I will find Interpol in the year 2000 when I am visiting the General Assembly.

My visions are: that the NCBs are still the focal administrative point of Interpol's operational system, but that the national law enforcement agencies concerned have direct access to the Interpol's systems; that the President and Secretary General of Interpol and the members of the Executive Committee are the natural counterparts for the appropriate ministers and chiefs of police in every country regarding policy on combating international crime; that there is an awareness that Interpol is a law enforcement initiative, founded as early as 1923, but that it is of the utmost importance that we have direct contacts with the ministers responsible in every decision-making process they have concerning the fight against international crime; that the NCBs have a natural role in every nation as a co-ordinator of giving and receiving strategic criminal information between all national law enforcement agencies; that all member countries are organized in Interpol Sub-Regional Bureaus in each Continent, some continents may have several Sub-Regional

Bureaus; that all Vice-Presidents are responsible for the co-ordination of their respective Sub-Regional Bureaus and report to the Executive Committee; that Interpol is represented in the United Nations administration by a headquarters agreement; that Interpol is the natural counterpart for the United Nations when planning UN peace-keeping operations and all engagements concerning the combat against crime; that all member countries are paying their contributions to the Organization on time.

I would like to underline that these are my personal visions. It will take the Organization some years to reach that point but I am certain that we have the potential and possibility to achieve even more than we have done if we aim in this direction.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is time for me to sum up both my speech and my time as President and I am privileged to do this in front of highly qualified officers representing chiefs of police from all over the world. You represent an enormous potential when it comes to fighting crime. But you do not only represent this, you also represent Interpol and the values of Interpol. Let us not forget in our daily work that we should respect each and every individual we deal with regardless of his political opinion, sex, religion or race. Let us maintain respect for human rights.

Mr Minister, delegates, ladies and gentlemen, dear friends, I am very proud that I have had your trust to carry out this important task during these last two years. It has been a busy and difficult task but I have never regretted that I undertook it.

I have had constructive and solid support from my colleagues on the Executive Committee and I am very grateful for this.

The Secretary General has shared his enormous knowledge with me in the most generous way

and I have really enjoyed working with him. I owe him a lot.

The staff of the General Secretariat have supported me in the best possible way by their skill, dedication and effectiveness, and I am very grateful for their co-operation.

The colleagues who have taken care of me during my numerous visits to member countries around the world have, by their professional and kind reception, left me with unforgettable memories.

I should like to express my gratitude to all of you and I assure you that I will remember you in the future. I also hope that after having been involved in international law enforcement for fourteen years I will be able to contribute further in some other capacity in the future.

Thank you for your attention.

Opening speech by Mr Alaadin Yüksel, General Director of Security

Mr Minister, Mr President, dear Members of Executive Committee, dear delegates and guests, distinguished representatives of the media, Turkey has played an active role with high responsibilities since the ICPO-Interpol was established. We are proud to welcome distinguished delegates to the 65th General Assembly, 41 years after Turkey was the host country in Istanbul in 1955.

I welcome you, distinguished delegates, to the 65th General Assembly.

My dear colleagues, prior to my speech, I would like to carry out my first duty that everybody here I believe feels the same about. I want to thank Mr Björn Eriksson on your behalf — we thank him for his great efforts for two years.

Mr Eriksson has shown great interest and made great efforts to

hoist the Interpol flag. Interpol will never forget him.

We wish him happiness and success.

Ladies and gentlemen, in the last century, parallel to industrial developments, the world has become an information society with many problems and, with these changes, the laws of States, democracy, human rights, and the superiority of law concepts have begun to be debated in this age.

Whatever the changes that have occurred or whatever the topics of discussion, the only points which are not under debate are trust in human beings and understanding of security.

In this connection, co-operation between international police forces has gained more value when you consider the increase in crime and the means and techniques of committing crime, the easy way of passing borders, and organized crime amongst countries.

Mr Alaadin Yüksel, General Director of Turkish Security



Turkey believes in the value and virtue of democracy. Democracy means respect for human rights, superiority of law and the historical mission of the Turkish people.

In fact, I know that these values are common to all of us. Therefore, we have to develop Interpol co-operation which we have established by devoting great contributions depending on mutual values, and we have to raise the Interpol flag up to a higher level.

Ladies and gentlemen, I deeply regret to observe the increasing worldwide trends of crime.

Along with the usual crimes, we have to evaluate the applicability of struggling against computer crime, crime against the environment, and crime against children and women, all of which have been developed with new techniques and tactics by the criminals.

In addition, we also consider that there are other main problems which are very important for us. These are problems concerning illegal immigration and general public security, and problems which arise as a result of racism and threaten human rights and freedom and also cause an obstacle to countries' development.

We believe in the necessity for mutual co-operation directly in matters of security, human rights, democracy and PKK-originated narcotic crimes.

Because the activities of this terrorist organization not only concern Turkey, I should extend my deepest appreciation to the countries which realize successful efforts in combating the PKK.

It is necessary to emphasize that there is no discrimination against people living in Turkey: in other words, there is neither a Kurdish problem nor any other ethnic problem, but we do have a terrorist problem.

The PKK has been slaying people — without consideration for the fact that they are children or women — in that region which they claim to represent.

We, the people who are responsible for security in the whole country, keep on struggling against terrorism within the framework of laws and human rights.

The responsibility that the people expect from Interpol in fighting against crime affecting world security is greater than it was in the past.

For this reason, no matter how big the problem may be, we should keep on working in the spirit of general principles and determination.

We have to realize the capacity and the power of Interpol to make the world more secure and more democratic and for this reason we have to increase our efforts in contributing much more support to Interpol.

I am quite sure it would be a safer world if we increased our capability in co-operating by developing Interpol's principles and values.

Turkey and the Turkish police will continue their contribution to Interpol as a responsible and creative member.

On behalf of the Turkish police, I congratulate Mr President, the Members of the Executive Committee, Mr Secretary General, and all colleagues who contribute to Interpol, and wish you a nice time and success in your work during your stay in our country.

Speech by Mr Mehmet Agar, Turkish Minister of the Interior

Mr President, dear Members of the Executive Committee, dear delegates, dear guests and distinguished representatives of the TV and press, on behalf of the

Turkish Government, it is a great honour and a pleasure for me to welcome the delegates of member countries and the representatives of various international organizations to the 65th General Assembly of Interpol.

This is the second General Assembly of Interpol to be held in Turkey and a great honour for us. The first was in Istanbul in 1955.

As is well-known, crime is one of the most detrimental acts against public peace and security. To overcome these kinds of acts, besides the struggle at national level, co-operation at international level is also required. The manner of the struggle is clear: either we work separately and lose, or work together and win. Thus, we provide our citizens with a more peaceful life.

The criminals who commit crime, especially organized crime, the varieties of which increase day by day, such as trafficking in nuclear substances, forgery of credit cards, computer offences and offences against children and the environment, can flee to another country and hide themselves easily by utilizing technical developments: as a result, the authorities are confronted with obstacles in their attempts to arrest the criminals since there is no opportunity to carry out operations beyond national borders. It is also clear that the developments in communications and transportation make it hard for countries to struggle against these kinds of offences. In this framework, extensive information exchange and co-operation is required in struggling against international offences.

Besides the possibilities of countries' bilateral and multilateral co-operation with their neighbours and with other countries, overall co-operation is required on a regional basis and within the Interpol community.

We should aim to improve our current relations in this field. For the time being, we have agreements on co-operation with 42 countries on the basis of 139 legal documents, and we are planning new ones. In this respect, with regard to criminal activities in our region, we are making necessary preparations and communications for the establishment of a "Sub-Division of Interpol" in our country. With all these endeavours, we are aiming to improve the struggle against increasing international offences that I mentioned above.

We strongly believe that multilateral co-operation is required for the success of police activities of nations fighting against offences committed worldwide, in parallel with the removal of obstacles to tourism, travel and customs: such co-operation can take place through Interpol, which extends all over the world, on the basis of law, and which has a perfect organization 70 years old in 176 member countries, despite the differences of language, tradition and judicial systems.

The Turkish Police is among the founders of Interpol and has maintained its official membership for 66 years. This shows the importance given to co-operation with the General Secretariat and member countries by the Turkish Police in preventing ordinary law crimes and terrorist offences, and in combating drug trafficking.

Besides officially fighting other offences, when we analyse terrorism — which is a current problem of the world and causes the deaths of a lot of innocent people and material damage everyday in all parts of the world — we can define it as an epidemic disease, a systemized violent act which darkens our century and aims not only to destroy the public peace but also the legal orders of States.

To achieve their goals, terrorists provide their financial needs

firstly from drug trafficking and then kidnapping, taking hostages for ransom, collecting tributes, etc. Thus, they try to destroy the legal order by terrorizing the masses. Because it causes the death of a lot of innocent people and removes their right to live, terrorism must be considered as something that has to be condemned by the whole world and prevented definitively.

The terrorist organizations PKK and DEV-SOL which acted in our country have also put the public security of Europe in danger today. We clearly observe that these terrorist organizations can easily kill and kidnap people, collect tributes, attack representatives and even make bold to threaten the presidents of some countries.

The Turkish Republic is maintaining its decisive struggle against the terrorist organizations and has taken all measures in this respect. The activities of the organizations mentioned have been reduced to a certain level. I want to emphasize that our struggle is being continued in the way we desired.

Today, the activities and screen companies of these organizations have also been forbidden in some other countries following Germany and France. We would like to thank Germany, France and Belgium for their support. The terrorist organizations whose activities have been forbidden in these countries have moved their actions to other European countries. On the other hand, the terrorist side of these organizations had been disclosed several times in the European Parliament too. I also invite the other countries to show a decisive attitude in forbidding the activities of these terrorist organizations.

In order to quell terrorism worldwide, it is believed that bilateral and multilateral co-operation must be effectively carried out, which has not adequately been the case up to now. In this respect, we would like to indicate our support for

the "CAT" (Combat Against Terrorism) project which is planned by Interpol.

In the light of international studies made for this purpose up to now, I believe in the necessity of an advisory decision that will be taken in this session regarding preliminary studies, co-ordinated by the United Nations, which will end by an international convention that is appropriate to today's conditions and provides an effective struggle against terrorism. In this framework Interpol, as a most important consultant for the United Nations in this field, should take the subject in hand before all else and the delegates should also forward it to the appropriate authorities of member countries.

The Turkish Republic is ready to give her support to all the studies that will be made regarding these matters.

On behalf of the Turkish Government, I congratulate the President, the Executive Com-



Mr Mehmet Agar, Turkish Minister of the Interior

mittee Members, the Secretary General and all the colleagues who contribute to the activities of Interpol.

We are glad to have you in Antalya for the 65th General Assembly, and we declare the candidacy of Mr Yusuf Vehbi Dalda, Head of the Turkish National Central Bureau, for membership of the Executive Committee. I welcome you again, hoping that you will enjoy being in Turkey.

I would like to indicate that I feel proud of opening the session officially and wish you success.

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

During the first plenary session which was held on 26th October 1996, Kyrgyzstan's application for membership of Interpol was submitted, and accepted by the General Assembly.

Interpol now has 177 member countries.



PRESIDENT'S REPORT (1995-1996)

The President asked his colleagues to refer to his written report, Document AGN/65/RAP/No.19. He had no intention of presenting it at length, but he did wish to emphasize certain points which he felt very strongly about and which he considered to be subjects of strategic importance for Interpol's future. He felt that they should be supported by decision-makers at the highest national level, i.e. at government level, in each member country. In the context of such a development, the Organization should set up a professional public relations structure to keep the media informed of Interpol's activities in combating organized crime. As it had obtained Observer status in the United Nations General Assembly, Interpol should develop practical co-operation with the United Nations — co-operation that could be carried on, for example, in the form of organizational contacts between the General Secretariats of the two institutions. Interpol should also continue its work on forging links

with existing regional structures for police co-operation, and promote the development of regional police co-operation throughout the world. To meet demands as effectively as possible, the General Secretariat should be organized in such a way as to have different units for each region of the world.

Finally, everyone knew that financial issues were continuously being discussed within the Organization. The problems were caused by member countries that did not pay, countries that paid too late, and countries that were reluctant to increase the size of the budget. Those problems could be solved, partly through a change in the Constitution and partly through a change in its application. However, the best way to achieve improvement was to connect those issues with morale and solidarity. The Organization should continue to be in the front line, and a financial and organizational basis had to be created at national level in order to

give the best police officers, coming from as many countries as possible, the opportunity to work at the General Secretariat or at the Regional Sub-Bureaus.

Of course the Executive Committee had an enormously important role to play in solving the strategic problems he had mentioned. He had personally come to the conclusion that the members of the Committee should hold the position of National Police Commissioner or a corresponding position at national level. That would allow them to work more effectively in favour of Interpol on national issues. Each member of the Executive Committee should be given a specific task. The President concluded his presentation by stressing that the views he had put forward were his own personal ideas. It was now up to his colleagues to decide on the consideration they should give them. (Applause)

The General Assembly took note of the President's report.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

The report on the financial situation and results of the financial year are to be found on pages 24 to 30 of the Progress Report (see end of present issue) which was submitted by the ICPO-Interpol's Financial Controller and Director of Administration and Finance.

Report by the External Auditors on administrative and financial management during 1995

This report was submitted by Mr Reuter, External Auditor from the Chambre des Comptes du Luxembourg, in Document AGN/65/RAP, No. 12. One difference, as compared with previous years, was that the financial data was

presented in French francs, the currency used to prepare the budget since 1st January 1995. On the basis of his examination, the external auditor confirmed that the financial documents faithfully reflected the Organization's financial situation at 31st December 1995 and the result of its operations during the financial year ending on that date. He also considered that the accounts had been prepared in conformity with the accounting policy currently in force and that the operations carried out had been in conformity with the Financial Regulations. On the subject of staff management, the External Auditors had noted that a system of bonuses had been introduced to replace the former system of bringing forward the date of advancement of officials, and

that the introduction of the IUCS had resulted in substantial savings.

In conclusion, the External Auditors supported the following recommendations:

- the need to seek financing from outside the Organization, while taking care to ensure that sponsorship did not interfere with free competition when contracts were to be signed;
- the need to evaluate the use made by NCBs of new equipment placed at their disposal.

Draft budget for 1997 and information about the period 1998-2001

The draft budget was given in Document AGN/65/RAP, No. 13.

The draft budget had been drawn up on the basis of a "zero-growth" strategy, i.e. with an increase in the value of the budget unit limited to the rate of inflation in the Headquarters country, namely 2%. The draft budget was a realistic document which took account both of the need to keep the Organization's costs down, and of the Organization's new activities.

The Finance Sub-Committee members had studied the document in great detail, and had assured themselves that it complied with the priorities fixed by the General Assembly.

During the plenary session, the following draft resolutions:
 - AGN/65/P.RES/13 "Approval of the balance sheet and accounts for 1995: allocation of surpluses".
 - AGN/65/P.RES/14 "Approval of the 1997 budget", were adopted unanimously.

Contributions in arrears and application of the plan for reassessing statutory contributions

The Director of Administration and Finance submitted the table of contributions in arrears at 16th October 1996. He reported that three countries — Iran, the United Arab Emirates and El Salvador — had paid off their arrears since the table had been drawn up. Since the beginning of the year, the General Secretariat had received FRF 111,654,000 in contributions, FRF 103 million of which had been for 1996 and FRF 8 million for previous years. Compared with the situation at the same date in 1995, the percentage of contributions actually received for the 1996 financial year was good: 81% compared with 77%. Most of the countries paid their contributions more or less on time. The number of countries to which Article 52 had been applied had reached 33 and corresponded to FRF 7 million. The Executive Committee had had to cancel debt-rescheduling agreements with three countries.



ALLEMAGNE

Members of the German Delegation

The problem of contribution arrears was particularly serious because some of the countries to which Article 52 of the General Regulations had been applied were benefiting from regional modernization, and the related operating and training costs were being paid by the Organization.

In 1995, the number of budget units had risen from 1,250 to over 1,700; 52 additional budget units had been paid by 25 countries which had agreed to increase their contributions.

Proposal to reduce the number of budget units payable by member countries with less than 300,000 inhabitants (Dominica, Trinidad and Tobago, Dominican Republic)

The subject had been discussed during a meeting of the Executive Committee, which had given its views as follows.

- In the current context of zero growth, it would be inconceivable to reduce the number of budget units to be paid by the member countries.

- For reasons of equity, it was not possible to treat countries with very small populations more favourably than countries which had higher populations but a lower GNP per inhabitant and which paid identical contributions to the

United Nations and its specialized agencies.

- If the countries' proposal was accepted, they would be in a much more favourable position because of the inflation which had prevailed during the period when the budget unit had remained stable.

- The operating costs of the regional modernization equipment made available to those countries, which were paid by the Organization, represented in themselves almost two budget units.

Preliminary Draft Resolution AGN/65/A.P.RES/21 (Proposal to reduce the number of budget units payable by member countries with less than 300,000 inhabitants) was rejected by the Finance Committee.

Increasing the severity of sanctions imposed under Article 52 of the General Regulations and simplification of the debt-rescheduling procedure (amendment of Articles 3a and 30 of the Financial Regulations)

This was the subject of Report No. 14 and of Preliminary Draft Resolution AGN/65/A.P.RES/20, the wording of which was amended to take into account the resolution adopted by the General Assembly in plenary session. The General Assembly adopted Resolution AGN/65/RES/23.

LEGAL MATTERS

Amending the Organization's Constitution: Voting Conditions (amendment of Article 52 of the General Regulations)

The draft resolution was No. AGN/65/P.RES/1.

The Organization's Director of Legal Affairs pointed out that the principle of amending Article 52 of the General Regulations had been discussed at length during the General Assembly session in Beijing the year before. The Executive Committee had subsequently sent a circular to the NCBs asking them to state their views.

Forty of the 176 NCBs consulted had replied, and the draft resolution being submitted was based on those replies. The text conformed to the opinion given that there was no need to amend Article 42 of the Constitution and that it would be sufficient to clarify Article 52 of the General Regulations.

The proposal was based on the following legal arguments:

- The right to vote at General Assembly sessions was a basic right of all member countries which went hand in hand with membership of the Organization. That was a constant feature of international law, even if — in Interpol's case — it only appeared in Article 13 of the Constitution, which read: "Only one delegate from each country shall have the right to vote in the General Assembly".
- In the Constitution — the Organization's basic text — there were no provisions which restricted that right; in fact, the contrary might be deduced from the very clear wording of Article 42 on the conditions for amending the Constitution, which stated that all amendments "shall be approved by a two-thirds majority of the Members of the Organization".

- The only restrictions on voting were given in the General Regulations, Article 18 of which read: "Subject to Article 52 of the General Regulations, each country represented has one vote". Consequently, it could justifiably be considered that that fundamental right of member countries could not be abolished by a text which carried less legal force than the Constitution.

The preliminary draft resolution, submitted to the General Assembly in plenary session, was adopted to become Resolution No. AGN/65/RES/3.

Draft Resolution No. AGN/65/P.RES/2: Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly

The draft introduced new provisions in areas not currently governed by any constitutional or regulatory provisions.

Verification of credentials (Article 8)

Article 8 made it possible to verify that the competent

governmental authority referred to in Article 7 of the Constitution had in fact appointed the person designated as head of the delegation. The procedure described was more flexible than that which existed in other international organizations. The President settled any disputes which might arise and reported on his decisions to the General Assembly at the start of the session.

Seating of delegations (Article 19)

Two new developments were being proposed.

- The first place in the General Assembly conference hall was no longer automatically attributed to the first country whose name began with the letter "A" in French, but to a country whose name was drawn at random by the President during the Executive Committee session immediately preceding the General Assembly. That made the situation fair for all the delegations.
- For greater convenience in organizing the conference hall, only five members of each delegation would be allowed to sit behind their country's name plate; other delegates would be seated



wherever there was room in the hall.

The final version of the Rules of Procedure would have to take into account any amendments made to Article 52 of the General Regulations.

Draft Resolution No. AGN/65/P.RES/2 was unanimously adopted by the General Assembly and became Resolution No. AGN/65/RES/3.

Observer status with the United Nations

A decision taken on 15th October 1996 granted Interpol Observer status with the General Assembly of the United Nations. It was hoped that that would be a first step in the development of relations between Interpol and the United Nations. In Preliminary Draft Resolution No. AGN/65/A.P.RES/25, Interpol's President and Secretary General were asked: to consider the appropriate practical measures to ensure that the Organization gained maximum benefit from the United Nations' decision; to pursue their efforts to enter into negotiations aimed at concluding outline agreements, conventions or memoranda of understanding with the United Nations and with its specialized agencies, and to submit any such agreements to the General Assembly for approval.

That preliminary draft resolution referred to Resolution No. AGN/64/RES/11 adopted by the General Assembly in 1995 at its session in Beijing and responded to the need to conclude agreements with other international organizations.

Preliminary Draft Resolution No. AGN/65/A.P.RES/25 was adopted unanimously.

Organization of General Assembly sessions

Preliminary Draft Resolution No. AGN/65/A.P.RES/12.

The report on the subject is summarized below.

In recent years there have been problems with the preparation of General Assembly sessions, particularly when several countries offer to host the General Assembly in the same year.

The material preparation of a General Assembly session is quite a heavy responsibility which, for certain countries, has to begin at least a year or two in advance. Article 12 of the Constitution provides that "during the final meeting of each session, the General Assembly shall choose the place of meeting for the following session".

Bearing these provisions in mind, the Executive Committee wished to study the conditions under which a General Assembly session could be organized. It adopted two documents which are being submitted to the General Assembly, one entitled "Organization of General Assembly sessions: Specifications" and the other entitled "Special Agreement on the ICPO-Interpol's privileges and immunities during Executive Committee meetings and General Assembly sessions".

The "Specifications" document lists the obligations incumbent upon a country wishing to host a General Assembly session and those which are incumbent upon

the General Secretariat. It incorporates many of the points which are to be found in the existing "Memorandum on preparing a General Assembly session" but gives additional information about how invitations should be submitted to the General Assembly. In particular, the authorities empowered to extend the invitation must give a written assurance beforehand that all member countries, without exception, will be allowed to send a delegation to the General Assembly session, that the obligations described in the Specifications will be respected, and that an agreement on privileges and immunities will be signed. A file giving practical details of the arrangements for the General Assembly session is also required. Article 1 of the Specifications recommends that countries wishing to host a General Assembly session should announce that fact at least two years ahead of time.

This provision takes account of the statutory requirement that the General Assembly shall decide where it shall meet the following year. It is intended to give some form of priority to those countries which announced their intentions first. Nevertheless, the final decision rests with the General Assembly itself.

The document on the ICPO-Interpol's privileges and immunities during Executive Committee meetings and General Assembly sessions is intended to provide the delegates and the General Secretariat staff with legal guarantees during their stay in the country where the General Assembly is being held, to ensure they can enter and leave the territory, and to enable the General Assembly session to proceed smoothly.

Following a discussion, Preliminary Draft Resolution No. AGN/65/A.P.RES/12 was adopted.



The Lithuanian Delegate

INTERNATIONAL DRUG TRAFFIC

Drugs Committee

Mr Chihuri, Zimbabwe, was elected to chair the Committee.

Mr Bain, Assistant Director (Drugs), reported to the Committee on the Drugs Sub-Directorate's activities since the General Assembly session in Beijing. He listed the meetings which had been held during that time, as well as the various reports and other documents which had been produced, and also described co-operation with other international organizations.

He introduced Report No. 15, entitled "International Illicit Drug Traffic in 1995".

The President warmly thanked the Assistant Director for his very comprehensive report.

The Chinese Delegate said that his Government's battle against drug traffic was a permanent one, and great efforts had been made nationally with the bans on consumption, traffic and production of illicit substances. China had ratified the international conventions on drug abuse and trafficking, and was working on implementing them in agreement with the United Nations and in co-operation with its neighbours. The Chinese Government shared a great deal of information with Interpol's General Secretariat, and hoped to do even more in the future. In fact, China considered that the only solution to the serious problem of drugs lay in international co-operation. It had therefore decided to organize an international meeting of experts from 25th to 29th November 1996 in Shanghai, where the first international meeting on drugs had been held in

1901. The speaker thanked the General Secretariat for the help it had given to his country and assured his colleagues that the Chinese NCB would continue to co-operate with them in their common fight against drug trafficking.

The Delegate of Pakistan described the situation in his country, where 3.1 million people were chronic drug users (there were 1.5 million heroin addicts). Afghanistan produced 3,000 tonnes of opium. The authorities in Pakistan used every means possible, even the army, to combat drugs and destroy laboratories in tribal regions. But as law enforcement improved, and because of the political instability in Afghanistan, the trafficking cartels were looking for new routes. The Delegate appealed for law enforcement to be stepped up throughout Central Asia and for the conclusion of more bilateral and multilateral agreements. He said he had been pleased that the seminar organized in Tashkent that year had tried to define a global strategy.

Focusing on narco-terrorism, the Turkish Delegate described the PKK's activities in connection with drug trafficking. He suggested that Interpol should give priority to the questionnaire on drug cases in order to highlight the links between traffickers and terrorists. He proposed that a working party similar to the one that had met in Antalya from 1st to 3rd June 1994 should be set up, as well as a special unit to study such matters, and added that it would be useful to publish half-yearly reports for circulation to international organizations. Turkey had drawn up a

comprehensive report on its fight against drug trafficking.

The Nigerian Delegate said he would give his colleagues a written report on the situation in his country which used to be a transit point for drug trafficking but where the authorities' efforts had greatly improved the situation. Surveillance of the air and land routes used by the Latin American and Southern Asian syndicates had forced the traffickers to turn to psychotropic substances. A "scorched earth" policy had led to the virtual eradication of the cannabis plantations. A new law on money laundering adopted in 1995 had made many arrests possible. The Nigerian authorities were working on all fronts: through bilateral agreements on co-operation with the international agencies and countries fighting against trafficking, through campaigns to mobilize the population, through a battle against the production of false documents, etc. The Delegate stressed that all countries should reply to Nigeria's offers of co-operation in the fight against drug trafficking.

The Indian Delegate congratulated the speakers and rapporteurs who had denounced narco-terrorism. He described the problems his country was experiencing because of its proximity to major producer countries. He said the Indian authorities had declared war in particular on methaqualone and precursors. Measures had been taken to prevent precursors from leaving Indian territory.

The South African Delegate said that, contrary to what was often believed, drug problems were by



Mr Alberto Siva, member of the Argentine Delegation

no means new in his country where the dangers of cannabis, methaqualone, LSD — and recently crack and cocaine — were only too well known. A programme to eradicate cannabis plantations had been quite successful. Many methaqualone (mandrax) users were complaining about the poor quality of the local product and going over to crack. The South African authorities co-operated with the suppliers of chemicals in order to identify suspect transactions; that had enabled them to dismantle a number of laboratories. A law had been proposed to improve surveillance of the traffic in precursors. The fight against crack was becoming increasingly necessary because a veritable explosion of consumption was feared. The South African police had tried to infiltrate groups of traffickers, without much success. The speed of communications via X.400 had, however, enabled them to obtain quite good results.

The Bahamian Delegate said that in his country, previously only a transit country, drug addiction had increased. Co-operation with the United States had made it possible to stem the flood of drugs and a

programme had been launched to eradicate the local cannabis plantations.

The Iranian Delegate described the effective programme undertaken to combat organized drug trafficking in his country which was a party to the 1988 Convention on Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. The measures taken at Iran's borders had obliged the large caravans to divide up into smaller groups, with the result that traffickers had started to use other routes via the CIS and Afghanistan. Controls had also been tightened on road vehicles and air transport, a centre had been set up to tackle drug trafficking in the south of Iran, and a comprehensive intelligence system had been introduced. Efforts were also being made to reduce demand by setting up rehabilitation centres and alerting the population to the dangers of drugs. The speaker called for greater co-ordination in the fight against drugs at international level, and advocated the introduction of international programmes to reduce demand.

The United Kingdom Delegate, representing the Gibraltar police, described measures taken in the

sensitive Gibraltar area to combat drug trafficking and tobacco smuggling. Inflatable semi-rigid craft (used for smuggling drugs) and outboard vessels (used for smuggling tobacco) were targeted for special surveillance. A decree dated 6th July 1995 had amended the import laws to prohibit the importation of semi-rigid vessels, and a licensing system had been devised. That had led to the confiscation of 66 vessels used in the traffic, and to improved surveillance carried out by maritime police units. Those measures had made it possible to reduce the number of "shuttles" from 20 vessels a day to one in the case of tobacco contraband, and from 7 a day to 3 in the case of drug trafficking.

The UNDCP Observer congratulated Interpol on its report the conclusions of which were, on the whole, optimistic. The effect of the measures taken had resulted, for instance, in South American traffickers' experiencing greater difficulties in obtaining precursor chemicals. Since the result of countermeasures in one country could often be to move the problem on to another, it was also important to develop international co-operation, particularly by applying the three international conventions to the full.

He added that stabilization of the price of cocaine on the main market — the United States — could mean either that the market was saturated, or that the consumers were turning their attention more to synthetic stimulants which were easier to obtain or manufacture. It was also essential to combat traffic in precursor chemicals. That subject would no doubt be raised at the meeting in Shanghai in November.

The Korean Delegate expressed his satisfaction at the international community's acknowledgment of his government's success in the fight against drug trafficking. Korea was about to ratify the 1988 Convention and, in particular, the Korean government had taken legislative steps against money laundering; had developed

techniques for combating drug trafficking; was striving to check traffic in precursors; was keeping a close watch on organized crime; was planning treatment and public awareness programmes. Korea hoped for greater co-operation in Eastern Asia.

The Lebanese Delegate recalled that his country was a major exporter of hashish and heroin. However, since 1990, the total surface devoted to cannabis plantations had been reduced from 25,000 to 11,000 hectares and that of poppy plantations from 5,000 to 1,000 hectares; the results could be seen on satellite pictures. The very primitive and rudimentary industry which produced those drugs had also been completely eradicated. The Lebanese officers, who worked in close co-operation with their Syrian and Turkish colleagues, had been able to carry out those programmes with help from liaison officers based in Cyprus. Lebanon was asking the international community and the UNDCP to help them compensate the former producers for the loss of their income.

The Syrian Delegate said that his country, which was only a transit country and not a consumer country, was making considerable efforts to combat drug trafficking. Syria was a party to all the international conventions on drug traffic and a member of the Middle Eastern Drugs Committee, and had

adopted a law in 1993 which provided for very serious sanctions (even capital punishment) for traffickers.

The Argentine Delegate said that the Argentine Federal Police had acquired a data bank to which all police forces were required to report interrogations and arrests. That information was communicated to the NCB, which transmitted it to the Interpol General Secretariat via X.400. It would be desirable for all the countries to communicate their information to the General Secretariat in that way. The battle against drug traffic could be won if all the countries combined their efforts and made proper use of the weapons available to them, particularly telecommunications facilities. The Delegate referred his colleagues to the document he had communicated.

The Romanian Delegate said that he had given the General Secretariat a comprehensive report on the situation in his country.

Evolution of the traffic (extracts from Report No. 15)

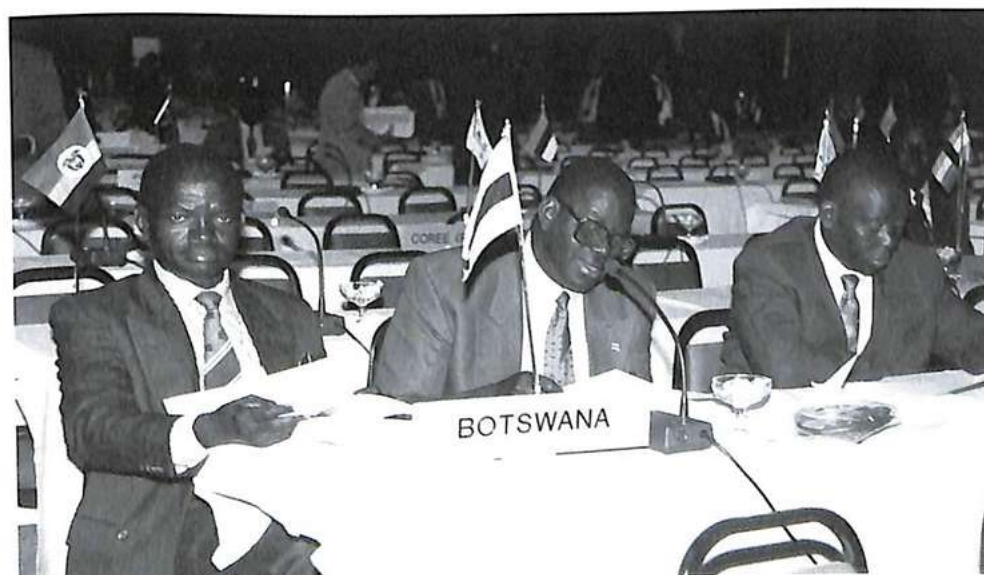
During 1995, the production of heroin, cocaine, cannabis and psychotropic substances was at a record high. The drug trade continued to be a profitable international business in which

traffickers aggressively developed new markets for their products.

Increased shipments of morphine and heroin were transported to Europe from source countries in South-West Asia via land and sea routes, while South-East Asian heroin continued to dominate the North American market. There was increased movement of Colombian heroin by commercial air transport to North American airports.

The increased availability of cocaine was evident throughout 1995, with record seizures being made by drug law enforcement agencies in South, Central and North America, the Caribbean and Europe. More and more, Central and Eastern European countries were used by South American cartels to take cocaine in transit onto the West European market, and West African nationals emerged as cocaine couriers from South America to Europe via West African airports. Cannabis supplies were abundant in numerous countries. Multi-ton shipments of cannabis products were transported between continents in merchant vessels and inside container trucks intermingled with legitimate cargo. The popularity of cannabis, coupled with enormous profits, has encouraged entrepreneurs to embark on new techniques of cultivation, especially in the United States and the Netherlands.

Large quantities of amphetamines were seized in several countries. In Europe, the Netherlands and Poland continued to be source countries for the European market. As in past years, methamphetamine continued to be manufactured in clandestine laboratories in the United States. South Africa continued to be targeted as the main consumer market for methaqualone smuggled from India, a major source; however, Indian law enforcement agencies have made record hauls and evidence is now forthcoming of the existence of clandestine methaqualone laboratories in South and East African countries. In African countries the abuse of



synthetic stimulants such as amphetamine/pemoline continued to be a major problem.

Production of clandestine methamphetamine destined for the United States is increasing in Mexico. In Asia and the Pacific region, methamphetamine abuse was a major concern for the Japanese authorities. In other countries in the region, particularly South Korea, China, Hong Kong, Thailand, Philippines and Australia, there were significant seizures of various psychotropic substances, indicating increasing abuse in the entire region.

Opiates

Opium

During 1995, the Near East, South-West Asia, Central Asia, South-East Asia, Mexico and Colombia remained the principal regions of illicit poppy cultivation. In spite of eradication and crop substitution programmes carried out in these regions, the total illegal production of opium is estimated to exceed 4,000 tons. There was regular transnational opium trade between Afghanistan and Iran in South-West Asia, between Afghanistan and Central Asia, and

between China and Myanmar in the South-East Asian region. There were more and more reports of the conversion of opium into morphine and heroin in clandestine laboratories in and around the production areas. Principal source and transit countries reporting significant opium seizures were: Iran (120 tons against 117 tons in 1994), Pakistan (200 tons against 14.3 tons in 1994), India (2 tons) and China (1 ton). In the western hemisphere, Mexico and Colombia were the principal producers of opium. Mexican authorities estimate annual production at 40 tons. Colombia's opium cultivation was reported to have covered over 12,000 hectares.

Morphine

Illicit traffic in morphine base continued in the West Asian region during 1995. The Iranian authorities intercepted 11 tons of morphine, the bulk of it on the border between Afghanistan and Pakistan, possibly bound for the West by the overland route. Drug trafficking groups found it cheaper to buy morphine in the source areas, considering it more profitable to convert morphine into heroin in clandestine makeshift laboratories in the European region

where chemicals could be obtained. During 1994/1995, the Turkish authorities seized approximately 51 tons of acetic anhydride diverted from legitimate trade between Western European and Eastern countries. The Turkish authorities dismantled six makeshift clandestine laboratories in different parts of the country in 1995.

Heroin

In 1995 there was a significant escalation in heroin production and its transnational transportation in spite of improved international law enforcement co-operation. South-West Asian heroin production and traffic were more prevalent than in previous years. This was ostensibly to meet the great demand by consumers in South-West Asia as well as in Europe and North America.

The bulk of the South-West Asian heroin, produced or refined on the Afghanistan/Pakistan border, was intended for the European market. During 1995, the Pakistan authorities seized a total of 10 tons of heroin, dismantling 15 clandestine laboratories. In a major operation in the Tribal Belt bordering Afghanistan, the Pakistan para-military task force seized 6.3 tons of heroin, 10 tons of opium and 3.7 tons of acetic anhydride, dismantling 15 makeshift clandestine heroin laboratories. This was by far the largest seizure of heroin ever recorded by any drug law enforcement agency.

Afghanistan was torn by civil strife, with no law enforcement activity, and reports indicated that the annual production of opium there exceeded 2,500 tons. There are reports that numerous clandestine laboratories are located in several provinces, some of them reportedly operating along the Afghanistan/Tajikistan border region. During 1995, the Iranian authorities seized 2 tons of heroin en route to the West. Apparently the heroin trail originating from the Afghanistan/Pakistan border region, transiting through Iran and

Members of the Colombian Delegation

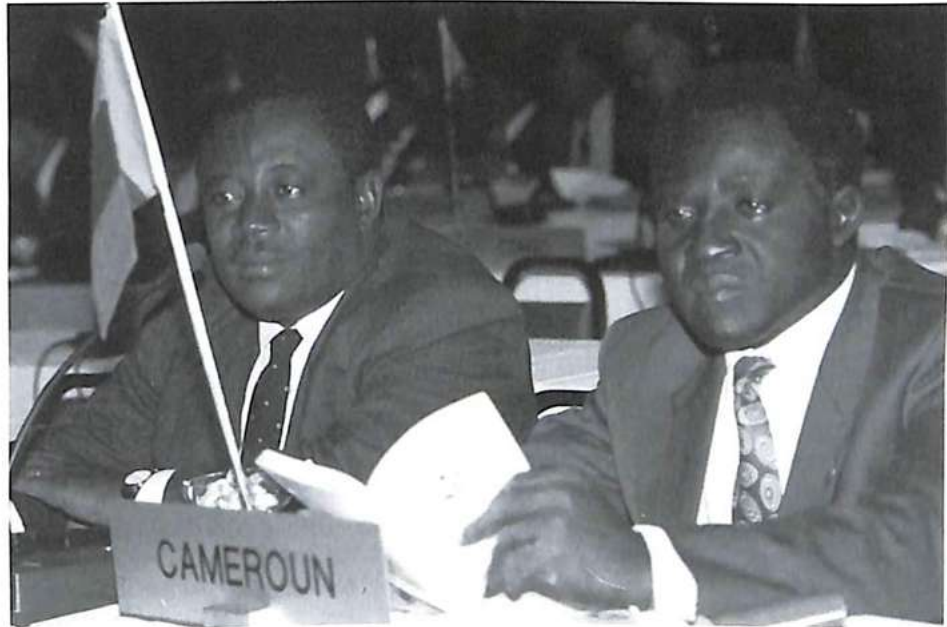


Turkey, was intended to lead to the West European market.

On the basis of European country reports, almost 80% of the 10 tons of heroin seized in Europe in 1995 (including 3.5 tons in Turkey) was bound for the European market. The war in former Yugoslavia has disrupted the traditional Balkan Route, and drug trafficking groups are now increasingly transporting heroin in vehicles north through Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary, Slovakia and the Czech Republic to Germany, and also via Greek ports where it is concealed inside TIR trucks and ferried across to Italian ports. TIR trucks continued to carry major loads of heroin along the Balkan Route originating from Turkey. During 1995, 20 TIR trucks were detected carrying about 1,800 kg of heroin. In Hungary, the authorities recovered 211 kg from one TIR truck. In the United Kingdom, where 1,342 kg of heroin were seized during the year, large quantities were recovered from the tourist buses and private vehicles arriving from the Eastern European countries. The "opening up" of Central and Eastern European countries proved advantageous to drug trafficking organizations which are using the countries in the region for storage and transit. Turkish crime syndicates continued to be actively involved in the transportation and distribution of heroin in Europe, working in close collaboration with organized criminal groups based in several European countries.

With the bulk of the heroin from South-West Asia being taken along the Balkan Route to Europe, there were fewer heroin seizures at European airports. Asian and African nationals were relatively less active, whereas more European nationals — especially from Central and Eastern Europe — surfaced as heroin couriers working for drug trafficking organizations from the airports of Cambodia, Vietnam, Thailand and Laos. African groups, especially Nigerians, were active in Pakistan during 1995.

In the Near East, Lebanon ceased to be a major source country for



illicit narcotics, owing to the efforts made by the Lebanese and Syrian security forces to eradicate poppy and cannabis cultivation in the Bekaa Valley. In Central Asia, however, the situation, appears to have deteriorated. Both opium and heroin are reported to be easily available and traffickers (particularly from Azerbaijan and Georgia) are said to be active. At present, Afghanistan is the source country for heroin but opium production has escalated in Tajikistan, particularly in the region of Gorno-Badakhshan. Movements of acetic anhydride from Kazakhstan and Russia to Afghanistan, through Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, were reported.

In South-East Asia, the heroin scene appears to have undergone a dramatic change. Based on seizure data, heroin processing appears to be declining in the border areas of Thailand, Myanmar, and Laos, popularly known as the Golden Triangle. Thailand, with its geographical location, modern transportation, developed coastline and well-connected air and sea ports in Bangkok, still remained the principal transit country for heroin exports but seizures have considerably declined. During 1995, the Thai authorities seized only half a ton of heroin, as compared with one ton in 1994

and two tons in 1993. The same trend has been observed in other countries in the region. For example Myanmar seized 72 kg of heroin in 1995 compared with 233 kg in 1994, Laos 49 kg compared with 53 kg in 1994, China 2,376 kg compared with 4 tons in 1994, Malaysia 103 kg compared with 178 kg in 1994 and Hong Kong 373 kg compared with 542 kg in 1994. The tight law enforcement in the region and beyond, low production of opium and the immobilization of Khun Sa the Myanmar drug lord, could partly explain this phenomenon.

The trend was still for China to be used as an alternative route for opium and heroin smuggled from Myanmar to Hong Kong. China's Yunnan Province is at the heart of the trafficking route. During 1995 the Chinese authorities seized 2,376 kg of heroin. Because of its close proximity to mainland China, Hong Kong continues to be a staging area in the Far East region. During 1995, it was evident that drug trafficking groups were moving into Laos, Vietnam and Cambodia to take heroin onto the international market, transiting through airports in all three countries. This was confirmed by significant seizures in Phnom Penh (Cambodia), Vientiane (Laos) and Ho Chi Minh City (Vietnam) of

heroin found in the possession of drug couriers bound for European destinations.

Based on reports received from United States drug law enforcement agencies, approximately 68% of the heroin seized in the United States during 1994 originated from South-East Asia. Countries such as Malaysia, Singapore, Philippines and Indonesia, where there is domestic heroin consumption, were also used as transit countries. Australia was another major recipient of South-East Asian heroin — organized criminal groups (Vietnamese) played a major role in the heroin trade there.

Europe and North America remain the two major heroin markets in the world today. As noted above, heroin in the United States originates mainly from South-East Asian countries which have well-knit networks in the United States. The United States authorities seized about 1,348 kg of heroin in 1995 (1,244 kg in 1994). In 1994, 68% arrived from South-East Asia, 9% from South-West Asia, 15% from Colombia and 8% from Mexico. Mexican heroin traffic to the United States continues to be controlled by Mexican criminal groups. Colombian heroin is increasingly transported by Colombian nationals using commercial airlines that fly to New York and Miami. Intelligence reports also suggest that South American cocaine cartels may be using existing cocaine smuggling networks to facilitate the shipment of Colombian heroin to North America and Europe.

Cocaine

The most newsworthy event of 1995 was the arrest of several of the major leaders of the Cali trafficking organization and the head of the Gulf of Mexico Cartel. It was to be expected that cocaine distribution would be affected. However, by the end of 1995 and to date in 1996, it was not clearly evident that fluctuations in numbers of seizures were directly



Members of the Canadian Delegation

related to those arrests. Prices and street supplies appear to be basically stable in the worldwide cocaine market. Using Europe as an indicator of supply, seizures across the region were relatively evenly spread through-out the calendar year 1995. This rudimentary statistical evaluation gave no indication that the supply of cocaine had diminished.

Preliminary worldwide figures gathered by the Interpol General Secretariat for 1995 indicate an overall decrease in cocaine seized during the 12-month period. All in all, the majority of cocaine seizures occurred at entry points into the various world markets (except in Colombia), as opposed to resulting from interior trafficking investigations. Colombian organizations still dominate the movement of cocaine into Europe and everywhere else around the world with the exception of the United States, where Mexican criminal organizations have further expanded their trafficking efforts. What is changing is the proliferation of non-Colombian nationals involved across the spectrum of traffickers and transporters.

Europe

As expected, a significant number of cocaine couriers arrested at European airports were of West African origin or working

for traffickers of West African origin. Colombians, however, remained the number one group of traffickers arrested, with Germans second.

In spite of the record amount of cocaine seized in 1994, evidence of a market glut did not surface in 1995. Cocaine continues to be the second drug of choice (after cannabis) throughout Europe. The secondary drug market may be facing competition from the use of MDMA and other psychotropic substances. Crack cocaine, experienced in the United States as an indicator of market conditions, has yet to gain a strong foothold in Europe, being evident mostly in the United Kingdom because of Jamaican gang influence.

North America

Seizure data from the United States showed a downturn in total cocaine seized from 1994 to 1995. Preliminary figures for 1995 show that almost 98 metric tons were seized by United States authorities compared with over 120 tons in 1994. This trend may be related to the increasing demand for heroin in the United States. Seizures of heroin at entry points (in the South East of the country and on the Mexican border) and street arrests and seizures support this premise. Heroin users appear more frequently in hospital emergency

rooms and treatment programmes than in years past. Snorting and smoking heroin have become popular methods for taking the drug, thus avoiding the stigma associated with injecting. The methods for smuggling heroin are following the patterns set by cocaine traffickers in the 1980s. Colombian and West African traffickers make up the bulk of these couriers.

The United States cocaine market is being influenced more and more by Mexican traffickers operating under the direction of four major trafficking organizations. These criminal groups learned the trade from their Colombian suppliers and, as transporters for the Colombians, have taken payment in both cash and product.

Concerns about Mexico's role as a transit country and the degree to which trafficking organizations have penetrated the business and public sectors, particularly at the state and local levels, have generated comparisons with Colombia's situation a decade ago. However, the government of Mexico has declared drug trafficking to be Mexico's number one security problem and the nation's president has pledged the country's resources to solve that problem.

South and Central America

As mentioned above, the arrest in 1995 of several of the kingpins of the Cali Cartel raised questions about that event's possible effect on the supply of cocaine. Price decreases noted shortly after the captures may have been false indicators stimulated by the trafficking organizations themselves in order to further expand the market. Short-term indications are that the only real effect of the arrests has been on the flow of raw materials used to make cocaine, not on cocaine production, transportation and distribution. It seems clear at this point that the organization itself prepared for the eventuality of the arrests of its headmen by stockpiling sufficient product throughout its pipelines. So much attention has focused on that organization that relatively little is known about numerous other trafficking groups which stand ready to fill the void even with the Cali kingpins out of the picture. Colombian influence is prevalent in production and wholesale distribution worldwide. Although the Colombians may use various ethnic groups to transport and distribute the drugs, they still hold the reins of production.

Cultivation levels of coca leaf continue to escalate in the three major producer countries — Peru,

Bolivia and Colombia. New fields of coca planted in Peru in 1993 arrived at maturity in 1995, and additional fields are reported to be under development due to abandonment of older fields, particularly in the northern Huallaga Valley. Peru's potential coca leaf production is over 183,000 metric tons which could yield 460 metric tons of cocaine. Eradication efforts in Bolivia kept cultivation relatively static from 1994 to 1995 with a potential leaf yield of 85,000 metric tons and cocaine potential of 240 metric tons. Colombian cocaine leaf production increased by about 13% up to nearly 41,000 metric tons, with potential cocaine production from that amount at about 80 metric tons. Of course, Colombian cocaine production still depends heavily on leaf brought in from the other countries.

Brazil, Venezuela, Argentina, Paraguay and Chile are experiencing the spillover effect of increased pressure from law enforcement in the three major producing countries. These five countries are being used with greater frequency in the cocaine trafficking process, not just as transit zones but also for storage and brokerage. The United States DEA estimates that over 100 metric tons of cocaine HCL transit through Venezuela every year. It is estimated that it takes about 3 tons of cocaine per month to satisfy demand in Rio de Janeiro alone. The town of Pedro Juan Caballero in Paraguay and its neighbour Ponta Pora in Brazil are both very active as brokerage centres and storage points. Consumption of cocaine base paste in Chile is one of the country's most serious drug concerns, and seizures doubled to over 2 tons from 1994 to 1995.

Africa

West African trafficking organizations continue to gain in sophistication and tenacity in their efforts to move cocaine into Europe and Africa. An analytical study undertaken by the General Secretariat's Analytical Criminal Intelligence Unit into this type of



GHANA

trafficking organization (Operation Transal), has confirmed an opinion held by most law enforcement services which have dealt with the West African trafficking phenomenon: it is extremely difficult to define the organizational structure of West African groups and even more difficult to target their activities for enforcement action. This fact notwithstanding, several aspects of the activities and profiles of couriers associated with these groups were substantiated. This led to the recent creation of an African Trafficking Group Initiative within the Drugs Sub-Division to focus more fully on the structure of these organizations.

The West African-related seizures of cocaine reported to the General Secretariat have shown patterns with several common features among couriers parallel to those witnessed in the past with Nigerian heroin smugglers. The connections used by West African cocaine traffickers to acquire cocaine lie mainly in Brazil. A trend towards using couriers from other parts of Africa developed in 1995, with frequent use of false United States and European passports and visas to Brazil obtained from that country's consulates in other South American countries. Many of the couriers arrested are former asylum seekers in European countries. Confirming their true identities in their home countries is virtually impossible. To date no widespread smuggling of cocaine by way of maritime or air cargo has been attributed to West African organizations; this feature was also found in the Nigerian heroin smuggling analyses previously done.

Cocaine trafficking organizations are taking greater advantage of the emerging freedoms in South Africa to expand the distribution of the drug in the southern cone of Africa. Trafficking by couriers of South African nationality and those from surrounding countries was a factor in numerous seizures in Brazil, Argentina and various European countries. A growing consumer market for cocaine in South Africa



EQUATEUR

has resulted in widespread courier activity in Mozambique and other countries in the southern cone. Authorities in South Africa have focused attention on the commercial air routings from the southern cone region of South America as a major source of trafficking.

The Caribbean

A trend towards increased use of Caribbean countries for cocaine traffic aimed at Europe and North America is evident in seizure data and intelligence reports. The use of the Netherlands Antilles, Martinique and Jamaica as transit points to Europe continues to be a factor as in the recent past. Because of increased pressure on persons and merchandise coming from other transit countries, it is likely that Europe could experience the phenomenon that has become evident in the North American market over the last few years — the emergence of the Caribbean region as a major trafficking point. The United States authorities believe that over 100 major trafficking groups have set up business in the Eastern Caribbean to store and distribute cocaine, not

just for the market in the United States but also for that in Europe.

Islands such as St. Kitts, Nevis, Antigua, St. Martin and Trinidad have drawn so much attention from trafficking organizations, for both transshipment of cocaine and money laundering, that their role in cocaine trafficking threatens the economic stability of these small States. The presence of Colombian, Italian, American and Russian organized crime figures in the region is stark evidence of the growing role of the islands in the cocaine trafficking world. Antigua has experienced an explosion of offshore banks in the last year; nearly 50 now exist there. Of course, some are legitimate but many are there for one reason only — to launder money from organized drug smuggling. In effect, the upsurge of organized crime presence in the region portends a recurrence of the phenomenon experienced when the United States increased pressure on Colombia and traffickers began to use the Bahamas with greater frequency.

The island of Puerto Rico remains the major transit point for cocaine moving through the Caribbean region to the United States. This is mainly attributable to the island's status as a United States Commonwealth, with relative ease of movement of passengers and goods to the mainland. Marine and air-drop shipments come into the island mainly from Colombia and Venezuela and are then parcelled out in smaller shipments to the United States. The activity is so intense and competitive that the island is affected in other ways — the murder rate there has been higher than any of the States in the United States for the last three years. Police authorities attribute 90% of violent crime on the island to drug activity.

Far East, Australia and South Pacific

Cocaine trafficking in the Far East, Australia and South Pacific is

mostly attributable to attempts by criminal organizations to establish and expand markets. Cocaine abuse is considered to be low in the region but evidence gathered by researchers indicates that in inner-city drug-taking cultures cocaine is acquired with relative ease. Japanese and Australian authorities made several seizures which support the premise that the criminal organizations moving the drugs are maintaining a steady but relatively low level of supply (in comparison to other areas) in order to keep the market open. Cocaine is available in most of the large cities of the Far East, but it is not considered to be as critical as other forms of drugs. Mass shipments to this region were not evident through 1995 seizure data or intelligence.

Conclusions and forecasts

The current market environment shows indications that cocaine supplies and distribution networks maintain levels at least equivalent to those of 1994. Numerous replacement enterprises stand ready to move into any void left behind by vacancies in the Colombian organizations' hierarchy. What is most disconcerting is the evidence of expansion of cocaine consumption in previously minimal markets.

As previously noted, it remains to be seen what effect the demise of the Cali organization's established hierarchical structure will have. The supply lines are certainly still in full swing. Cocaine production capability is as viable as ever. No single seizure or series of seizures has been an evident cause of market decline.

Cannabis

Cannabis is still the most popular drug of abuse worldwide and the drug most subject to traffic. It is the favourite drug in a large number of countries throughout the Far East, the Middle East, Africa, Central America, North and South America, Europe and the South Pacific.



Interpol statistics for cannabis resin show that during 1995 Western Europe and Asia accounted for over 70% of the total quantity seized throughout the world and that over 10% of cannabis resin seizures were made in North Africa. Statistics on herbal cannabis show that the largest quantities were seized in North and South America (75% of the world total) and in Western Europe (almost 15% of the world total). The estimated total quantity of cannabis seized worldwide was 3,081 tonnes. Massive seizures were reported by Morocco (110 tonnes of cannabis resin and 36 tonnes of herbal cannabis), Mozambique (60 tonnes of resin), Senegal (106 tonnes of herbal cannabis), Belgium (24.5 tonnes of resin and 38 tonnes of marijuana), Spain (181 tonnes of resin), France (38 tonnes of resin and 2.5 tonnes of marijuana), the Netherlands (43 tonnes of resin and 265 tonnes of marijuana), United Kingdom (33.5 tonnes), Pakistan (222 tonnes of cannabis resin), United States (14.5 tonnes of hashish and 495 tonnes of marijuana), Mexico (895 tonnes of marijuana) and Paraguay (97 tonnes of marijuana).

The situation was similar to the 1994 situation in that the cannabis seized in 1995 came from 64

different countries or territories, 17 of them in Africa, 5 in Central America and the Caribbean, 8 in North and South America, 22 in Europe and 12 in the Middle East and Asia. Cannabis cultivation is spreading over all the continents because of the high profits the plant can generate, and is displacing the cultivation of other crops in Africa, Central America and other parts of the world.

Details of 1995's 80 largest seizures — all over 1,000 kg — reported to the General Secretariat show that most of the cannabis was found in containers loaded on ships or in long-haul vehicles on international journeys. Morocco was reported as the source of the cannabis in the largest number of cases (30).

The problem posed by the indoor cultivation of cannabis is taking on serious proportions in Europe, Canada and the United States. The 2nd International Conference on Cannabis Trafficking, held in Lyons in September 1995, highlighted the scale of the problem and the alarming situation which prevailed particularly in the Netherlands and Canada. In Europe, the Netherlands is the major producer of indoor-grown cannabis, referred to as "Nederweed", which is increasing

its share of the market. In 1995, over 470,000 cannabis plants were confiscated in the Netherlands. Indoor cultivation of cannabis has also been detected in Eastern European countries, where the drug is grown both for personal consumption and for the illicit market. Farmers in several villages in Albania were found to be growing cannabis indoors: they obtain the seeds from Greek traffickers, who in turn purchase their cannabis crop.

Africa

Africa remained the main source of the cannabis consumed in Europe and a significant source of cannabis for North America. Many of its seaports — especially on the East coast — and its airports have become transit points for international cannabis traffic. For instance, cannabis from Afghanistan and Pakistan passes through East African seaports, while locally grown cannabis is often smuggled out from airports in Central African countries.

Inter-regional and international cannabis trafficking increased unabated. European criminal organizations control the import and distribution of cannabis on the international market. Ordinary commercial circuits between Europe and Africa are still used as a means of giving the illicit traffic the appearance of normal business transactions.

European criminal organizations continue to use West African countries such as Senegal and Côte d'Ivoire as transit points for shipping Moroccan cannabis to Europe. Cases reported to the General Secretariat also show that European gangs are increasingly involved in cannabis traffic from Africa South of the Sahara. Several multi-tonne seizures of cannabis were made in Europe, some in Eastern European countries (Russia, Poland); the drug had come from countries such as Nigeria, Kenya and Tanzania. Sub-Saharan Africa has become a new source of cannabis supply for the international market, as a



The Malagasy Delegate

supplement — for the time being — to the Moroccan output. It should be borne in mind that the cannabis-growing potential of Sub-Saharan Africa is enormous, and far outstrips that of Morocco.

Americas

In 1995, there was a disturbing renewal of interest in cannabis among young people in the United States where the drug is widely available. Cannabis traffic also rose sharply in urban areas. However, production and trafficking activities developed mainly in Mexico and Colombia. Because of their geographical location and their limited interception capabilities, the Central American and Caribbean countries continue to be used as transit areas for smuggling large quantities of cannabis to Europe and North America.

The marijuana in Canada, comes mainly from Mexico, Colombia and Jamaica. Hashish originates in

Afghanistan, Pakistan and a growing number of African countries. The drugs are usually smuggled in multi-tonne shipments aboard merchant vessels or concealed in containers. Demand for hashish oil, though limited to central and eastern Canada, remains very high. Jamaica is undeniably the source country for virtually all the hashish oil found in Canada.

Europe

During the year, a total of 405 tonnes of cannabis resin and 341 tonnes of herbal cannabis were seized in Europe. Morocco is the main producer of cannabis resin found in Europe and Colombia now seems to be the producer of most of the herbal cannabis intercepted. However, significant quantities originating from countries in Asia, the Middle East and Africa south of the Sahara were also seized. Seizure figures mentioning some of the source countries were as follows: Morocco — over 230 tonnes of resin; Colombia — over 260 tonnes of herbal cannabis; Pakistan — over 19 tonnes; Nigeria — over 5 tonnes.

On the basis of the reported seizure figures, it seems that the major cannabis-trafficking groups continue to be Western European gangs from Germany, the United Kingdom, Spain, Italy, the Netherlands and France. These groups control the transport and distribution networks in Europe. Moroccans act mainly as suppliers or intermediaries based in their own country. Algerian nationals, of whom there are a large number in Europe, often serve as go-betweens.

Two modes of transport continue to dominate cannabis traffic in Europe: sea transport and road transport. Interpol's statistics show that 56.44% of the seizures made in 1995 were of cannabis transported by sea, and 39.65% were of cannabis transported by road.

Asia

Cannabis is cultivated or grows wild in virtually every country in Asia. In the Central Asian

republics, cannabis fields extend over thousands of hectares, constituting a considerable reserve for the illicit European market. At present, there is limited traffic to Eastern Europe, but there is a flourishing domestic trade within the countries of Central Asia where cannabis consumption is quite common. It is nonetheless feared that Russian, or even Turkish, criminal organizations will organize traffic in cannabis from this region towards Europe.

Hong Kong continues to be used as a transit point for cannabis produced in South-East Asia. In April, 700 kg of herbal cannabis were seized while it was being repacked.

In addition to the South-East Asian countries — Laos, the Philippines and Thailand — which produce large quantities of herbal cannabis for the regional and international market, Cambodia is also becoming a large-scale cannabis producer, as borne out by the destruction in December 1995 by the Cambodian authorities of 20 tonnes of cannabis in an area close to the border with Thailand.

South Pacific

Numerous cannabis seizures were made during the year, especially in Australia. There are signs that trafficking organizations are attempting to develop the regional market. Smugglers tend to use small boats or light aircraft, mainly from Papua New Guinea where there are isolated landing strips. In Australia, most of the landing strips used by the traffickers' light aircraft are to be found in remote areas of Queensland. Several cases of cannabis being smuggled into Australia aboard light aircraft were dealt with by the Papua New Guinea law enforcement authorities and involved Papua New Guineans. The Australian authorities also dealt with similar cases and seized a number of light aircraft. Cannabis smuggled into Australia also came from other countries such as the Philippines and Pakistan.



The Jamaican Delegate

In Papua New Guinea, cannabis cultivation would appear to date back to the 1970s. The main growing areas are in the eastern and western mountainous regions and in the central provinces. The traffic has expanded to meet the demands of the lucrative Australian market: since the cannabis grown in Papua New Guinea has a high THC content, the profits generated are considerable. The trafficking networks are currently run by Australians who usually have business connections with the country.

In conclusion, it should be reiterated that, given the many links between trafficking in cannabis and trafficking in other drugs, and between drug-related crime and other types of economic, organized and violent crime, there is an urgent and vital need to give top priority to measures aimed at countering the traffic, to devise a common and comprehensive strategy, and to utilize the resources of international organizations in the fight against drug

trafficking and abuse which are escalating rapidly.

Psychotropic substances

If we consider all psychotropic substances without distinction, the general trend was for amounts seized in 1995 to be larger than in 1994, even if those amounts represented only a fraction of the quantities of other drugs seized such as cocaine and heroin, to say nothing of cannabis. Specific regional problems relating to traffic in, and consumption of, psychotropic substances were as marked as ever.

The data contained in this report has been prepared on the basis of the seizures reported to the General Secretariat. The fact that little information was forthcoming from some countries has led us to base our report on other sources of information such as national statistics reports.

Once again, in 1995, it was noticed that drug users in Europe were very much attracted to amphetamines and their analogues, with Ecstasy particularly in vogue. In North America, methamphetamines and methcathinone continued to gain ground, while in Far Eastern countries consumption of the crystallized form of methamphetamine — Ice — was on the increase. Africa still suffered from the usual problem of methaqualone trafficking, as well as from an attraction to medicinal drugs such as barbiturates and benzodiazepines which are also encountered in most regions of the world. Fenetylline continued to flood the markets in Middle Eastern and Persian Gulf countries.

Stimulants

After a slight drop in amphetamine seizures in 1994 (1,153 kg and 626,582 tablets), there was a small rise in 1995 when worldwide seizures totalled 1,310 kg and 1,234,620 tablets.

Seizures were reported as having been made in Africa, Europe, the

Near and Middle East, the Far East and the South Pacific. Most seizures were reported by European countries (where the quantities totalled 1,257 kg 946) and by Far Eastern countries (50 kg 440 and 1,140,246 tablets).

After the slight drop in amounts seized in Europe in 1994, the figure for 1995 seizures was even higher than the previous record set in 1993. Of the 18 European countries that reported seizures in 1995, the largest total was reported by the United Kingdom (749 kg 649 out of the 1,257 kg 946 seized in Europe). Information sent in by various European countries suggested that most of the amphetamines came from Poland and the Netherlands. Polish amphetamines seemed to flow mainly into the Nordic countries although those countries also mentioned the Czech Republic as a source; the Netherlands was mentioned as the main source of supplies for the United Kingdom, Germany and France.

One constant factor was that the amphetamines seized were usually of good quality with few impurities.

A member of the Delegation of Pakistan



In 1995, a few illicit laboratories located in the United Kingdom, Poland, the Netherlands and Germany were found and dismantled.

We received very little information about seizures of methamphetamine. The phenomenal rise in quantities reported seems to have been the result of a real effort made mainly by the Far Eastern countries.

North America would appear to be one of the two regions of the world most affected, along with the Far East.

Methamphetamine is produced for the American market both within the United States and in illicit laboratories in Mexico. The DEA announced that 137 illicit laboratories had been found in the United States and dismantled during the first six months of fiscal year 1995. It also reported that, during the same period, over 120 million doses had been seized (compared with 58 million doses over the same period of 1994). Methamphetamine is spreading rapidly in the United States and is even taking the place of cocaine in some areas where it seems to be the cheapest drug available.

It also appears that Mexico is no longer merely the largest supplier of ephedrine (the immediate precursor of methamphetamine): it now produces substantial quantities of the finished product sold as Speed or Crank.

The methamphetamine encountered in the Far East is sold in the crystallized form known as Ice. Many reports on large seizures did not mention the source or producer country. Nevertheless, China and the Philippines appeared to be the main suppliers of the finished product, and China the main supplier of the precursor ephedrine.

The United States seems to be the only country in the world currently affected by production and consumption of methcathinone, which is a far less serious problem than methamphetamine. The same precursor, ephedrine, is

used for both these drugs and may well come from the same sources.

The DEA announced that 10 illicit methcathinone laboratories had been found in the United States and dismantled during the first six months of fiscal year 1995. As in the case of methamphetamine, the number of states affected is growing steadily.

In discussing fenetylline we are dealing with a substance which gives rise to serious problems in the Middle East and we run the risk of offending some of the countries of that region when we come to talk of production, traffic and consumption.

The figures in our database and the seizures reported by various countries might suggest that there was no large increase in the quantities seized and that they may even have fallen slightly. However, this is not true: record seizures of 12,951,039 tablets were made in 1995.

The consumption areas correspond to the areas where the drug is seized. However, identifying the source country is a different matter. The countries where seizures are made confirm that most of the fenetylline passes through Turkey in transit.

All the countries affected by this problem agree that there is an enormous demand for Captagon, the name under which illicitly produced fenetylline is commonly sold. This name is used on illicit markets because consumers consider it to be a guarantee of quality (Captagon is the original brand name).

In 1995, khat was still not included in the schedule of controlled substances but some countries, especially the European Nordic countries, had adopted their own control laws.

Only Egypt, Saudi Arabia and a few European countries reported seizures. The total amount seized was lower than in 1994.

Khat can pass freely in transit through a number of countries where it is not controlled: the

European countries concerned, and the United Kingdom in particular, do not therefore keep statistics on this substance which is mainly intended for the consumption of Somali and Ethiopian communities living abroad. The khat seized in Saudi Arabia came from Yemen. We do not have any official information on the origin of the khat seized in Europe although it is traditionally produced in the Horn of Africa countries and in Kenya.

Depressants

No solution was found to the methaqualone problem in 1995: India and the countries of Southern Africa were as badly affected as ever by the traffic.

India reported that seizures totalled 5,854 kg in 1995, whereas the actual provisional figure is over 16,000 kg, i.e. 4,000 kg more than in 1994. The Philippines, which had reported seizures totalling 7,000 kg in 1994, did not report a single seizure in 1995.

In the absence of more specific information, it still seems that the largest seizures are made in India. The methaqualone is always intended for Southern African countries and passes in transit or is handled along the way in many other countries before reaching South Africa, which is the target for most of it but which is making considerable efforts to counter this traffic.

Two drugs of the benzodiazepine family, diazepam and flunitrazepam, are particular favourites with consumers, but many others may also be taken. The names under which these two substances are sold are Valium and Rohypnol respectively; the latter appears to be gaining ground at the expense of the former. Originally these drugs were used as substitutes for morphine and heroin addicts but they are now being consumed along with other drugs, or on their own for their sole effect.

The most striking development in 1995 was the huge increase in flunitrazepam traffic in the United

States where, during the first ten months of the year, the DEA seized quantities which totalled six times the amount seized during the whole of 1994. Flunitrazepam is not authorized or legally marketed in the United States.

Hallucinogens

From the information we received, there was no significant change in the scale of traffic in LSD which has remained stable for several years.

Ecstasy on the European market — and Europe is the area mainly affected by production, traffic and consumption — is most often found in the form of pills or tablets which are marked with logos designed to attract consumers. The themes vary considerably. They include the letters "CCCP" (Cyrillic for USSR), symbols of peace such as a white dove, film or cartoon characters such as Superman, Fido Dido or Sonic, makes of cars such as Mercedes or VW, animals such as elephants. The word Ecstasy itself, or the term "love pills", plays on the supposedly aphrodisiac effects of the substance, and other terms suggest that people who do not take Ecstasy are "just not with it".

The European countries mentioned the Netherlands as the main producer country (37% of the Ecstasy produced), followed by Germany (35%), and then by Belgium, Spain and France with about 5% each.

Wherever possible, chemists employed in clandestine laboratories tried to find new chemicals or new combinations of chemicals.

Precursors and essential chemicals

For several decades now Interpol, along with other international and regional organizations, has been actively fighting against illicit drug traffic. The idea of placing certain chemicals — referred to as precursors and essential chemicals — under control, is by no means

new: the international community has been considering this aspect of the problem for a number of years, and references were made in the United Nations Conventions of 1961 and 1971 to certain types of control. However, it was in the 1988 Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances that detailed provisions were first set out.

In the preamble to that Convention (which came into force on 11th November 1990) it is stated that "measures are necessary to monitor certain substances, including precursors, chemicals and solvents, which are used in the manufacture of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, the ready availability of which has led to an increase in the clandestine manufacture of such drugs and substances".

It is obvious that, in combating the illicit trade in such chemicals, a distinction has to be drawn between products with very limited legal applications (e.g. ephedrine) and products (such as solvents and acids) used on a wide scale in perfectly legitimate industries.

It very soon became clear that without a system of international controls matched by similar measures at national level, effective detection of the diversion of essential chemicals from international trade or the legal manufacturing and distribution circuits was going to be impossible.

Following the introduction of a database at the General Secretariat, and given the use made by member countries of the PECS form for reporting seizures, it is possible to draw a certain number of conclusions. Indeed, the points listed below give cause for some concern.

- Eight years on, some of the major chemical-producing and exporting countries are still not parties to the Convention, and some States parties to the Convention have not yet passed the necessary implementing legislation.

- Interpol is not the only institution suffering from a lack of information.

- The chemicals used to manufacture illicit drugs and psychotropic substances are, in nearly all cases, obtained by diversion from legal distribution circuits, often with the help of transit countries which tend to "turn a blind eye", and with the systematic use of brokers and intermediaries based in those countries.

- The sources of the chemicals and the diversion routes used remain largely unknown.

- The traffickers target countries where controls are less strict.

- Chemicals which are subject to control are often replaced by substitutes which are not subject to control (this is especially true of solvents).

In 1995, member countries reported the seizure of 86 different chemical substances, to

be used as precursors, essential chemicals or solvents. The quantities seized in 1995 were generally far greater than those seized the previous year. Quantities seized varied considerably, ranging from a few grams or centilitres to several thousand kilograms or litres. The larger seizures were of solvents and acetic anhydride, whereas the smaller quantities were of direct precursors.

As is the case for narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, the quantities of precursors and essential chemicals seized and reported to the General Secretariat were far below the actual amounts seized. For example, hundreds of tonnes of substitute chemicals not subject to control which were seized in Latin American countries, and large quantities of ephedrine seized in Europe and the Americas, were not reported to the General Secretariat.

Seizures of controlled chemicals, as well as of those not subject to control (usually substitute chemicals), also came to our attention. Member countries are therefore asked to bear this information in mind and to take care to report all seizures using the PECS form provided. Member countries are also requested not to confine themselves to reporting only controlled substances, but to provide full details about any chemicals likely to be used in the drug-manufacturing process.

Every region of the world is affected by traffic in precursors and essential chemicals. The main producing regions are Europe (all countries are concerned although, with respect to the diversion of chemicals from legal supply circuits, we are witnessing a shift towards Eastern Europe) and Asia (especially China and India). In South America, major chemical producers are located near the drug-producing areas.

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL CRIME

The International Economic and Financial Crime Committee meeting was chaired by Mr Estay Cerda (Chile).

Universal classification system for counterfeit payment cards

Report No. 16 was introduced by the Head of the General Secretariat's Economic Crime Group.

The Working Party on a universal classification system for counterfeit payment cards had met for the first time in February 1995 and had met six times since then. It proposed the adoption of a universal classification system for counterfeit payment cards, the establishment of an international payment card database and of an international central reference point to collect and circulate information, and the setting up of a reference library for counterfeit payment cards.

The purpose of setting up the system was two-fold:

- to collect up-to-date information on traffic in payment cards in order to identify counterfeits and to establish links between fraud cases and offenders;
- to provide investigators and experts with rapid access to information.

The project had been made more complicated by the fact that there was no payment card classification standard of the type that existed for banknotes, and that the extremely sophisticated technology used meant that investigators had to be highly specialized and procedures had to be standardized as far as possible. Suggested solutions included the use of a card identification number (CIN) and the formatting of card classification



The Malian Delegate

which would allow the system to be integrated into the ASF.

Preliminary Draft Resolution AGN/65/A.P.RES/22 was unanimously adopted and became Draft Resolution AGN/65/P.RES/4.

Currency Counterfeiting

The Head of the Economic Crime Group reported that the number of counterfeit notes sent for examination to the General Secretariat by NCBs (particularly European NCBs) had fallen sharply since 1993. That was probably due to the fact that, since 1993, the General Secretariat had been publishing a list of the notes most often counterfeited. Also, police officers responsible for dealing with currency counterfeiting in

member countries were becoming better and better qualified, and shared their information with the issuing bodies and printers more regularly. Interpol's "Counterfeits and Forgeries" was much appreciated by the police and financial institutions, since it gave valuable information about counterfeit and genuine notes in circulation.

The banknote most often counterfeited was still the USD 100 note (it accounted for 73% of all counterfeits). Technical progress in the colourcopier and laser scanner sectors allowed small-scale counterfeiters to produce good-quality counterfeits more rapidly and more cheaply. However, progress made in integrating security features in banknotes had checked that dangerous trend to some extent.

The 9th International Currency Counterfeiting Conference and the 3rd International Conference on Fraudulent Travel Documents would be held in Finland in June 1997, and it was hoped that they would be as successful as those which had been held in Ottawa. The General Secretariat had set up two working parties to prepare for the Conferences; they had met in September 1996.

In response to a circular it had sent out in April 1993, the General Secretariat had received specimens of genuine travel documents from about one hundred countries. Its database now comprised details of some 800 travel documents from 173 countries. Some countries regularly sent in lists of passports which had been lost or stolen, and that information was fed into the General Secretariat's database and circulated to all member countries.

The Delegates of Lebanon, China, Romania and Bangladesh reported

that currency counterfeiting was increasing steadily in their countries and that counterfeiters were using more and more sophisticated methods.

The Egyptian Delegate explained that his country had set up a special committee, composed of the senior police officers concerned and of representatives of the Ministry of Justice and the banks, in an attempt to prevent the different institutions from all launching separate initiatives to combat currency counterfeiting.

Combating industrial and artistic counterfeiting

The Head of the Economic Crime Group explained that between 1980 and 1985, only 78 cases of industrial piracy had been reported to the General Secretariat. A questionnaire had been sent to the

NCBs, but the General Secretariat had only received 45 replies.

The French Delegate emphasized the risks created by counterfeit pharmaceuticals — including vaccines — and industrial products such as motor-vehicle braking systems manufactured with poor-quality alloys. France had set up a special squad with responsibility for law enforcement, centralizing information, training staff, circulating information to other departments in the form of technical leaflets prepared by manufacturers, sending experts on missions abroad and providing assistance to other countries which had been the victims of counterfeits produced in France. The French Delegate proposed that Interpol organize a meeting on international traffic in counterfeit products likely to endanger the security or lives of consumers. The General Secretariat representative

replied that a meeting on that subject had recently been held at Interpol's Headquarters.

Environmental crime

The Belgian Delegate submitted a preliminary draft resolution at his country's initiative on the creation of national working parties on "waste". Preliminary Draft Resolution AGN/65/A.P.RES/23 was adopted by the Committee to become Draft Resolution AGN/65/P.RES/6.

The following draft resolutions were unanimously adopted in plenary session:

- AGN/65/P.RES/4, on counterfeit payment cards;
- AGN/65/P.RES/6, on environmental crime, thereby allowing the establishment of national working parties on waste and the adoption of Resolution AGN/65/RES/25.

ORGANIZED CRIME AND INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM

Organized crime

In plenary session the Director of the Liaison and Criminal Intelligence Division spoke about his Division's activities which included gathering, analysing and disseminating information on organized crime. The Division was currently working on five major projects: "Project GOWEST", which dealt with organized crime originating in Eastern Europe; "Project ROCKERS", which concerned motorcycle gangs involved in extortion, intimidation and traffic in drugs and in motorcycle spare parts (the main gangs were Hells Angels, Bandidos, Outlaws and Viking Nomads); "Project OCSA", dealing with organized crime gangs in South America; "Project EASTWIND",

which tracked Asian criminal gangs specializing in the smuggling of illegal Asian immigrants; "Project MACANDRA", which covered the three main Italian criminal organizations.

The Division's future activities would include a project on illegal immigration in general, and an initial report on that subject would be submitted to the 6th Symposium on Organized Crime due to be held at Interpol's Headquarters on 11th and 12th December 1996. The Director stressed the vital importance of active co-operation on the part of all NCBs in collecting relevant information.

The presentation was followed by extremely interesting contributions from the Delegates of

Bangladesh, Iran, the Central African Republic, China, India, Turkey, Sri Lanka, Romania and Nigeria.

At the end of the discussion on that agenda item, the President said that the fight against organized crime would clearly remain one of Interpol's priorities for a long time to come.

International terrorism

The Director of the Liaison and Criminal Intelligence Division explained that the International Terrorism Group at the General Secretariat was composed of a Head of Group and four specialized officers who divided up their work on a geographical basis and shared the work involved on subjects such

as civil aviation security, the black market in nuclear substances and narco terrorism. Every year the Group organized a symposium at the General Secretariat; the next one would be held on 18th and 19th November 1996 and would provide member countries with a most effective forum for sharing views in an attempt to co-ordinate efforts to combat transnational crime.

The Organization had made considerable progress in dealing with terrorism since the time when it had had difficulties in interpreting Article 3 of its Constitution correctly. Nevertheless, much still remained to be done, and he urged member countries to send information on terrorist incidents to the General Secretariat on a more regular basis. That would make it possible to update the databases, to inform the other member countries, and to provide material for the crime analysis unit. NCBs could refer to the Guide on combating international terrorism; an updated version of the Guide would be sent to all NCBs once it had been approved by the forthcoming symposium.

The Director reminded delegates of the position adopted by the G7 meeting in June 1996 and the subsequent inter-ministerial meeting in Paris: a list of 25 points of particular interest to Interpol had been drawn up. Along the same lines, the General Secretariat had just launched a programme to publish more green notices, which would allow member countries to monitor the international movements of terrorists more effectively. The General Secretariat urged member countries to step up co-operation in the fight against international terrorism.

The Sri Lankan Delegate called for international co-operation to fight a form of crime which had spread worldwide. Many civilians, soldiers and police officers had been killed in his country over the last thirteen years by terrorists who thought that their action would lead to the establishment of an independent Tamil state. In July

1993 there had been a major revolt by five Tamil groups and in 1994 there had been incidents of indescribable violence. The terrorists conscripted twelve year-old children, attacking the parents of those who refused to co-operate. They had turned down all the Sri Lankan Government's offers of negotiation. They obtained money by threatening Sri Lankans who had emigrated to Western countries, and also obtained weapons in those countries through a network operating under cover of a shipping company. In neighbouring South-East Asian countries they had killed politicians who failed to support them.

The speaker said the authorities in his country were doing all they could to put an end to the situation, but they could not succeed unless all the other countries became more aware of how dangerous such terrorist activities could be and stepped up their co-operation to stamp them out.

The Turkish Delegate described the activities of the PKK and the PHKPC: although both organizations were involved in killings, extortion and all other forms of crime, they still enjoyed some measure of support in Western countries. Law-enforcement measures had been organized more efficiently, and new legislation had been adopted, so that over the past six years those terrorist activities had been reduced. The terrorists were also being prosecuted abroad, particularly in three European countries. The European Parliament had adopted a resolution against terrorism. All Western countries should be more aware of the dangers such terrorist activities represented: they threatened to traffic in nuclear substances, they controlled illegal immigration, they engaged in drug trafficking, etc.

Interpol was very familiar with the problem. It had published its Guide on combating terrorism, which was an effective tool for countries which were prepared to use it. In June 1994, in Antalya, it had organized a meeting on drug

trafficking and terrorism. The struggle against terrorism obviously had to be carried on both nationally and internationally. In the context of the CAT Project and the conclusions of the G7, the Turkish Delegation hoped that the Interpol General Secretariat would step up its anti-terrorist activities even further, and prepare and send out questionnaires and reports on the subject.

The Peruvian Delegate regretted the fact that his country did not benefit from all the international co-operation it needed to combat terrorism; that was because of certain shortcomings in national laws, lack of staff at some NCBs, etc. The MRTA and the Shining Path had begun their activities around 1980, seeking to overthrow the Government "in the name of the people". Faced with this internal strife, and also with the risk that foreign powers would take advantage of the situation for their own ends, the Peruvian Government had realized that the best way to counter the threat was from the social and political angle, to cut the terrorists off from popular support. As a result, the Rondas campesinas had been set up and a law had been adopted on co-operating witnesses. The only thing left was to gain greater support from foreign countries which should fully understand exactly what the terrorists were and which should co-operate more effectively to wipe them out.

The Indian Delegate explained that his country had suffered from terrorist activities at least as much as other countries. He reminded delegates of the assassination of Indira Gandhi and of her son Rajiv, as well as of the many incidents that had occurred in the Punjab, Kashmir, and Bombay in March 1993. He asked all member countries to understand that it was pointless to aim at technological progress in the vain hope of building a better society if citizens' safety, peace and public order could not be guaranteed. He urged them to collaborate more fully on developing efforts to combat terrorism.

COMPUTERIZATION AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS

The Committee meeting, which was chaired by Mr Nzoi, Kenya, began with a presentation from Mr Silva, Argentina, the Chairman of the Standing Committee on Information Technology (SCIT). He described the SCIT's background and objectives.

The General Secretariat's representative, Mr Mellet, Acting Director of the Information Technology Division, paid tribute to the former Director of Information Technology, Mr Paul McQuillan, who had died recently.

He then went on to present Report No. 4, entitled "Computerization and Telecommunications".

Regional Modernization

The situation regarding the Regional Modernization Projects in 1996 is summarized below.

South America

The Regional Modernization project was implemented in South America nearly two years ago. Over the region as a whole the results are excellent. The X.400 network availability, using the Sita services, has been maintained at a high level of efficiency.

Europe and the Mediterranean

A total of 22 countries have been operational since 1995 and at least a further 5 will be added to the network in due course. The statistics software installed at the General Secretariat has allowed the first measurable indication to be made of the effects of Regional Modernization for an entire region which previously had limited means of communication.

The following trends have been observed: the number of messages sent by the NCBs in Eastern Europe doubled from nearly 7,000 to over 14,000 per month. The number of messages sent to the same NCBs increased by 50%, from nearly 25,000 to over 36,000 per month. The overall increase in the volume of message traffic on the Interpol network in Eastern Europe has clearly indicated the effectiveness of the Regional Modernization policy and the additional work of the staff involved at the NCBs.

Caribbean and Central American region

Significant progress has been made in the Caribbean and Central American region. Since February 1996, 23 NCBs have been provided with the Interpol X.400 (Sita) communications network and they now also have access to the Automated Search Facility. Operator training took place at the Regional Station in Puerto Rico and the efforts of the staff should be recognized in making the Regional Station server (message-switching system) and the training an outstanding success. A further 6 NCBs will be connected at a later date.

West African Region

The project for West Africa concerns a total of 26 countries and, in August 1996, the legal agreements had been signed by 23 countries. The Regional Station will be located in the same building as the Sub-Regional Bureau in Abidjan. 16 NCBs are already installing the system and 7 are preparing the NCB sites for the equipment. The majority of the West African countries will be operational by the end of 1996.

East African region

The East African project concerns 19 countries, plus the Sub-Regional Bureau in Harare. 17 countries have signed the legal agreements and the contract for the Sita network will be signed in September 1996. The equipment will be installed early in 1997, after site surveys have been finalized.

The French Ministry of Co-operation, in addition to supporting the West African project, has agreed to donate FRF 1.25 million to assist in the implementation of the project in East Africa. The assistance provided by France is very much appreciated and the donation will be used to purchase telecommunications equipment for installation in the region.

Asian region

There are 23 NCBs in the Asian Region and Kyrgyzstan has applied for membership. 12 NCBs have applied for technical and financial assistance and some member countries involved with the Aseanapol project have requested assistance to link to the Interpol network. The sum of FRF 3 million was set aside for capital investment in the project by the General Assembly at its session in Beijing in 1995 and a further FRF 1 million will be requested in the 1997 budget.

The following 10 countries have been included in the project by the Executive Committee and are the subject of an application for running costs in the 1997 and 1998 budgets: Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Bangladesh, Mongolia, Vietnam, Nepal, Maldives, Laos, Cambodia, Myanmar.



The Delegate of Papua New Guinea

In addition, the following countries will be provided with technical assistance and equipment (capital investment only): India, Pakistan, Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines.

Mr Mellet recalled the important role played by Japan in implementing the modernization of the region from a technical and financial point of view.

South Pacific region

The South Pacific region will be the subject of a study to identify its requirements, and funds will be proposed in the 1998 budget. The first indications are that 7 NCBs will require assistance, and investment in the region of FRF 2 million will be necessary.

Mr Mellet took the opportunity to thank the donor countries — including France, the United States and Japan, as well as the UNDCP — which had contributed to financing the worldwide regional modernization project.

After this geographical overview, Mr Mellet reported on the growing volume of messages transmitted between 1993 and 1996 over the public networks and the X.400 network (+50%), accompanied by a spectacular reduction in overall costs (-30%). Those factors, coupled with the network's high degree of availability (96.5%), were the result of its efficiency which in turn stemmed from the policy currently being followed in this highly strategic area. However, as far as cost reductions were concerned, the speaker felt it would be difficult to go any further except, possibly, by increasing use of the Sita network.

The main consequence of implementing these projects was that the image transmission facility, including that of receiving images from the ASF database, would shortly become available on the Interpol network. The Scitor Company had agreed to increase line speed from 2,400 b/s to 9,600 b/s without modifying the monthly subscription rates. In that way, all the NCBs which had been equipped as part of the regional modernization programme, as well as those with lines of that speed, would be able to transmit and receive images at the beginning of 1997. The speaker emphasized the importance of the initial and ongoing technical training provided in the regions by the General Secretariat, and reminded participants that member countries could obtain financial assistance from Interpol in the form of training grants to help them send trainees to the regional training courses.

Mr Mellet concluded the first part of his presentation by giving some financial information, recalling the initial investment costs per NCB (FRF 200,000 — or 2.8 budget units) and annual operating costs (FRF 80,000 — or 1.1 budget units) which were paid by the Organization. He provided the equivalent information for the Regional Stations, highlighting the significant cost of the initial investment (FRF 800,000), part of which was paid by the Organ-

ization. In all, 131 NCBs had had their investment costs paid by the Organization, and 107 of them also benefited from financial assistance from the Organization to cover their operating costs.

Mr Suc, of the General Secretariat's Information Technology Division, then gave a presentation.

Office Automation and the Client Server 3-Tiered Architecture

The contracts for Interpol's new Office Automation and Client Server 3-Tiered Architecture were signed in December 1995 following an open call for tenders conducted in liaison with the Standing Committee on Information Technology. The system was successfully brought into operational use on 28th March 1996 and nearly 300 workstations at the General Secretariat would be connected over the next 12 months. The system consisted of 7 servers linked to a fibre optic network which supported the Microsoft Office suite of programs.

The following facilities were available for users via personal computers:

- Word Processing: Word
- Spreadsheets: Excel
- Graphics: PowerPoint
- Communication: Exchange
- Crime Analysis: Access plus I.2 software

Interpol's Criminal Information System (ICIS)

The pilot development site for Interpol's Criminal Information System (ICIS) had been established in the Analytical Criminal Intelligence Unit (ACIU) and a high priority was given to crime analysis. The results have been very successful: information can now be automatically displayed in graphic form and the time normally taken by crime analysts to complete their tasks has been greatly reduced.

The technical specifications for the system were prepared in consultation with the Standing Committee on Information Technology (SCIT) and were sent out to open tender on 25th April 1996. The bids were currently being evaluated and confirmed that the system could be purchased within the estimated 1996/97 budgets.

The system would be designed to receive structured information sent by NCBs via the X.400 Interpol network, using electronic message formats. It would also be necessary to develop new programs for the Automated Search Facility (ASF). The majority of the special software applications would be written by the Information Technology Division's Research and Development Department and would be owned and maintained by Interpol. Over the operational life of the system, both investment and running costs would be reduced as compared with the cost of the current systems.

It was planned that the ICIS system would be available for operational use by mid-1997.

Mr Mellet, General Secretariat, then continued the presentation.

Introduction of electronic message formats

The concept of electronic message formats for use on the Interpol network was adopted by the General Assembly at its 1988 session in Bangkok, in Resolution AGN/57/RES/13. The NCBs had encountered difficulties in implementing the resolution due to the type of communication equipment used at that time and the transfer of information formatted in different ways at a national level. Extensive research was carried out by the Information Technology Division, and the Research and Development Department wrote a software program which could be used for the preparation of electronic message formats. The system, called InterForm, was owned by Interpol and could be

made available to NCBs free of charge.

Mr Suc, General Secretariat, then outlined the advantages of the InterForm system.

- Information transmitted by the General Secretariat or NCBs could be standardized.

- Information could be structured within validated fields to avoid mistakes and to ensure high quality.

- Structured information entered within the format could be automatically translated into English, French or Spanish, depending on the addressee of the message.

- Communication costs would be reduced, as only the data entered would be transmitted and not the field headings.

- Criminal information sent to the General Secretariat via the X.400 could be entered in Interpol's Criminal Information System (ICIS) without re-keying by the operators. The structured information within the message formats would correspond to the information held on ICIS.

- Additional vital information would be made available for crime analysis.

- The message formats could be sent to the NCBs and to the national specialist units which provided the NCBs with information. The software program

would operate on any microcomputer supporting the Windows operating systems and the X.400 protocol for communication.

- The electronic message formats could be made available and later updated electronically via the X.400 or via CD-Rom or floppy disks.

The system would be operational at the end of 1996 for nominal information, drug seizures, money laundering, works of art and firearms. Standard NCB messages were being researched by the Standing Committee on Information Technology. If the new facilities on Interpol's Criminal Information System (ICIS) were to be fully utilized, it was essential for NCBs to use the electronic message formats for the transfer of information.

It was particularly important that the nominal formats be used without delay, in order to ensure the accuracy of personal information and to allow the operators at the General Secretariat to process the increasing number of messages received in an efficient and cost-effective manner. A great many messages were also received in relation to drug seizures, and use of the appropriate formats should be given high priority.



The message formats would be made available to all member countries which received communications workstations as part of the Regional Modernization projects.

Once the InterForm system was operational, member countries should consider the possibility of making the formats mandatory in the future. Mr Suc then submitted preliminary draft resolution AGN/65/A.P.RES/3 on electronic message formats; it was adopted unanimously.

Mr Webb, Head of the United Kingdom National Central Bureau, reported on the results of the study conducted by the SCIT's Working Party on Formatted Messages, which he had chaired over the previous year. He thanked the General Secretariat and the NCBs which had contributed to the success of the study and briefly recalled the aim, i.e. to identify the most frequently used types of messages for sharing criminal information. He summarized the advantages of using a good formatted message: user-friendly, quick to prepare, quick to transmit, up-to-date, exact text, translation problems solved.

Mr Suc then referred to the need to modernize and extend the Automated Search Facility (ASF) in connection with the introduction of the ICIS system. The criteria adopted were reduced costs, improved means of access, security, and the possibility of downloading to authorized departments. The ASF database was accessible from nearly 245 workstations installed in some 120 countries. He described the aims of improving the ASF for 1997 and 1998 and said that new applications — such as stolen works of art (1997), stolen or suspect land, air and sea vehicles (from 1996), stolen or lost identity documents, and forged payment cards — would be made available to the member countries.

The speaker then went on to discuss section 5 of the report.

Automated Search Facility (ASF) — Upgrades to the system

The Automated Search Facility (ASF) had been in use since 1992 and a number of the software programs needed replacement.

The current use of the system by NCBs, the introduction of Interpol's Criminal Information System (ICIS) and the possible purchase of an Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS) all indicated the need to review and upgrade the system in 1997/98.

The strategic direction recommended was to improve the ASF cost effectiveness, means of access, security and method of downloading criminal information and information on identifiable stolen property to NCBs and to official services with a police mission.

Current use of the ASF system

The ASF was accessed via a total of 203 workstations located in member countries, mainly at the NCBs. There were a number of different options to access the system:

- Option 2 — Direct access to Lyons for data only: 3 NCBs
- Option 3A — Direct access to Lyons for data and images: 8 NCBs
- Option 3 — Information downloaded to a single workstation: 2 NCBs
- Option 5 — Information downloaded for multiple access: 14 NCBs
- ASFMail — Information requested via the Interpol X.400 network: 90 NCBs
- Option 6 — Stolen cars downloaded to police national databases: 4 NCBs.

The ASFMail software had been written by the Research and Development Department and the NCBs' extensive use of this system and of Option 5 had seriously reduced the cost effectiveness of supporting Options 2, 3 and 3A in the future.

Goals and objectives for 1997/1998

The goals and objectives to upgrade the Automated Search Facility over the next two years had been studied with the Standing Committee on Information Technology and the following recommendations had been presented to the Executive Committee and at the Regional and Telecommunications Conferences.

The Standing Committee on Information Technology recommended that Division IV enhance the ASF/ICIS by adding the following applications in 1996/97:

- Stolen works of art
- Stolen/Suspect vehicles, planes or boats
- Stolen/Lost passports or identity documents
- Counterfeit payment cards.

The SCIT also recommended that in 1997/98 NCB Option 5 should be updated and enhanced and that ASF Option 6 should be extended to the downloading of criminal (nominal) information to police national databases in countries where the policing agencies were interested. In addition, it suggested that the possibility of using X.400 should be explored for the exchange of messages including communications with the ASF/ICIS, and that Options 2, 3 and 3A should be replaced by extending the use of ASFMail.

The limited number of NCBs currently using the above ASF Options could continue to do so for a period of at least one year and would be given technical assistance to change to the new system, if required.

In the event of X.400 being used for the downloading of information to either Option 5 or Option 6, the operation would be controlled by the General Secretariat and the communications costs would be incurred on the Information Technology Division's budget. NCBs using those Options would have to subscribe to the Sita network in order to keep communications costs to a minimum.

It should be noted that ASF Option 6 was currently available for operational use to exchange data on stolen cars with police national databases. Any enhancement to that system would obviously depend on the success of the stolen vehicle application, which NCBs were beginning to use.

Changes to the current Rules governing the database of selected information (ASF) might be necessary to implement the facilities proposed in Option 6. The same data privacy restrictions would be applied to Option 6 and only information authorized by the NCB of origin would be downloaded to police national databases, in conformity with Article 3 of those Rules.

Article 3(2) states "An NCB from which an item of information originates, and which has agreed that the item may be held in the database, shall designate the other NCBs that are allowed direct access to that information. This designation may only be revoked by the NCB from which the police information originated".

Article 3(3) states "An NCB which may have direct access to police information in conformity with paragraph 2 (above) shall be entitled to grant direct access to that information to official services which have a police mission in its country, as well as to revoke that access at any time".

If the proposal to extend ASF Option 6 was adopted in principle, a technical study would be carried out to establish the best way of transferring the information from the General Secretariat direct to the police national databases, but only with the consent of the NCBs concerned. The Rules governing the database of selected information, particularly Articles 6(1) and 6(5), would be reviewed from the legal aspect to allow Option 6 to be extended as outlined above. The results of the study and proposals to change the Rules would be presented to the General Assembly in 1997.

Preliminary Draft Resolution AGN/65/A.P.RES/2 on additional facilities and proposed updates to the Automated Search Facility was then put to the vote.

The French Delegate mentioned the difficulties that could arise as a result of national data protection legislation from the proposal to enhance ASF Option 6, and sought clarification that the final two paragraphs of the preliminary draft resolution were directly connected. It was then agreed that the order of those two paragraphs should be reversed to provide for greater clarity.

Thus modified, the preliminary draft resolution was adopted.

Mr Mellet then gave a presentation on a new project.

The Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS): 1997-1998

The requirement for Interpol to offer member countries the facilities of an Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS) has been clearly identified in the past and the Secretary General and the Head of the Liaison and Criminal Intelligence Division have again highlighted the need to the Executive Committee. Previous attempts to fund the system at an estimated cost of about FRF 10 million have been unsuccessful. The project was removed from the proposed budget at the 1994 General Assembly session in Rome in order to comply with the "zero growth" policy.

The new development of the ASF, which contains fingerprints and photographs, indicates the need to identify the strategy regarding the electronic circulation of fingerprints in the future. The fingerprint information on the ASF cannot be searched but this is one of the main functions on AFIS. In addition, a database of scenes of crime fingerprints (latent prints) could be searched.

Approaches made by the Secretary General and the Head of the Liaison and Criminal Intelligence Division indicate that it may be possible to find donors willing to help pay for the system, even from within the AFIS companies themselves.

In view of the above, it is recommended as a strategy within the "zero growth" budget policy that reduced appropriations for an AFIS, spread over two years, be included in the 1997/98 budgets. A tender procedure could then be launched in an effort to purchase a system with the financial assistance of an outside donor. This proposal was discussed and agreed by the Executive Committee at its meeting in July 1996.

A preliminary draft resolution (AGN/65/A.P.RES/1) regarding the proposal to purchase an Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS), was submitted to the Committee.

The French and German Delegates expressed reservations about finding outside funding to pay for an AFIS.

The General Secretariat representative replied that the call for bids would be sent to the four major companies which manufactured such equipment. The Research and Development Department was fully up-to-date with the technical developments in that field.

The text of the last paragraph was amended to read: "AUTHORIZES the Secretary General to seek appropriate sources of finance for the project, such as special contributions, before putting out a call for tenders with a view to acquiring an Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS) for installation at the General Secretariat". Preliminary Draft Resolution AGN/65/A.P. RES/1, thus amended, was adopted by the Committee.

Mr Suc then presented another agenda item.

On-line encryption of Interpol telecommunications: 1997/1998.

The current Signum chip card encryption system was first introduced on the Interpol communications network in 1992. The system provides a high level of encryption from person to person or a general encryption for broadcast messages. A total of 30 NCBs use the current system.

In view of the extensive use now made of the ASFMail system by 90 NCBs, it is considered highly desirable to provide a more automatic form of on-line encryption, particularly within the concept of Regional Modernization. The new system would supplement and not replace the current Signum system. The benefits of the proposed system, which would be provided by connecting automatic encryption devices at the end of each communication line, are outlined below.

- The encryption device is considered to be cost effective and easy to install at an estimated cost of about FRF 10,000 per NCB.
- The information transmitted to or from the General Secretariat or NCBs would be automatically protected by encryption.
- Information transmitted or downloaded from the ASF to NCBs would also be protected on line.
- Maintenance would be reduced to a minimum and encryption key management would be avoided.

A technical study by the Information Technology Division would be required in order to recommend the system best suited to Interpol, which would be made available in 1997/98.

Preliminary Draft Resolution AGN/65/A.P.RES/4, regarding the introduction of on-line encryption, was submitted to the Committee and adopted.

Mr Mellet concluded by announcing the forthcoming replacement of the X.400 server (E-mail messaging system) and of

the computerized pay and finance system.

The X.400 server

The decision in 1987 to adopt the X.400 protocol for communication on the Interpol network has proved to be an unqualified success. The current X.400 is due for replacement in 1998 and the updated X.400 system will be the subject of a study and tender procedure. NCBs currently using the M440 User Agent (X.400) system were notified by letter on 19th February 1996 that it would be necessary to change to the new X.400 system in 1998 to coincide with the change at the General Secretariat. The new recommended system will be notified to NCBs at a later date. The countries currently using a Message Transfer Agent (MTA) or which are part of Regional Modernization projects are not affected by this change.

The pay and finance system

The pay and finance system is due for replacement at the beginning of the financial year in January 1998. It is hoped that the system can be simplified in view of the single currency policy adopted, and a commitment budgeting system is considered to be highly desirable. The normal feasibility study and tender procedures will be carried out in liaison with the General Administration Division and the Financial Controller.

The four draft resolutions were submitted to the General Assembly in plenary session.

Preliminary Draft Resolution AGN/65/A.P.RES/1 was further amended in Committee, at the request of the United States Delegate, and was then unanimously adopted as Draft Resolution AGN/65/P.RES/8.

The General Assembly adopted the following draft resolutions:

- AGN/65/P.RES/7: Additional facilities and proposed updates to

the Automated Search Facility. Resolution AGN/65/RES/5 was adopted.

- AGN/65/P.RES/8: Proposals for the acquisition of an Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS). Resolution AGN/65/RES/4 was adopted.

- AGN/65/P.RES/5: Introduction of electronic message formats. Resolution AGN/65/RES/6 was adopted.

- AGN/65/P.RES/9: Introduction of on-line encryption in 1997/1998. Resolution AGN/65/RES/7 was adopted.

MEETING OF HEADS OF NCBS

The meeting was chaired by Mr Barry Webb (United Kingdom).

Mr Higdon, Director of Liaison and Criminal Intelligence, General Secretariat, introduced the subject of "Interpol Notices and Surveillance of International Criminals". He referred to Preliminary Draft Resolution AGN/65/A.P.RES/9 which would abrogate a number of existing resolutions, bringing their provisions together in a single meaningful document. In particular the text called for full use to be made of the Notices System. Preliminary Draft Resolution AGN/65/A.P.RES/9 was adopted unanimously.

Mr Durand then introduced the subject of "Extradition". He referred to Preliminary Draft Resolution AGN/65/A.P.RES/10 which, again, abrogated a number of existing resolutions and brought the relevant provisions together in a single document. Attention was drawn to the details contained in Report No. 5 on the subject, in particular those relating to current legal agreements in various regions, model treaties and the role of NCBS in processing extradition treaties. The General Secretariat would shortly ask member countries to provide information on the minimum criteria for arrest in cases where extradition was requested. Preliminary Draft Resolution AGN/65/A.P.RES/10 was adopted unanimously.

Mr Gronnerud (General Secretariat) then introduced the subject of "Disaster Victim Identification". He referred to Preliminary Draft Resolution AGN/65/A.P.RES/11 which would merge six previous resolutions. He pointed out that the text had been drafted by the Standing Committee on Disaster Victim Identification. Following a comment by the

Delegate of Nepal calling for full co-operation when disasters occurred, the Preliminary Draft Resolution was adopted unanimously.

Mr Durand introduced the subject of "Co-operation with the United Nations".

That subject was being dealt with as one of the agenda items relating to legal matters, as was the subject of organization of General Assembly sessions raised during the first meeting of Heads of NCBS by the General Secretariat's Director of Administration and Finance (Preliminary Draft Resolution AGN/65/A.P.RES/12).

Then, at the request of the Executive Committee, Mr Durand (General Secretariat) reported on the subject of NCB policy. The Rules on International Police Co-operation (1982) authorized the NCBS to have direct contacts with police departments in other countries, subject to authorization from the NCBS concerned. The Executive Committee had asked for a study on such contacts. The results, which would be circulated in the near future, were as follows:

- the General Secretariat had received 50 replies
- 44 NCBS had said they had no direct contacts
- 4 NCBS had said that from time to time they had direct contacts
- 2 NCBS had said they regularly had direct contacts.

The Chairman said he drew the following conclusions from the discussion: the rule was that an NCB should always contact another NCB. However, and in reply to a question from Japan, if other police departments wished to contact an NCB directly, it was quite impossible to prevent them.

Mr Higdon (General Secretariat) concluded the discussion by

stating that the NCBS were essential to the Organization. But the enormous technical developments in all fields had to be taken into account. It was true that the NCBS made it possible to solve language and legal problems and to direct questions to the appropriate national departments.

As far as electronic data transmission and national databases were concerned, direct communication took place for information purposes. The advent of technology had to be taken into account and a full-scale debate on the future of the Organization was needed.

Mr Chamorro (General Secretariat) then reported on the activities and expansion of the General Secretariat's embryonic Public Relations Department. He briefly recalled the results already achieved in 1995, details of which were contained in General Assembly Report No. 1. Those results, which were particularly significant in the light of the Department's extremely limited resources, included the production of the video entitled "Interpol — a safer world", which had proved very successful both with the NCBS and with the audio-visual press. The speaker went on to describe Interpol's overall public relations strategy and recalled that the suggestions made by the NCBS had been collected in the document entitled "Interpol 2000".

Mr Chamorro then referred to the contributions made by certain NCBS, including France, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and Sweden, not forgetting the various General Secretariat departments. On the subject of financing, he expressed satisfaction at the fact that the Executive Committee had allocated certain resources so that public relations

activities could be developed. He thanked all the NCBs which had supported the General Secretariat's initiatives and said that a special communication unit would shortly be established under an officer with extensive experience. He would be assisted by a communication specialist and a secretary. Logistic preparations to enable the unit to begin work had already begun at the General Secretariat, but the project would be implemented in strict observance of the budget restrictions imposed. He was sure the General Assembly would have confidence in the project.

The Chairman noted that two agenda items namely "Relations with other International Institutions" and "Crime Prevention" had been withdrawn by the Belgian and Iranian delegations respectively.

Mr Gronnerud (General Secretariat) described the work done by the Interpol Standing Committee on Disaster Victim Identification, the membership of which had grown to 22 with the addition of Australia, Kuwait, Nigeria and Yemen in 1996. The Committee continued to receive support from the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), the International Air Transport Association (IATA) and the United Nations Department of Humanitarian Affairs. During its meeting in May 1996, the Committee had concluded the revision of the Disaster Victim Identification (DVI) Form and the accompanying DVI Guide. The Guide incorporated several new topics such as DNA identification techniques, the treatment of victims in accordance with cultural, religious and national customs, and post-traumatic stress disorder suffered by personnel at disaster scenes. A computerized version of the revised DVI Form was presented. Both the revised Form and Guide were being translated at the General Secretariat and would be ready for distribution to member countries at the beginning of 1997. The Committee had also prepared a preliminary

draft resolution on DVI which sought to replace the six existing resolutions on the same subject. It intended to work on new projects on DVI training and the creation of a DVI Liaison Officer Network. With reference to the crash of TWA Flight 800, the Committee planned to include such subjects as the role of airline companies in DVI operations, standardization of DNA sampling, and communication methods, on its 1997 meeting agenda. A Steering Committee comprising Australia, Belgium, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and the General Secretariat, had been set up to identify future priorities.

Mr Gronnerud reported that the successful identification of all the 141 passengers killed in the Tupolev plane crash in Norway in August 1996 was a combined result of professional DVI procedures, new identification techniques, and co-operation between the Norwegian, Russian and Ukrainian authorities.

Turning to the subject of stolen works of art, Mr Gronnerud then informed the meeting that the General Secretariat had sent out a circular letter in April 1996 to urge member countries to provide detailed statistics on art theft cases, and so far had received 45 replies. In 1995 Interpol had published 182 international notices on 895 items, of which 80% were issued on behalf of European countries. This figure seemed to suggest that countries in some regions were not making the best possible use of Interpol facilities. The General Secretariat had been able to present to the region concerned the services available for tracking down stolen works of art at the Regional Training Course for Latin and South American NCBs in Argentina and the Conference on Illicit Traffic in Cultural Property in Ecuador. That had resulted in a considerable increase in the supply of information by countries in that region. The General Secretariat had continued to work closely with the International Council of Museums (ICOM) and UNESCO. In September 1996 the General

Secretariat had organized the 3rd International Symposium on Theft of and Traffic in Stolen Art, Cultural Property and Antiques which had discussed, among other things, the extension of the ASF to incorporate the Stolen Works of Art Database. The database currently contained 7,000 items connected with 2,000 art theft cases. With effect from January 1997 NCBs would be able to access the database.

Replying to a question by the Egyptian Delegate, Mr Gronnerud agreed to obtain more information on the international conference on stolen works of art which had been held in Madrid in late 1995, and to advise member countries in due course.

The Nigerian Delegate said that over 200 works of art had been stolen from her country in recent years. However, thanks to the French authorities, 95 items stolen from 6 museums had been recovered and returned. There had been seizures of stolen Nigerian artefacts in the Netherlands and in Spain, and steps had been taken to return the stolen property to Nigeria. The Delegate also reminded the meeting of the resolution on stolen works of art which had been adopted at the 64th General Assembly Session, and stressed the importance of international co-operation. She expressed her appreciation of the international notices published by the General Secretariat.

The Delegates of Turkey and China described the situation with regard to the theft of historical and cultural property in their countries and called for international co-operation in curbing the smuggling and sale of stolen cultural artefacts.

Mr Durand then introduced the item entitled "Draft Memorandum of Understanding on Co-operation with the Universal Postal Union". He described the role of the Universal Postal Union whose professional staff included experts on drug smuggling and the mailing of illicit material through the post. He then presented the text of the Draft Memorandum (Report No. 8)

drawing particular attention to Article II (2) which stated that no police information could be communicated to the UPU without the authorization of the NCB concerned. He stated that, in a communication received the previous day, UPU had requested an amendment to the Article. He proposed therefore that the following sentence be added: "No postal information obtained from a postal administration shall be communicated to Interpol without the prior approval of that Postal Administration".

Thus amended, Preliminary Draft Resolution AGN/65/A.P.RES/14 was adopted unanimously.

Mr Higdon then introduced Report No. 7 "ACIU and Crime Analysis" which drew attention to the objectives and activities of the Analytical Criminal Intelligence Unit at the General Secretariat. He also explained the role of the General Secretariat's Steering Group which set an order of priority for the subjects suggested as projects for the ACIU. He reminded the meeting that suggestions for projects from member countries were always welcome, and asked member countries to consider sending officials to work in the ACIU. Mr Higdon stressed the importance of the work done by the unit and the desirability of promoting the development and use of crime analysis skills in member countries.

Preliminary Draft Resolution AGN/65/A.P.RES/13 was adopted unanimously.

The Egyptian Delegate then introduced the item entitled "Changing NCBs Structures". Referring to presentations he had made on the subject in previous years, he described the activities of the Egyptian NCB following structural changes made in 1993 when the NCB had taken on an operational role. He referred to the increase in arrests and extraditions but stressed the importance of finding out the full truth whether the person under suspicion was guilty or innocent. He also

described how the Bureau was dealing with international car theft and the kidnapping of children and mentioned its important training role. He spoke of the Bureau's communication strategy, whereby citizens were kept fully informed of the role and availability of Interpol, and completed his presentation by describing the role of the Egyptian Police in UN peace-keeping missions: 16 missions involving over 300 officers had been undertaken.

Mr Higdon (General Secretariat) then spoke on firearms regulation, which was a subject of particular concern to the police and the public because traffic in firearms could be highly profitable and, unfortunately, led to killings every year. He wondered whether appropriate legislation might not have prevented the tragedies which had occurred. He reminded the meeting that there were no fewer than 20 Interpol resolutions on the subject, in particular Resolution AGN/64/RES/13, adopted by the General Assembly in Beijing, which asked the General Secretariat to co-operate with the United Nations in trying to halt the spread of firearms.

He was pleased to inform the delegates that the General Secretariat had been able to play an active part in the 102nd training session organized in February 1996 by the United Nations Institute for Crime Prevention and the Treatment of Offenders in Asia and the Far East. The trainees had come from 32 countries in all parts of the world.

The General Secretariat representative then referred to the IWETS Programme (Interpol Weapons/Explosives Trafficking System) which had been implemented at the General Secretariat and, in particular, the creation of a formatted X.400 message for that type of crime. He said that the programme would very soon be available to the NCBs, once it had gone through the experimental stage, and asked member countries to feed the database by reporting all major

thefts of weapons and explosives from manufacturers, importers and exporters. He suggested that the delegates present at the 65th General Assembly session visit the interactive stand installed by Division IV near the room used for the plenary sessions. Under the heading "InterForm" the stand showed the full range of X.400 formatted messages developed by the General Secretariat.

Mr Higdon then reported on the first replies received by the General Secretariat to a "firearms and explosives" questionnaire sent to the NCBs, which would be the subject of a presentation to the 4th Symposium on Firearms to be held in Tokyo in November 1996. He concluded with an appeal to all countries to combat the proliferation of firearms and explosives in the world.

The Japanese Delegate expressed his satisfaction at the tangible results the General Secretariat had already achieved and promised both technical and financial support. He shared the views of the General Secretariat's senior officials and unreservedly supported all efforts to put the IWETS database into service.

The Iranian Delegate gave a brief oral presentation and recalled the fact that any action taken to search for fugitive criminals should be followed by a request for extradition once they had been located. He pleaded for political differences to be set aside in the context of the development of bilateral and multilateral extradition agreements, and said that his country supported the efforts being made in that area by the General Secretariat, and particularly the resolution on extradition currently being submitted (AGN/65/P.RES/20).

At the end of the meeting, the Turkish Delegate gave a brief presentation on the history of his NCB since 1930. He said the Turkish NCB currently had a staff of 114, half of whom spoke a foreign language (French or English). The Turkish NCB was among the 20 most active NCBs

with an average of 70.000 messages exchanged every year. He ended by announcing that in January 1997 a computerized network for sharing data between the NCB and the various ministries involved in combating crime would be installed. Lastly he thanked the other Heads of NCBs, particularly those of Egypt, the United Kingdom and Switzerland, with which Turkey had recently concluded successful police operations.

During the plenary session, Draft Resolution AGN/65/P.RES/16, "Traffic in human beings and the international exploitation of prostitution", was adopted unanimously and became Resolution AGN/65/RES/8.

Draft Resolution AGN/65/P.RES/18, "Improving international police co-operation in combating offences against children", was discussed. The United Kingdom Delegate explained that his country's representative at the Meeting of Heads of NCBs had chaired the meeting and had not therefore had an opportunity to make comments. Consequently, he took the opportunity afforded by the plenary session to report on a meeting of the International Committee on offences against children which had been held in London in 1995. Discussions at that meeting had greatly facilitated the arrests which had been made after a case of pornography on the Internet had come to light. Six countries had co-operated actively in breaking up an international pornography network. Those cases clearly showed the advantages of international co-operation in combating such offences, an area in which the United Kingdom authorities were being extremely active. The British Police had established a database on people involved in paedophilia-related activities, which contained information from the United Kingdom and abroad and which made it possible to analyse the various items of information obtained and to trace links between them. In 1995, the police had arrested about one hundred people

involved in cases of paedophilia. The authorities were planning to widen the scope of United Kingdom legislation on sex tourism and to establish a register of known paedophiles, the main objective of which would be to stop such people obtaining employment in sectors where they could give free rein to their inclinations.

The President said that at the Stockholm Conference on offences against children, which he had attended with the Secretary General, it had been noted that Interpol would be extending its activities to combat such offences.

Referring to the second paragraph of the draft resolution, the Japanese Delegate said he did not feel Interpol could "approve" the declaration and programme of activities adopted by the Stockholm Conference. He suggested that the words "Expressing its satisfaction at..." be used instead.

The Secretary General pointed out that the Interpol Standing Working Party had helped to draw up the declaration and said he felt that the General Assembly could therefore "support" it. The Japanese Delegate agreed with that suggestion.

The amendment to the Japanese Delegate's amendment (replacing "Approving" by "Supporting" in the second paragraph) was adopted unanimously.

Draft Resolution AGN/65/P.RES/18, "Improving international police co-operation in combating offences against children", thus amended, was adopted unanimously and became Resolution AGN/65/RES/10.

Draft Resolution AGN/65/P.RES/19, "Interpol notices and surveillance of international criminals", was adopted unanimously and became Resolution AGN/65/RES/11.

Draft Resolution AGN/65/P.RES/20 on Extradition was adopted unanimously and became Resolution AGN/65/RES/12.

Draft Resolution AGN/65/P.RES/21 on Disaster Victim Identification, was adopted unanimously and became Resolution AGN/65/RES/13.

Draft Resolution AGN/65/P.RES/24, "Draft Memorandum of Understanding on co-operation with the Universal Postal Union", was adopted unanimously and became Resolution AGN/65/RES/17.

Draft Resolution AGN/65/P.RES/23, "ACIU and crime analysis", was adopted unanimously and became Resolution AGN/65/RES/16.

CONTINENTAL MEETINGS

African continental meeting

The meeting was chaired by Mr Mahundi, Tanzania, Vice-President for Africa.

Regional activities

Mr Cameron-Waller, the Regional Co-ordinator, reported on activities in the region during the past year. The General Secretariat had done its utmost to keep African countries better informed about the Organization's activities and its requirements, and had sent a number of missions to various countries in Africa for that purpose. Meetings on traffic in hashish, economic crime, and traffic in stolen works of art had been held in Côte d'Ivoire, Zimbabwe and Zaire respectively. A regional meeting on traffic in stolen motor vehicles had been planned for a French-speaking country but unfortunately it had so far proved impossible to organize it. Togo had offered to host the meeting and the General Secretariat hoped that it would be possible to hold it in 1997. Representatives of the General Secretariat had also attended a meeting held in Cairo organized by the UNDCP. Recommendations had been adopted at those meetings and the texts were available on request.

The Regional Co-ordinator reminded participants of the principles which currently governed the training of NCB officials. In accordance with the new policy which had been formulated in 1995, nearly all training courses were being held in the regions themselves, which meant that they had become more accessible and corresponded more closely to the needs of the regions concerned. The first training course



RWANDA

for NCBs in West Africa was to be held in December 1996.

He then went on to describe the situation of the Sub-Regional Bureaus and their activities. Everyone at the meeting knew that there was agreement in principle for Abidjan, Harare and Nairobi — each was at a different stage of development.

Attempting to sum up the situation as best he could, the Regional Co-ordinator pointed out that the most recent agreement was that for the Sub-Regional Bureau scheduled for Nairobi. A ministerial meeting on the subject had been held in May 1996; it had been attended by very senior representatives from all East African countries which could be expected to participate in the Bureau's activities, with the exception of Somalia. The ministerial meeting had fully

supported the project and had promised to provide the necessary financial assistance and personnel. At the end of the ministerial meeting, the General Secretariat had been asked to draft an agreement for a Sub-Regional Bureau in Nairobi. The text was the subject of a preliminary draft resolution which would be submitted to the African Continental Meeting for approval.

Turning to the Sub-Regional Bureau in Harare, the Regional Co-ordinator said he was pleased to be able to inform the meeting that an agreement between Interpol and the Government of the Republic of Zimbabwe had been signed on 19th July 1996. The agreement had not yet come into force because various legal formalities had not been completed, but it was expected that everything would be settled very shortly. Minor amendments to the agreement had been approved by the General Assembly at its session in Beijing (Resolution AGN/64/RES/16) but as could be seen, those amendments had not prevented the agreement from being signed. The text of the amendments appeared in another preliminary draft resolution which would also be submitted to the meeting for approval.

The Regional Co-ordinator then reminded the meeting that the Sub-Regional Bureau in Abidjan was already open, the Headquarters Agreement between Interpol and Côte d'Ivoire having been signed in October 1994. The ministerial conference called for that purpose had approved the principle of opening the Sub-Regional Bureau, had examined its draft budget in minute detail and had approved its terms of reference. Under those conditions, the General Secretariat had no reason to doubt that it

would be able to move forward. Unfortunately, the initial enthusiasm seemed to have worn off. Thus, only ten — including Congo that very day — of the 24 countries which might be interested had confirmed that they were ready to sign the draft Convention, the text of which had been submitted to them on 17th July 1995. Furthermore, three of those ten countries had suggested various amendments to the text.

As far as the Budget was concerned, matters were progressing even more slowly. Two of the 24 countries had paid the expected amounts so that, of a provisional budget of FRF 1.275.000, only FRF 100.000 had been received! To say the situation was serious would be an understatement. The very principle on which the functioning of the Bureau was based was that it had to be financed by the countries of the Sub-Region concerned. Currently, Côte d'Ivoire had to meet very high costs alone, which had led the General Secretariat to write to all the relevant ministers of the Sub-Region on 25th September, asking them to become personally involved in order to solve the problem. The Regional Co-ordinator took the opportunity of asking the representatives of the countries which had not yet met their obligations to do all they could to encourage their ministers to release the required funds and to confirm that they would sign the draft Convention which had been sent to them. The Secretary General had informed the Executive Committee of the situation.

In Abidjan, Mr Lorougnon was currently assisted by two Gabonese officials, and three other candidates were being considered. As far as staff were concerned, therefore, the situation was tending to improve.

Furthermore, four Sub-Regional Committees already existed or were being established in Africa. In southern Africa the SARPCCO, bringing together chiefs of police, had been created on 31st July 1995

with three sub-committees, on legal, training and criminal matters respectively. It had held its first annual general assembly in Namibia on 29th and 30th July 1996 and would be holding an extraordinary general assembly in Botswana in February 1997. SARPCCO had prepared a draft multilateral agreement and a draft Constitution which were currently being studied by the General Secretariat and the countries of the region.

A committee of the Chiefs of Police of three East African countries had already existed before the ministerial meeting mentioned earlier. It had been agreed that the committee would be extended to include the Chiefs of Police of all the countries of the Sub-Region and that its next meeting would be held in Uganda in March 1997.

A meeting had been held in Abidjan on 10th and 11th July 1996, which had led to the creation of a Sub-Regional committee for West Africa and another for Central Africa. Those decisions had to be confirmed during two meetings to be held in Nigeria and Congo. The meeting in July had mainly dealt with the draft Convention and the financing of the Sub-Regional Bureau in Abidjan. It was rumoured that a number of countries were prepared to sign the draft Convention fairly soon, and that rumour had been confirmed by the contacts the Regional Co-ordinator had had during the present session. He was therefore hopeful that the very real problems experienced by the Sub-Regional Bureau were going to be solved.

The Zimbabwean delegate told the meeting that the text of the Headquarters Agreement had been published in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Zimbabwe and, consequently, the agreement could enter into force. The Secretary General had been informed by letter, that very day. Furthermore, the premises of the Sub-Regional Bureau in Harare had been prepared and were ready for occupation.

The Nigerian Delegate informed the meeting that his country had paid its contributions for the Sub-Regional Bureau in Abidjan. He then appealed to all Interpol member countries to comply with the resolutions adopted by the Organization's General Assembly. That was particularly important in the case of returning stolen works of art to their countries of origin. Unfortunately, some member countries which were in possession of Nigerian works of art apparently refused to return them to their rightful owners, in violation of the resolution adopted in Madrid.

The Kenyan Delegate said that his country was about to sign the draft Convention and that it was taking the necessary steps to second staff to the Sub-Regional Bureau.

The South African Delegate, speaking on behalf of the SARPCCO Legal Affairs Sub-Committee, thanked the member countries which had begun to study the draft Constitution for the Harare Sub-Regional Bureau. The General Secretariat had made some extremely interesting observations to the Committee and they would of course be taken into account. It went without saying that SARPCCO and the Sub-Regional Bureau in Harare were intended to complement, and not to compete with, each other.

The Senegalese Delegate reported that his country had paid all its contributions to the Organization's general budget, as well as that due for the Sub-Regional Bureau. Furthermore, Senegal had signed the draft Convention. All that remained now was for it to second staff, whose names would be duly sent to the General Secretariat.

In reply to a request from the Delegate of Botswana, the Chairman explained that the financial situation for all the Sub-Regional Bureaus was extremely worrying, and he urged his colleagues to do their utmost to persuade their authorities to pay their financial contributions. With regard to the Sub-Regional Bureau

in Harare, for example, only four countries — including Botswana — had paid their contributions, and as far as Abidjan was concerned, only two out of twenty-four countries had paid the contributions to which they had committed themselves.

In reply to a request from the Delegate of burkina faso, the Director of the Legal Division began by emphasizing that the texts circulated to the Ministers of the countries concerned were only drafts. In other words, the representatives of the Ministries of Justice or the Ministries of Foreign Affairs could propose amendments, and had indeed done so as the Regional Co-ordinator had said. What was important was to reply, even if amendments were proposed. In any case, the process would end with a diplomatic conference at which the ambassadors or other representatives would sign the Convention on behalf of the States they represented.

The Director of the Legal Division also said it would be inconceivable to go back on the basic principle of giving priority to Interpol's general budget in respect of any payment made by a member country, there would be a risk of the Organization exploding: the Sub-Regional

Bureaus were intended to help Interpol function better, not to take its place.

The Chairman asked the meeting to decide on Preliminary Draft Resolutions AGN/65/A.P.RES/15 (Draft Agreement with Kenya regarding a Sub-Regional Bureau in Nairobi), AGN/65/A.P.RES/16 (Amendments to the Agreement between the Government of Zimbabwe and the ICPO-Interpol regarding a Sub-Regional Bureau in Harare and its Privileges and Immunities on Zimbabwean Territory) and AGN/65/A.P.RES/17 (Adoption of the Draft Convention between the Organization and countries of the region served by the Sub-Regional Bureau in Harare).

Preliminary Draft Resolutions AGN/65/A.P.RES/15, AGN/65/A.P.RES/16 and AGN/65/A.P.RES/17 were adopted by the General Assembly in plenary session and became Resolutions AGN/65/RES/18, AGN/65/RES/19 and AGN/65/RES/20 respectively.

Date and place of the next Regional Conference

The Chairman recalled that, the previous year, Algeria had offered to organize the 1997 Regional Conference. Burkina Faso had also extended an invitation, but had

then withdrawn in favour of Algeria whose offer was still valid.

The meeting was consulted and accepted Algeria's offer. Consequently, the next African Regional Conference would be held in Algeria in 1997 on a date to be communicated in due course (Applause). The Chairman thanked Algeria for its invitation.

The South African Delegate recalled that his country had offered to organize the next Regional Conference during the African Continental Meeting in Beijing and that it had withdrawn its offer in favour of Algeria. He wished to make it known right away that South Africa was extending an invitation to host the 1999 African Regional Conference.

American continental meeting

The meeting was chaired by Mr Nelson Mery Figueroa, Chile, Vice-President for the Americas.

Day-to-day co-operation

The Argentine Delegate took the floor and stated that delegates should be reporting on what they could do, and not just making speeches. He went on to detail the activities of Mercosur which had held three working meetings on security matters in order to improve police co-operation against international crime in the region. At those meetings recommendations had been adopted on setting up a public security group within the Mercosur structure, on creating units specializing in regional and international terrorism at the NCBs, and on creating liaison officers' positions within the relevant countries. Optimizing the use of the X.400 Interpol telecommunications system had also been recommended. The Delegate pointed out that the Argentine Police were providing financial support for the Buenos Aires Sub-Regional Bureau to the tune of FRF 650,000. He asked his colleagues within the region to consider supporting the Bureau financially.



He also referred to the fact that Argentina had hosted the 1st Interpol Training Course for Spanish-speaking NCB Officers, and said that if there were no other volunteers his country would host a second such course in 1997. Interpol grants would be available to participating countries. His country was also hosting the X.400 training courses for the region. Interpol grants (one per country) would also be available for that training.

The Delegate then announced that his country would host a World Conference on Crimes Against Minors from 11th to 13th March 1997. He concluded his statement by saying that he believed that the countries in the region had made considerable progress in international co-operation.

The Chairman thanked the Delegate for his statement and stressed the importance of the relationship between Interpol and the American continent. He felt that the support of the Mercosur Ministers would bring more impetus to police initiatives.

On the subject of day-to-day co-operation the Chilean Delegate stated that crime was continuing to increase within the region, while there was still a lack of adequate legislation on extradition despite the fact that there were many bilateral agreements with the United States. Interpol was not mentioned in the treaties on extradition and many courts in the Americas did not recognize the validity of Interpol, particularly in relation to letters rogatory. That issue should be discussed at a meeting of the Heads of State of South American countries. He then recommended that delegates to the next American Regional Conference (Ottawa, 1997) should bring with them background material on all bilateral and multilateral treaties, national legislation and conventions on extradition. He proposed an amendment to Preliminary Draft Resolution AGN/65/A.PRES/10 to incorporate that suggestion. The amendment was approved.



The Mexican Delegate thanked the Chilean Delegate for his wise proposal and said it was important that the role of Interpol be reflected in national laws. The Chairman summarized the proposal by the Chilean Delegate and agreed that it was a good suggestion. The Mexican Delegate suggested that the information requested should be sent to Chile prior to the meeting. The Chairman agreed with the Mexican Delegate and supported the suggestion that all those documents be sent to Chile in advance.

Regional activities

The General Secretariat representative gave a brief account of the activities of the Sub-Regional Bureau in Buenos Aires. He mentioned the appointment of the new Head of the Bureau from Uruguay and of officers from both Chile and Argentina. The officers were endeavouring to promote awareness of the existence of the Bureau by issuing newsletters and by carrying out studies on various aspects of international crime specific to the region. He asked the countries which had not yet answered the questionnaires sent out in connection with the studies, to do so as soon as possible. He referred to the number of meetings attended by representatives of the

Regional Bureau, the number of visitors the Bureau had received, and its involvement in Mercosur. He also referred to the Bureau's funding. It was financed almost entirely by the Argentine authorities and he asked other countries to consider providing financial assistance. In 1996 the Secretary General had written to the Ministers responsible for police matters urging them to pledge material support for the Bureau.

The Puerto Rican Delegate summarized the proceedings of the Regional Committee for the Caribbean and Central America which had met in San Juan, Puerto Rico, from 5th to 7th June 1996. He spoke about the regional training courses and the fact that they were more efficient and economical. The Committee had asked the Secretary General to allow it to contribute to future courses. Other speakers at the meeting had also referred to the importance of training. The Chairman of the Committee had formed a Standing Working Party on Regional Training whose primary objectives were (a) to conduct a comprehensive needs analysis; (b) to devise a strategy; (c) to develop a comprehensive index of available training and funding sources; and (d) to establish selection criteria to choose among options. The United Kingdom

regional police adviser for the six British dependent territories in the Caribbean, provided a report on the United Nations Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) regional meeting on drug control co-operation held in Barbados. That meeting had referred to the subject of legislation and enforcement issues, and a number of recommendations had been made. Several working party reports had been submitted to the Committee on various topics, including a report from the Interpol General Secretariat Regional Co-ordinator. Budget issues had also been discussed.

Date and place of the next regional conference

The Canadian Delegate took the floor and informed the delegates that Canada would have the pleasure of hosting the next regional conference from 7th to 13th June 1997 in Ottawa. He extended a cordial invitation to all.

Asian Continental Meeting

The meeting was chaired by Mr Wajahat Latif (Pakistan), Vice-President for Asia.

Regional activities

Mr Dorsey (United States Observer), a member of the FOPAC Group, told the Asian delegates that a conference on money laundering would begin in Hong Kong on 12th November 1996.

The Chairman urged as many delegates as possible to participate in that very important conference.

Day-to-day co-operation

The Saudi Arabian Delegate again reported on the problems of co-operation with certain other Asian NCBs. Just before leaving his country for the current General Assembly session, he had again received evidence of difficulties faced by the Saudi Arabian NCB in obtaining replies from another country about a problem which



Members of the Syrian Delegation

directly concerned that other country. He asked for greater efforts to be made to improve day-to-day co-operation.

The Delegate of Myanmar referred to cases which proved his country's wish to co-operate. In 1995 and 1996, the Myanmar NCB had co-operated with the NCBs in China, Singapore, Thailand, etc.

The Delegates of Oman and the United Arab Emirates supported the observation by the Saudi Arabian Delegate and asked for greater co-operation, particularly in dealing with requests for extradition.

The Iraqi Delegate wished to assure the Organization of his country's desire to co-operate fully, but that implied that Iraq should be treated in the same way as all other Members. Iraq was prevented from paying its contributions by the embargo to which it was subjected. The speaker asked his colleagues to insist that that situation be brought to an end.

The Korean Delegate also wished to see extradition difficulties resolved, but commented that national police forces were obliged to submit to their countries' laws, which made it difficult to standardize procedures.

The Indian Delegate was aware of that fact, but asked Interpol to ensure that criminals against whom evidence had been assembled in their countries were no longer able to use legal loopholes to escape prosecution.

The Chairman acknowledged the extreme importance of that subject. Unfortunately, differences in national laws could result in delays, which led to misunderstandings because they were often taken as refusals by the requesting countries. He asked all the countries to attempt to reply as quickly as possible to requests made to them, and to try to solve all problems bilaterally.

Mr Cameron-Waller, Regional Co-ordinator, said that the problem of extradition would be discussed by the meeting of Heads of NCBs and was the subject of Preliminary Draft Resolution No. 10.

Regional and Sub-Regional Committees' progress reports

The Chairman reported on the meeting of the Working Party on Co-operation in Asia, which he had chaired. It had been held in Antalya on 22nd October and attended by representatives of

Australia, China, Iran, Japan, Pakistan, the Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Thailand and the United Arab Emirates.

The Regional Co-ordinator had presented a recent report on the Drugs Liaison Bureau for South-East Asia. The number of replies received to the questionnaire meant that final conclusions could not yet be reached. The Regional Co-ordinator had suggested that, at a later stage, the General Secretariat could make a study of the services which could be provided, and report to the Working Party at its next session. Japan, Thailand and Australia observed that the financial consequences of the project should be studied first.

The Acting Director of Information Technology had submitted a report on regional telecommunications and the progress of regional modernization in Asia. The technical specifications were ready to be sent to suppliers, subject to the General Assembly's agreement on the proposed means of financing. For the seven Pacific countries, a study would be conducted with a view to possibly implementing the project in 1998-1999. Technological developments would make it possible to reduce the cost for each of the countries.

Mr Cheng, Liaison Officer for Asia, had announced that a questionnaire had been prepared on training requirements in Asia. The Regional Co-ordinator had explained that, for the moment, Australia could not host a course and that another country therefore had to be found. The Australian Delegate had stressed the value of joint training.

The Acting Director of Information Technology had referred to the possibility of liaison between Interpol and Aseanapol, pointing out that the appropriate software could make the process very simple. Japan had hoped the development of that project would enable the countries concerned to have a single contact point for both institutions.

The Working Party had discussed the Asian contact officers' programme. The General Secretariat had provided information about the number of countries which had already appointed contact officers and about the meeting held with European contact officers, during which a desire to co-operate with the Asian contact officers had been expressed. Japan had stressed the fact that the countries which had not already appointed contact officers should do so as soon as possible.

With regard to Iran's offer to host a drugs bureau in Tehran, the Regional Co-ordinator had said that the General Secretariat would be prepared to help launch that body once it knew which countries were interested and the necessary financial arrangements had been made.

It had been decided to hold the Working Party's next meeting immediately before the 66th General Assembly session.

The Chairman announced that the minutes of the Conference had been sent to member countries on 13th September 1996.

Co-operation with Aseanapol

The Acting Director of Information Technology said he had attended the April meeting of the ASEANAPOL Working Party, the Asian Regional Conference in June, and the meeting of the Asian Working Party. The General Secretariat was fully aware of the need for reliable links between the ASEANAPOL network and Interpol's general network, to allow data to be exchanged effectively. It was not yet possible to say exactly how that would be achieved technically, but there was a firm desire to do it. The connection would be made via the X.400 electronic messaging system. A proposal for financing the project would be submitted to the General Assembly in the draft budget for 1997. The General Secretariat would then only have to wait for the countries concerned to decide to participate.

Regional training in Asia

The Iranian Delegate said that his country had undertaken a regional research programme with the assistance of UNDCP, and that it would continue to study the subject.

The Japanese Delegate reported that his country was trying to find funds to organize a training course for NCB officers in the region, if possible every two years. He was not yet able to say how soon the courses would begin and how many trainees would be accepted, but he assured the meeting that his country was making every effort to ensure that the project came to fruition.

The Chinese Delegate was pleased to learn of that offer. He said that his delegation was aware of the importance of training and very much appreciated the work the NCBs were doing in that connection. He hoped that Interpol would continue its efforts along similar lines so that what had been achieved in other continents could also be done in Asia. In the past, China had already provided training, in liaison with police colleges of other countries, and it was prepared to play its part in organizing advanced training courses.

The Turkish Delegate said that his country was in a geographic position crucial to international co-operation, and was proposing to establish a sub-regional bureau covering the whole neighbouring region. Some of the countries concerned had already given a positive response and the project was well on its way from the financial point of view.

The Iraqi Delegate supported that proposal and hoped that Iraqi trainees would not be excluded from any training to be given at regional level.

The Delegate of Bangladesh approved of the idea of regional co-operation through Interpol. He congratulated Sri Lanka which had hosted a conference of police chiefs from Southern Asia in July, and had laid the foundations for

regional co-operation through Interpol.

Mr Cheng assured the Asian countries of the General Secretariat's desire to open up training possibilities in Asia. The Regional Co-ordination Bureau and the Training Section had set up a working party to prepare a programme. The General Secretariat would be ready to launch the programme as soon as a host country could be found.

Date and meeting place of the next Regional Conference

The Chairman said that the next Asian Regional Conference would be held in 1998 and asked all countries prepared to host it to inform the General Secretariat.

European continental meeting

The meeting was chaired by Mr William Taylor, a Member of the Executive Committee.

The Chairman gave the floor to Mr Henning Thiesen, Denmark, Chairman of the Interpol European Committee (IEC), who gave a report on the Committee's activities.

He informed the meeting of the composition of the IEC (new members had been appointed at the last European Regional Conference, held in Warsaw). He drew the attention of future candidates for the IEC to the terms of reference of the Committee and the requirements for becoming a member.

The IEC Chairman stated that the work of the Committee was still based on the key priority areas set out in the European Business Plan. He said that the IEC had evaluated the 25th European Regional Conference, and would play an active role in the preparation of the agenda for the 26th Conference.

He then reported on the progress of the IEC working group, which was currently preparing a strategy paper outlining steps to be taken in order to facilitate co-operation between Interpol and institutions

such as the European Union and Schengen.

In pursuance of the Business Plan, the IEC was considering the establishment of a working party on DNA profiling. The terms of reference for such a working party would be discussed at the forthcoming IEC Meeting.

The four European working parties were progressing with their work as scheduled. Progress and final reports would be presented at the 26th European Regional Conference.

The IEC Chairman then reminded the meeting of the recommendation adopted by the 25th Conference, enabling European candidates for the Executive Committee to introduce themselves during the European Continental Meeting if they so wished.

He concluded the IEC activity report by conveying his thanks to all who had contributed to the improvement of international police co-operation.

The Chairman then opened the meeting for general discussion.

The Swiss Delegate supported the General Secretariat's efforts to improve co-operation with other organizations, which had culminated in a Memorandum of Understanding with the Universal Postal Union (UPU). He recommended examining the possibility of concluding similar agreements with Schengen and Europol.

Mr Thiesen replied that a strategy paper had already been prepared on the subject and would be presented and discussed at the next meeting of the IEC.

European Liaison Bureau Progress Report

The Chairman then gave the floor to Mr Herman Heijerman, Head of the European Liaison Bureau, who reported on the Bureau's activities since the 25th European Regional Conference.

Mr Heijerman informed the meeting of the ongoing contacts between Interpol and Europol with

a view to complementing each other's work and avoiding duplication. He also reported on the efforts made to establish a sound working relationship with Schengen and the European Union.

Following the recommendations adopted during the 25th European Regional Conference, the European Liaison Bureau had organized a meeting of the IEC "European Initiatives" working party. As a result of that meeting the European Liaison Bureau had drafted a strategy paper for discussion at the 15th IEC meeting.

Mr Heijerman reported that in July 1996 the Liaison Bureau had distributed a document on the background and possibilities of DNA profiling. He further stated that a document had been sent to various NCBS in Central and Eastern Europe on the possible use of the European Commission's "PHARE" programme for funding law enforcement projects. Both Slovakia and Poland had already obtained funds from the programme for the installation of the ASF at their NCBS.

The European Liaison Bureau had finalized the project on the European Police and Judicial Booklet, which now contained information on 37 countries. It was hoped that the remaining NCBS would send in their contributions in due course to complete the Booklet.

Mr Heijerman reported on the conferences and meetings in which the European Liaison Bureau had participated. He stated that the 8th Meeting of European Contact Officers, which had been held in Lyons on 19th and 20th September 1996, had been attended by Contact Officers from 31 countries. Although attendance was increasing every year, the speaker called upon all Heads of NCBS to have their Contact Officers attend the annual meeting as it was considered to be very important for facilitating their work. He then gave details of the matters discussed during the Contact Officers' Meeting.

With the exception of the NCB in Sarajevo the European Liaison Bureau officers had visited all the European NCBs during the past 2 years. As such liaison visits were highly appreciated by the NCBs and considered to be very useful, the European Liaison Bureau was going to draw up a new schedule for further visits.

Between May and October, the Liaison Bureau had handled one hundred cases concerning 34 countries. In one case — an aircraft crash in Spitsbergen, Norway — the General Secretariat had sent the Russian Liaison Officer to the crash site to liaise between the victim identification team and the authorities in Russia and the Ukraine.

Mr Heijerman then briefed the meeting on the progress made with respect to the motor vehicle crime action plan. He said that a study had been carried out by the Analytical Criminal Intelligence Unit to highlight the key trends in vehicle trafficking. However, the study had been based on information provided by only 14 NCBs and it was a pity that several key countries affected by that type of crime had not responded. The centralized database of stolen vehicles was now in place and accessible via the ASF. Slovakia, Sweden, Luxembourg and Russia had already entered their stolen vehicle data successfully. The NCBs were reminded that they had asked for this tool, which had subsequently been developed by the General Secretariat. It was therefore up to the NCBs to make full use of it.

Day-to-day co-operation

The Chairman opened the floor for discussion.

The Danish Delegate gave a short overview of the recent developments in Denmark and the other Scandinavian countries with regard to outlaw motorcycle gangs. As already indicated in the press, the war between the Hells Angels and the Bandidos had escalated. As a consequence the Danish Government had introduced a bill

in Parliament which would enable the police to ban outlaw motorcycle gangs from certain residential areas. Another project on that subject was being studied at the European Union level, and the Interpol General Secretariat had provided all available information about "Project Rockers" for evaluation. As a next step, it was intended to start an investigation project on the operations of those motorcycle gangs. To support that, it was also planned to set up a "Nordic Database" on stolen firearms, cars etc., which might be used by the gangs.

The Spanish Delegate informed the meeting that Spain would be prepared to host the 23rd European Meeting of Heads of National Drug Services scheduled for spring 1997. He asked the Delegates to support the Spanish invitation.

The Belgian Delegate thanked his colleagues from Europe for their co-operation in recent investigations into child pornography networks.

An observer from Mexico, supported by the Spanish Delegate, informed the meeting that Mexico was willing to give assistance to European countries in cases of drug trafficking and organized crime. Interested parties would be able to contact the Mexican authorities through their liaison office in Madrid.

At the request of the Chairman, the candidates for the Executive Committee elections introduced themselves to the meeting. Mr Andrzej Koweszko, Head of NCB Warsaw and Mr Y. Vehbi Dalda, Head of the Turkish NCB, would be standing for election as Executive Committee Members. Mr Michel Richardot, Director of the French National Police Academy, would be standing for the position of Vice-President for Europe.

Mr Dalda informed the participants that his country was suggesting the setting up of a Sub-Regional Bureau in Turkey to serve countries in both Europe and Asia.

The Azerbaijani Delegate supported this Turkish initiative, but suggested limiting the region to be covered by the Bureau to the Black Sea countries.

Date and place of the next European Regional Conference

The Slovak Delegate announced that the 26th European Regional Conference would be held in Bratislava, from 14th to 16th May 1997.

PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES FOR 1997

The Director of Administration and Finance at the General Secretariat submitted Report No. 11 which contained the Programme of Activities for 1997. The Assembly adopted the report which is summarized below.

General administration

- Development and installation of the new computerized accounting and payroll system and the system for managing expenditure commitments
- Improving the site security facilities following the installation of a new external security post, and adaptation of the flow of traffic for access to the site
- Fitting out certain offices and other areas to meet the need for document storage space
- Building a new dining area to cope with the increase in the number of participants at conferences and the number of visits to the General Secretariat
- Inspecting and overhauling the air-conditioning and fire-detection systems in the computer room
- Ongoing study on social welfare schemes
- Study on and installation of a computer-assisted translation system.

Liaison and criminal intelligence

General Crime Group (Sub-Directorate 1)

Crimes against persons and property

- Study on the possibility of entering the album on international pickpockets in the ASF system
- Study on violent crime trends in the last quarter of the 20th century.

Disaster Victim Identification

- Work on disaster victim identification matters, in co-operation with the Standing Working Party.
- Closer co-operation with the United Nations Department of Humanitarian Affairs, with a view to obtaining expert status on disaster victim identification at the UN.

Motor vehicle crime

- Further development of the motor vehicle crime action plan. In particular, co-operation with Directorate IV to develop the central stolen vehicle database, using the ASF
- Inclusion of all European and North African countries in the brochure on motor vehicle registration documents
- Study on selected countries to develop a programme for the prevention of motor vehicle trafficking, with the co-operation of other organizations such as the European Institute for Crime Prevention and Control (HEUNI)
- Development of crime analysis activities relating to motor vehicle crime once the new ICIS system has been installed
- Regular updating of the motor vehicle registration manual (descriptions of number plates in various countries).

Works of art and cultural property

- Conversion of earlier years' records of stolen works of art for entry in the ASF (ongoing)

Weapons and explosives

- Production and dissemination of a world-wide situational report on firearms and explosives
- Incorporation of the IWETS database into the ICIS programme, in particular by:

- formatting the IWETS entry form for X.400 transmission
- providing direct, limited query access to IWETS through the NCBs
- Study on the proliferation of AK-47 type assault rifles throughout the world
- Provision of firearms/explosives training and analytical studies to police forces in specific areas (i.e. Africa, Caribbean, Eastern Europe) as the need arises.

Offences against minors

- Ongoing training programme in co-operation with the United Nations
- Monitoring of the Specialist Liaison Officers' network created by the Working Party with a view to increasing efficacy
- Creation of an international register of laws on child pornography and child sexual abuse, with the aim of harmonizing member countries' legislation
- Promotion of Interpol's international role with the aim of obtaining United Nations expert status in connection with offences against minors.

Organized Crime Group (Sub-Directorate 1)

- Ongoing work on the following projects and on individuals wanted at international level in connection with the projects:

MACANDRA (Italian organized crime)

ROCKERS (Motor cycle gangs involved in organized crime)

OCSA (Organized crime in South America)

EASTWIND (Organized crime in Asia)

GOWEST (Organized crime in Eastern Europe)

MA.L.E. (Italian Mafia Money Laundering in Europe)

- Production of an Encyclopaedia of legislation pertaining to organized crime

- Production of an "identification manual" for motor-cycle club colours

- Work on a project concerning organized crime in Africa.

Sub-Directorate 1: Terrorism

- Study on selected major terrorist groups

- Study on links between drugs and terrorism

- Study on the possibility of nuclear terrorism incidents.

Sub-Directorate 2: Economic and Financial Crime and FOPAC

Counterfeit Currency Group

- Computerized database on currency counterfeiting (ASF)

- Computerized database on fraudulent travel documents (EDISON System)

- Computerization of "Counterfeits & Forgeries"

- Preparation of a booklet on passports.

FOPAC Group

- "EastWash": In-depth study on economic environment in the countries of the former eastern bloc, in order to prepare a report

- Encyclopaedia of assets derived from crime.

Economic Crime Group

- Encouraging regional approaches to combating economic crime by organizing or co-ordinating working party meetings and conferences in the different Interpol regions, i.e. Africa, America, Asia and Europe

- Further work on the creation of an international payment card database and the establishment of an international central reference

point and reference library for counterfeit payment cards

- Co-ordinating national and regional efforts to combat West African Fraud Groups.

Sub-Directorate 3: Drugs

- Probalkan Programme: Special analysis and monitoring of all drug movements along the Balkan Route (including review of KOALA Project)

- Following up the Pompidou Group's initiatives on drug trafficking by ship

- Transal Project: Intelligence analysis ("Operation Transal") confirmed the existence of large-scale multi-drug trafficking groups run by African based/led groups requiring special focus on this phenomenon

- Mandrax Project on large-scale traffic in methaqualone from the Indian Sub-Continent to Southern Africa. Study to identify and dismantle the trafficking networks operating in the producer, transit and consumer countries

- Cocaine Packaging Marking or Logo Programme to establish links between seizures based on similar packaging markings

- Monitoring of precursor and essential chemicals (PECS)

- Study on anabolic steroids

- Worldwide study on illegal drug prices and purity

- Updating of the reference material on controlled deliveries (REC/CONF/HDS/EUR/22)

- Study on the possibility of using undercover agents for joint operations in Europe, particularly when co-operating with the specialized departments in Central and Eastern European countries (REC/CONF/JDS/EUR/22).

Sub-Directorate 4: Criminal Intelligence

International Notices Branch

- Provision of guidance to the NCBs on the procedure for requesting

notices in order to improve the quality of requests and notices

- Re-engineering of the notices production process

- Project on the default release of fugitives.

Fingerprint Section

- Modernization of the Fingerprint Section

- AFIS project (preparation of the database for conversion)

- Monitoring NCBs' use of standard forms for transmitting fingerprints and latent traces.

Analytical Criminal Intelligence Unit (ACIU)

- Further development of Division IV and ACIU's joint pilot project

- Further "Crime analysis awareness training" for General Secretariat staff to stimulate interest in the discipline and in the role of the ACIU Crime Analysts and to assist management in the identification of suitable crime analysis projects

- Strategic analysis implementation.

Message Research/Response Branch (MRRB)

- Ongoing back record conversion for the Works of Art project, in cooperation with the General Crime Group, ASA and Division IV.

- Study on ways of increasing MRRB productivity and extending working hours to enhance service to NCBs and to improve quality and speed.

Automated Search and Archive Section (ASA)

- Creation of electronic coloured images in connection with the Stolen Works of Art database (back record conversion and new information).

European Liaison Bureau

- Ongoing work on the Business Plan for Europe, 1996-2000

- Monitoring and encouraging the implementation of minimum standards for NCBs in Europe

- Monitoring and assisting with the development of NCBs in the new member countries
- Carrying out visits to NCBs to review programme development and provide assistance
- Updating the booklet on European police and judicial systems
- Developing and implementing, in collaboration with Division III, training courses (workshops) on NCB management for Central and Eastern Europe
- Monitoring developments, establishing working agreements, and maintaining close association with the European Union, EDU/Europol and Schengen, and other bodies involved in European police co-operation issues
- Maintaining the network of European contact officers.

Regional Co-ordination Bureau

- Continuing to oversee the smooth introduction and development of the Sub-Regional Bureaus and the implementation of their work programmes
- Monitoring and supporting the activities of regional committees such as the Working Party on Co-operation in Asia, the Mercosur Working Party, the Council of Police Chiefs (Southern Africa) and the Committee for the Caribbean and Central America, and exploring the potential for the introduction of regional committees in other regions
- Ensuring that the necessary link between the Sub-Regional Bureaus and the regional committees, where they exist, is firmly established
- Building upon the success of the NCB Trainees Course held in Buenos Aires in November 1995; in collaboration with Directorate III, continuing to develop and implement a programme for the delivery of training on aspects of international police co-operation in a single language
- Encouraging the expansion and effective utilization of the Asian Contact Officers' network, building

upon initiatives taken during their first meeting, held in Australia in February 1996.

Legal Affairs and Training

- Conclusion of an outline agreement with the United Nations
- Conclusion of an implementing convention with UPU
- Further negotiation of regional conventions with member countries
- Negotiations with the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs on improving the Headquarters Agreement
- Monitoring legal problems in connection with the ICIS
- Amendment of the Financial Regulations
- Study on the Organization's various publications (ongoing).

Computerization and Telecommunications

- Ongoing work on information technology strategy: three-tiered client/server architecture project
- Completion of the installation of new office automation and electronic archiving systems in the context of the three-tiered client/server architecture; introduction of a financial management system to operate solely in French francs by 1st January 1998
- Merging of the CIS (Criminal Information System), the ASF (Automated Search Facility) and the EAS (Electronic Archiving System) to form a single Interpol Criminal Information System (ICIS)
- ASF (Automated Search Facility): developments relating to stolen or suspect vehicles, boats and aircraft, to lost or stolen passports and identity documents, and to counterfeit credit cards
- Establishment of a strategy for the development of ASF options and the use of X.400 protocols for ASF/ICIS data exchange

- Study on the Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS) project and its integration into Interpol's information system

- Ongoing work on the Regional Modernization projects, particularly for East Africa and Asia
- Introduction of a systematic on-line encryption system for all data exchanges
- Development of technical training in the various regions with equipment installed at the Regional Stations.

ELECTIONS AND SELECTION OF A MEETING PLACE FOR THE NEXT GENERAL ASSEMBLY SESSION

Election of the President

The Elections Committee declared the following candidates eligible for the post of President for a four-year term:

- Mr Toshinori Kanemoto (Japan)
- Mr Wajahat Latif (Pakistan)
- Mr Zhu En Tao (China).

Mr Zhu En Tao withdrew his candidature.

In conformity with Article 16 of the Constitution, the election required a two-thirds majority.

Mr Kanemoto (Japan) was elected as the new President of the ICPO-Interpol.

Elections to the Executive Committee

- Election of a Vice-President for Europe (three-year term of office): Mr Richardot (France) was elected.
- Election of a Vice-President for Africa: Mr El-Rooby (Egypt) was elected.
- Election of delegates for the Americas: Mr Pellachi (Argentina) was elected for a three-year term; Mr Kelly (United States) was elected for a one-year term.
- Election of a delegate for Europe: Mr Vehbi Dalda (Turkey) was elected for a three-year term.
- Election of a delegate for Africa: Mr Augustine Chihuri (Zimbabwe) was elected.
- Election of a delegate for Asia for a one-year term: Mr Yoghinder Singh (India) was elected.

Selection of a meeting place for the 66th General Assembly session

By acclamation, the General Assembly decided to accept India's offer to host the next session.

Closing ceremony

Closing the session, the President presented the Interpol medal to the retiring members of the Executive Committee; Mr Latif and Mr Mahundi (Vice-Presidents) and Mr Zachert and Mr Noble (Delegates).

The Secretary General then presented the Interpol medal to Mr Eriksson, the retiring President.

The President presented Mr Dalda with a memento as a token of Interpol's gratitude.



*From top to bottom:
Mr Richardot,
Mr El-Rooby,
Mr Pellachi,
Mr Kelly,
Mr Dalda,
Mr Chihuri and
Mr Singh.*

RESOLUTIONS

AGN/65/RES/4

Subject: Proposals for the acquisition of an Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS)

NOTING the contents of section 4 of Report No. 4 regarding the Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS),

AWARE that the implementation of an AFIS facility at the General Secretariat will increase the effectiveness of member countries in the fight against international crime,

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT the previous unsuccessful attempt to fund the system from within the Interpol budget,

AWARE of the need to identify the future strategy within Interpol's Criminal Information System (ICIS) regarding the method of retention and international circulation of fingerprints and photographs,

NOTING that the proposed policy regarding the AFIS facility has been discussed and agreed by the Executive Committee at its 114th session from 2nd to 4th July 1996,

The ICPO-Interpol General Assembly, meeting in Antalya from 23rd to 29th October 1996 at its 65th Session:

AUTHORIZES the Secretary General to seek appropriate sources of finance for the project, such as special contributions, before putting out a call for tenders with a view to acquiring an Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS) for installation at the General Secretariat.

AGN/65/RES/8

Subject: Traffic in human beings and the international exploitation of prostitution

HAVING IN MIND the United Nations Convention on the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others of 2nd December 1949.

RECALLING the terms of Report AGN/34/RAP No. 9 submitted to the General Assembly at its 34th session (Rio de Janeiro, 1965) entitled "International traffic in women under the cover of employment exposing them to prostitution", and the recommendation made to the NCBs to pay particular attention to such traffic with a view to identifying and dismantling organized networks and their intermediaries in each country.

DEEMING that activities which favour or exploit prostitution at international level should be combated internationally as a top priority,

HAVING IN MIND the fact that the exploitation of prostitution often stems from or gives rise to other criminal activities,

NOTING a definite increase in the activities of international organized networks involved in traffic in human beings, as well as in illegal activities relating to the exploitation of prostitution, including the sexual exploitation of children, and believing that the dismantling of those networks is a priority for international co-operation,

The ICPO-Interpol General Assembly, meeting in Antalya from 23rd to 29th October 1996 at its 65th session:

ASKS the Interpol National Central Bureaus to step up their sharing of information about people likely to be directly or indirectly involved in international networks engaged in the exploitation of prostitution or in traffic in human beings, in order to improve the quality and increase the volume of information exchanged:

RECOMMENDS that member countries co-ordinate the multidisciplinary activities carried on by all the authorities dealing with such matters: for example, such co-ordination could include — at national or regional level where appropriate — government departments, police forces, judicial authorities specializing in such offences, as well as any public bodies involved:

RECOMMENDS that member countries step up the bilateral and multilateral sharing of information about illegal activities favouring the exploitation of prostitution, such information to include material identifying individuals suspected of participating in, for example, marriages of convenience or illegal marriages, the establishment of illegal immigration networks and the production of forged identity documents:

ASKS the General Secretariat to increase co-operation with the appropriate organs of the United Nations and the European Union, with a view to conducting joint campaigns against traffic in human

beings and the exploitation of prostitution; these projects could include publication of a manual listing the appropriate authorities, contact points and departments with specialized knowledge and expertise in such matters, as well as a study of the timeliness and feasibility of centralizing data on DNA and the criminal analysis of such data, taking account of the ethical and legal constraints involved;

ABROGATES the following resolutions:

- AGN/29/RES/6 — (1960) — Exploitation of prostitution
- AGN/34/RES/1 — (1965) — Particular forms of traffic in women
- AGN/43/RES/4 — (1974) — Exploitation of prostitution at international level
- AGN/57/RES/19 — (1988) — Traffic in human beings.

AGN/65/RES/9

Subject: International traffic in child pornography

CONSIDERING that the distribution of pornography within a country is a matter of internal criminal policy, but that the export

of such material is a matter of international concern,

ALSO CONSIDERING that almost every country in the world has subscribed to the Universal Postal Convention of 1957 and the 1964 revision thereof, and that Article 28 of this Convention prohibits the sending of obscene or immoral articles in the international mails,

HAVING IN MIND the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, and more particularly Article 34 thereof,

ACKNOWLEDGING that child pornography, which implies the sexual exploitation of children, is often produced in one country with a view to its distribution in other countries,

CONSIDERING that it is increasingly difficult to intercept such material because of the methods used by the senders, and recognizing that there is an international market for such material showing children,

The ICPO-Interpol General Assembly, meeting in Antalya from 23rd to 29th October 1996 at its 65th session:

RECOMMENDS that member countries:

- enact legislation (if they have not yet done so) making the production, distribution, importation or possession of child pornography criminal offences, and also making assistance and incitement punishable in the context of such offences, and
- consider enacting legislation which would allow the seizure of assets derived from such offences;

STRESSES the fact that such legislation should take account of the types of support currently used to transmit such material, but also leave room for new technology, such as computers and other virtual representations, so as to avoid any legal void which might favour offenders;

ASKS the member countries to reassess the importance they attach to child pornography investigations to give them maximum priority, and to pay particular attention to protecting the interests of the child when combating this form of crime;

ABROGATES the following Resolution:

- AGN/39/RES/4 — (1970) — Exporting obscene material by mail.

AGN/65/RES/10

Subject: Improving international police co-operation in combating offences against children

HAVING IN MIND the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child,

SUPPORTING the declaration and programme of activities adopted during the World Congress Against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children held in Stockholm from 26th to 31st August 1996,

ACKNOWLEDGING the fact that children are the most vulnerable members of society and must therefore be accorded specific protection against the offences of which they are victims,

CONSIDERING that the interest of the child must take precedence over any other consideration,

The Thai Delegation



RECALLING Interpol General Assembly Resolution AGN/61/RES/10 on offences against minors, and the creation of the Interpol Standing Working Party on offences against minors.

HAVING NOTED the report on offences against minors submitted by the General Secretariat to the National Central Bureaus, which describes the Standing Working Party's activities and gives a picture of trends in crimes against children.

The ICPO-Interpol General Assembly, meeting in Antalya from 23rd to 29th October 1996 at its 65th session:

RECOMMENDS that member countries carefully study the recommendations made by the Interpol Standing Working Party on offences against minors contained in Appendix 2 of Report AGN/65/RAP. No. 5 and, if necessary, amend their national laws in conformity with the spirit of those recommendations and also make provision in their national penal legislation for the prosecution of offences committed abroad;

RECOMMENDS including the subject of offences against minors as an item on the agendas of all the Organization's regional conferences;

ASKS member countries to pay greater attention to offences against minors and to provide increased resources for combating such offences, especially by training specialist personnel to work in the special units within police forces;

RENEWS its confidence in the Interpol Standing Working Party on offences against minors, and asks it to continue to assist in the fight against this particularly sensitive form of crime and in fostering international police co-operation, renews the Working Party's mandate and asks it to submit a full report on its activities to the General Assembly at its next session;

PLACES PARTICULAR EMPHASIS on the importance of constant co-operation with the United

Nations institutions dealing with the rights of the child and on the advisability of establishing a working relationship with the European Union in the context of Council of Europe Recommendation R(91)11 of 9th September 1991 and its appended Report, Articles II-3 and II-4 of which mention the importance of co-operation with Interpol and other international organizations working for children's welfare;

ABROGATES the following Resolutions:

- AGN/58/RES/15 — (1989) — Improving international co-operation to combat offences against minors.

- AGN/61/RES/10 — (1992) — Offences committed against minors.

AGN/65/RES/14

Subject: Co-operation with the United Nations

BEARING IN MIND Article 41 of the Organization's Constitution,

BEARING IN MIND Resolution No. AGN/64/RES/11, entitled "Relations with other international bodies and with police organizations in particular",

BEARING IN MIND Report No. AGN/65/RAP. No. 23, entitled "Co-operation with the United Nations",

HAVING LEARNED, with great satisfaction, of the decision taken on 15th October 1996 to grant the ICPO-Interpol Observer status in the United Nations General Assembly,

CONSIDERING that this decision opens up excellent prospects for co-operation with the United Nations and its specialized agencies, and consolidates Interpol's position in the community of international organizations,

CONVINCED of the need to conclude agreements which will make it possible to streamline policies in the fight against crime on a worldwide basis.

The ICPO-Interpol General Assembly, meeting in Antalya from 23rd to 29th October 1996 at its 65th session:

ENDORSES the considerations contained in the above-mentioned report;

CONGRATULATES the President of the Organization and the Secretary General on their undoubted success;

ASKS THEM:

- to consider the appropriate practical measures to ensure that the ICPO-Interpol gains maximum benefit from the Observer status it has obtained;

- to pursue their efforts to enter into negotiations aimed at concluding outline agreements, conventions or memoranda of understanding with the United Nations and with its specialized agencies;

- to submit any such agreements to the General Assembly for approval.

AGN/65/RES/16

Subject: ACIU and crime analysis

BEARING IN MIND the growing importance of crime analysis as a helpful instrument for combating and preventing all types of crime at national and international level,

CONSIDERING that few member countries have developed crime analysis methods and techniques, while many may lack experience in that field,

APPRECIATING the quality of the work done by the Analytical Criminal Intelligence Unit (ACIU) since its establishment at the General Secretariat in 1993, with particular reference to the production and dissemination of several comprehensive ACIU analytical studies and the effective use of criminal information held at the General Secretariat,

RECOGNIZING the significant and positive impact that ACIU analytical studies have had on the level of assistance offered to member countries in combating international crime,



HOPING that ACIU will become a worldwide central reference point for all matters relating to crime analysis,

The ICPO-Interpol General Assembly, meeting from 23rd to 29th October 1996 in Antalya at its 65th session:

RECOMMENDS that:

- Member countries which do not have crime analysis units should consider the possibility of establishing them,
- While developing their own crime analysis facilities, member countries should consider adopting the standard terminology and approach used by ACIU, in order to facilitate co-operation;
- Member countries should bear in mind the fact that crime analysis ought to be carried out by specially selected and trained staff;

INVITES the NCBs and other law enforcement authorities to seek crime analysis assistance from the General Secretariat, and particularly from ACIU;

ENCOURAGES member countries which have made progress in crime analysis to keep the General Secretariat informed of any training possibilities offered and of all

improvements made in their national crime analysis facilities;

ASKS the General Secretariat to explore the possibility of establishing an international network of member countries' crime analysis units with a view to developing a standard approach, and to take whatever other steps may be necessary to make effective use of this technique;

CONSIDERS that priority should be given to the further development of crime analysis at the General Secretariat, taking into account all the associated financial, technical and staffing implications;

URGES member countries to send delegates to future crime analysis conferences and workshops organized by the Interpol General Secretariat.

AGN/65/RES/23

Subject: Increasing the severity of sanctions imposed under Article 52 of the General Regulations and simplification of the debt rescheduling procedure

NOTING THE CONTENTS of Report No. 14 entitled "Increasing the severity of sanctions imposed under Article 52 of the General Regulations and simplification of the debt rescheduling procedure (amendment of Articles 3a and 30 of the Financial Regulations)",

BEARING IN MIND the opinion expressed by the ad hoc Committee in application of Article 56 of the General Regulations,

WISHING to encourage the signing of debt rescheduling agreements by countries whose contributions are currently in arrears and also considering that the Organization's financial situation requires the adoption of rules providing an incentive for member countries in arrears to pay their contributions,

The ICPO-Interpol General Assembly, meeting in Antalya from 23rd to 29th October 1996 at its 65th session:

ADOPTS the following amendments to regulations, subject to the vote on Report AGN/65/RAP No. 2 entitled "Amending the Organization's Constitution: Voting conditions (Amendment of Article 52 of the General Regulations)" which will modify paragraph 1(a) of the present version of Article 52.

(A) Amendments to the Financial Regulations

ARTICLE 3a

Paragraphs 1 to 3 are unchanged, paragraph 4 now reads as follows:

(4) The debt shall be rescheduled over a period which may not exceed ten years and the sum to be repaid shall amount to at least the total of the Member's statutory contributions for the three financial years preceding the financial year in which the agreement is signed.

Paragraphs 5 and 6 are unchanged, paragraphs 7 and 8 now read as follows:

(7) If the Member fails to fulfil its obligations arising from the rescheduling agreement or from the terms of paragraph (5) above, the Secretary General shall notify that Member that the rescheduling agreement has been terminated. In such circumstances, and whatever the balance owed by the Member concerned, the Secretary General shall apply the provisions of Article 52 of the General Regulations, until that Member has fulfilled all its financial obligations towards the Organization.

(8) A Member's debt may be partially cancelled provided that the Member concerned concludes a debt rescheduling agreement with the Organization in conformity with the terms of the present Article. However, the cancelled debt shall again become due if the Member fails to fulfil its obligations arising from the rescheduling agreement, or does not promptly pay the statutory contributions called up during the period in which the rescheduled debt is being paid off.

ARTICLE 30

Abrogated.

(B) New wording of Article 52 of the General Regulations

Article 52 has been completely reworked and now reads as follows:

(1) If a Member has not fulfilled its financial obligations towards the Organization for the current financial year and the previous financial year:

(a) the Member's right to vote at General Assembly sessions and other meetings of the Organization shall be suspended but such voting restrictions shall not be applied to votes taken on amendments to the Organization's Constitution;

(b) the Member shall no longer have the right to be represented at any ICPO-Interpol meetings or events except the General Assembly and other statutory meetings;

(c) the Member shall not have the right to host ICPO-Interpol meetings or events;

(d) the Member shall no longer have the right to propose candidates for secondment or detachment to the General Secretariat;

(e) all benefits and services, provided by the General Secretariat except those mandated by the Constitution, shall be withdrawn from that Member.

(2) Once a Member has failed to fulfil its financial obligations towards the Organization for the current financial year and the previous financial year, the Secretary General shall:

(a) note the fact that the conditions for applying sanctions have been fulfilled and notify the Member accordingly;

(b) apply the measures listed under (1) above, unless the Executive Committee decides that it would not be in the Organization's best interests to withdraw one or more of the benefits or services referred to under paragraph (1.e);

(c) inform the Executive Committee accordingly.



Part of the Chilean Delegation

(3) The Member concerned may appeal to the Executive Committee against the measures taken. Appeals must be received by the Executive Committee not later than 30 days before the opening of its next meeting. If the Executive Committee decides to maintain the measures imposed, appeals shall be transmitted to the General Assembly which shall discuss them and take decisions at the beginning of its session. A member country may not submit a new appeal against the decision taken by the General Assembly unless so authorized by the Executive Committee on the grounds that a new decisive fact has come to light. Appeals shall not have the effect of suspending the measures taken by the Secretary General in conformity with the second paragraph of the present article; those measures shall remain in force until they are revoked by the Executive Committee or the General Assembly.

(4) If a Member has not fulfilled its financial obligations towards the Organization for the financial years prior to the year in which an election to the Executive Committee is held, delegates from that Member shall not be eligible for election as President, Vice-President, or Delegate on the

Executive Committee. Such Members shall not be permitted to propose candidates for any form of elected office or representative function connected with the Organization.

(5) The Secretary General shall note the revocation of the sanctions taken in application of paragraph (1) of the present Article as soon as it has been verified that the Member concerned has fulfilled its financial obligations to the Organization as defined in paragraphs (1) and (6) of the present Article. The Secretary General shall inform the Executive Committee of any such revocation.

(6) (a) The term "financial obligations" shall mean Members' statutory contributions and any other contractual obligations they may have vis-à-vis the Organization.

(b) For the purposes of the present article only, unfulfilled financial obligations relating to the previous financial year shall not be taken into account if such obligations, as defined above, do not exceed five per cent (5%) of the sum due.

The present resolution shall come into force on 1st July 1997 and Article 52, as adopted in

General Assembly Resolutions AGN/52/RES/7 and AGN/57/RES/1, shall be abrogated on the same date. The related modifications made to Articles 3a and 30 of the Financial Regulations shall come into force on the same date.

AGN/65/RES/25

Subject: Environmental crime — Establishment of national working parties on problems of waste

BEARING IN MIND the following Resolutions on international environmental crime, with particular reference to the international traffic in waste products:

- AGN/61/RES/12, adopted at the 61st General Assembly session in Dakar in 1992, deciding to set up a working party under Interpol's auspices and asking the General Secretariat to place the subject of environmental crime on the agendas of international meetings on economic crime held by the General Secretariat,

- AGN/62/RES/5, adopted at the 62nd General Assembly session in Aruba in 1993, dealing with the transborder movements of dangerous waste,

- AGN/63/RES/12, adopted at the 63rd General Assembly session in

Rome in 1994, concerning the use of "ECO Messages",

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT the experience shared by the delegates at the first three meetings of the Working Party on Environmental Crime, held in Lyons in September 1993, May 1994 and May 1995,

IN VIEW OF the proposal made by the delegates at the Third Meeting of the Working Party on Environmental Crime to establish, in each member country, a national working group (comprising representatives of law-enforcement agencies and administrative control departments) to examine the problem posed by traffic in waste, to co-ordinate law-enforcement measures, to submit proposals to the different departments involved, and to send the General Secretariat annual reports on the subject,

CONSIDERING that these proposals may usefully supplement the "Eco Message", which focuses on the exchange of information on international cases of environmental crime, and on the collection, storage, analysis and circulation of such information with the assistance of the General Secretariat,

CONSIDERING that international police co-operation is essential in

the fight against environmental crime,

CONSIDERING that international police co-operation requires, at national level, close co-operation not only between the different law-enforcement agencies but also between those agencies and the administrative bodies concerned,

The ICPO-Interpol General Assembly, meeting in Antalya from 23rd to 29th October 1996 at its 65th session:

ASKS the National Central Bureaus to:

(1) Set up, within their Bureaus, a national working party comprising representatives of all the law-enforcement agencies and administrative departments responsible for the control of waste products, in order to carry out the following priority tasks:

- ensure greater effectiveness in using the "Eco Message";
- collect information and statistics on environmental crime;
- ensure that crime analysis of data is carried out in each country;
- be attentive to the problems of the law-enforcement agencies and the administrative departments responsible for waste control and look for ways of solving those problems;

(2) Ask the national working party to prepare an annual summary report for the General Secretariat.

Part of the Brazilian Delegation



The new President, Mr Toshinori Kanemoto

Mr Toshinori Kanemoto was born in Japan on 24th August 1945. He is currently Director General of the International Affairs Department at the National Police Agency of Japan. As a student, he majored in law at Tokyo university and passed the National Bar Examination while at university. Since joining the police in 1968, he has held several posts, including Director of the Criminal Investigation Department at Kanagawa Prefecture, and Director of the International Criminal Affairs Division at the National Police Agency.

As Director of the International Research and Training Institute and as Director General of the International

Affairs Department of the Agency, he planned and implemented police technical assistance programmes and organized and lectured at international seminars.



From 1972 to 1973, Mr Kanemoto attended a graduate course at the University of Virginia, United States. From 1980 to 1983, while serving as First Secretary at the Japanese Embassy in Paris, France, he represented the police of Japan vis-à-vis Interpol.

He has attended nine Interpol General Assembly sessions and was twice elected as a member of the Executive Committee (1987 and 1994).

He is married and has three children.

States, Territories and Observers attending the 65th General Assembly session



States and Territories

Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Argentina, Aruba, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Ecuador, Egypt, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Gibraltar¹, Greece, Guinea, Honduras, Hong Kong¹, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Korea (Rep. of), Kuwait, Laos, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macao², Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Moldova, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, Netherlands Antilles, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Puerto Rico³, Qatar, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syria, Tanzania, Thailand, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vietnam, Yemen, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

¹ United Kingdom NCB Sub-Bureaus

² Portuguese NCB Sub-Bureau

³ United States NCB Sub-Bureau

Observers

European Union
 International Air Transport Association
 International Banking Security Association
 Technical Secretariat of the Arab Interior Ministers Council
 United Nations Organization
 World Customs Organization

Conference Sidelights

by Miguel Chamorro, General Secretariat

The hostess announced that we were beginning our descent to Istanbul and, looking out of the window, we could just make out — even at that altitude — the coastline of Turkey, the country hosting Interpol's 65th General Assembly session.

As we flew in over the Black Sea, we had a bird's-eye view of the Bosphorus, the strait which divides Thrace from Anatolia, separating the European and Asian parts of Turkey. By far the greater part of Turkey lies in Asia, occupying the vast peninsula of Anatolia, a region which has witnessed the birth and development of several western civilizations, starting with the Stone Age and moving on from cave-dwellers to the first attempts at urban planning by the powerful Hittites, from the great city-states of the Greco-Roman period to the Byzantine Empire, and from the creativity of the Seljuks and the grandeur of the Ottoman rulers to the modern nation that is present-day Turkey.

We took advantage of our slow descent to learn a few more facts about our host country.

Turkey has a population of 62 million inhabitants living in an area of 780,000 sq. km. Its 8,000-km coastline extends along the

Black Sea and the Sea of Marmara, down to the Aegean and the Mediterranean. The capital is Ankara.

Modern Turkey manages to combine a certain mystic oriental appeal with typical Mediterranean vitality. It may be cosmopolitan, as in the city of Istanbul, or rural as in the tiny mountain villages. The country has a wealth of history, and its language — unchanged for 1,000 years — is spoken by more than 100 million people.

In 1923, Turkey was among the countries which attended the First International Criminal Police Congress in Vienna. It renewed its membership when Interpol was revived in 1946 after the Second World War, and hosted the 1955 General Assembly session in Istanbul. Turkey has always supported the Organization since its inception, and confirmed this support by its invitation to host the 1996 General Assembly session in Antalya, one of the country's most delightful areas.

Antalya

After a stop-over in Istanbul, we continued our journey to Antalya — Turkey's principal tourist resort. The city, built on the coast of the ancient province of Lycia,

founded in the 2nd century B.C. by Attalus II, King of Pergamum and, despite the protection of its walls, was occupied successively by the Romans, the Byzantines and the Seljuks, before it came under Ottoman rule.

Nestling on the shores of the Mediterranean, with its profusion of monuments and relics of bygone civilizations, Antalya provided a warm welcome for the 65th ICPO-Interpol General Assembly session, held from 23rd to 29th October 1996.

The emblem chosen for the General Assembly depicted the stylized, elegant minaret of the Yivli Minareli mosque, set off against a clear blue sky, with the bay of Antalya and the Taurus mountains in the background.

The 555 delegates representing 144 countries, 4 Sub-Regional Bureaus, 6 international organizations and one observer country, worked relentlessly to complete a tightly-packed agenda. Fortunately, they were also able to relax at the events included in a pleasant and varied social programme.

The first of these events was the dinner hosted by the mayor of Antalya for the Executive Committee. This took place in a



The Roman amphitheatre at Aspendus which provided the setting for a display of traditional dances

restaurant set on the very walls of the city with a splendid panoramic view over the bay. During the meal, the President of Interpol made a short speech thanking the mayor for the work that had been done to make it possible for the General Assembly session to take place in Antalya.

On Tuesday 22nd October, at the end of the working day, the United States delegation issued its usual invitation to the participants to visit its "Hospitality Salon". From the terrace, we feasted our eyes on the scene before us: a huge, curiously shaped swimming pool, surrounded by tennis courts and carefully tended gardens reaching down to the beach itself, where holiday-makers could either indulge in every type of water-sport or simply lie back and relax in the sun.

All the hotels which had been reserved for the General Assembly were situated along the same beach, separated only by flower beds and thickets of Mediterranean pines; this helped to create a feeling of isolation, peace and quiet. The hotels offered everything in the way of 20th-century luxury and comfort — a far cry from Spartan austerity of the cave-dwellings that we had already visited in the region.

Over the 11,000 years which have elapsed since the first human settlements, life-styles have undoubtedly changed beyond recognition; we see this clearly in Turkey, which has evolved over the centuries to become the modern country we know today.

On Wednesday at midday, there was a break in the proceedings and the Director General of the

Turkish police invited us to an open-air lunch in the relaxed setting of the Golf Club.

That evening, the Turkish Minister of the Interior gave a banquet to welcome all the delegates, at the Dedeman Hotel in Antalya. The evening was enlivened by music and by a charming hostess who succeeded in persuading many of those present to sing some of their countries' traditional songs. The evening gowns worn by the ladies added colour and elegance to the occasion.

The next day, the reception traditionally given by Interpol for all those attending the Assembly took place in the salons of the Antbell Hotel. Mr Eriksson addressed the gathering and bid an informal farewell to all the guests, since a large

number of persons accompanying the delegates would not be at the official closing ceremony on the final day of the session.

From there, we moved on to the reception arranged by the Japanese Delegation. Whilst we were sampling a few Japanese specialities in the company of a group of delegates, a young Venezuelan interpreter told us of the legend according to which Noah — after the Flood — divided up the world among his three sons, Ham, Shem, and Japheth, who thus became the ancestors of the human race. Japheth was given the eastern part of the world and Turkestan, and his second son, Turk, inherited the land which is now Turkey.

At the end of the day's proceedings on Friday, the Commissioner of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police hosted a reception in the Sirene Hotel. From there, with night — and the outside temperature — falling rapidly, we boarded buses and left in a convoy to the ancient Roman city of Aspendus, where we saw only one monument: the theatre built during the reign of Marcus Aurelius.

Taking our places on the ancient stone steps which could seat up to 15,000 spectators, we gazed in awe at the most beautiful Roman theatre in all Asia Minor, its massive semi-circular bulk crowned by a gallery of arch-ways in the purest Roman tradition. Before us rose the crenellated wall of the stage, at the foot of which — like silent witnesses to a glorious past — stood the remains of columns which would have graced the theatre in its heyday.

The evening's programme included a selection of folk tableaux from different regions of Turkey, offering us a rich and varied repertoire influenced by cultural traditions inherited from the Greeks, Persians, Romans, Byzantines and Ottomans. The most important events in life are often celebrated in music and dance, and some examples of these were presented to us by the "Turkey" Group, which led us on a journey across the different regions of the country.

We were especially impressed by the traditional dance of the Dervishes who, clad in their white bell-shaped costumes, whirled like human spinning-tops across the stage to the sound of mystical

music in an extraordinary ritual of prayer.

The stars shone brightly in the firmament above this Roman theatre — which must have the best acoustics in the world — and, at the stroke of midnight, as the show came to an end and the floodlights went out one by one, the stage recovered its more natural appearance and we were able to admire the edifice one last time before returning to the coaches that would take us back to our hotels.

Side

Very early on the Saturday morning, we headed in the direction of Side, a spit of land jutting into the Mediterranean, former haunt of pirates and once the largest port of Pamphylia. Splitting up into groups by language, we visited the architectural remains bequeathed to us by the Romans after their conquest: a huge theatre, and Roman baths now converted into a museum housing a vast collection of magnificent archaeological artefacts which bear witness to the advanced level of art and culture of the time. We



The ruins of ancient Perga

Photo: Veronique Castan



The waterfalls at Kursunlu

continued with a visit to the agora and the Temple of Apollo, before turning our attention to the souvenir shops in the narrow streets of the tourist town that Side has now become. From there, we moved on in organized, caravan-like fashion to our next destination: Perga.

Perga

We arrived in Perga just as the mid-morning sun was reaching its zenith. Founded by the Hittites around 1500 B.C., and one of the most important cities of ancient Lycia in the fertile region of Pamphylia, Perga was conquered first by Alexander the Great and later by the Romans, reaching its apogee under the Emperor Trajan, who covered the city with beautiful statues.

According to Christian tradition, Perga was also the place where St. Paul gave his first sermons.

Entering the old city between crumbling circular towers of golden stone — the remnants of what was once a Hellenistic-period gateway — we continued our way down a street lined with Ionic columns, without doubt the most impressive sight in ancient Perga. To one side we saw the agora, a little further on, a somewhat damaged monumental

fountain dating from the time of Hadrian, and straight ahead the Roman baths, with their ingenious water-heating system.

Before reaching the Roman gate, we stopped to admire the ruins of a Byzantine basilica, which concluded our tour of the lower town. We then continued upwards to a plateau on which the acropolis had stood: unfortunately, there was very little left to see. From there, we could make out the theatre — not unlike the one we had visited in Aspendus — which was closed for restoration. There was also the 234-metre long stadium, the tracks of which were being used to store many of the statues which had been found during the excavation work. These testimonies in stone helped us to imagine a little better what life must have been like in ancient Perga.

Kursunlu

We returned to our coaches shortly before midday, since there was another visit to fit into our schedule — a trip to a natural park and the Kursunlu waterfalls. Although not as spectacular as Niagara, these waterfalls are nonetheless the pride of the region: for us visitors, they provided a most refreshing and

welcome rest after a full morning of walking around under the hot sun.

We took advantage of the break to take some photographs of romantic spots in the park where the long, silver horse-tails of water cascaded gracefully down from the lush vegetation into limpid pools, providing a veritable oasis of peace to restore our spirits.

In the shade of the pines we were able to enjoy the pleasures of an open-air feast. Almost a thousand people gathered around an enormous barbecue, reminding some of us of how we enjoyed our time in the boy scouts.

To round off the day's excursions, we paid a visit to one of the country's biggest leather factories, where we were treated to a fashion show. After a little shopping and a break to drink tea served in the Turkish style, we continued to the Hotel Club Sera, where we prepared to take our places for what our social programme announced as the "Thousand and One Nights" show.

Entering the hotel gardens — a carpet of manicured green lawn and abundant, varied plants and shrubs set against the backdrop of the open sea — we caught a glimpse of what was to be the highlight of a truly memorable day.

There stood the sultan's pavilion, decorated with vividly coloured rich silk drapery, its red canopies topped with silk and gold tassels, containing the thrones of the sultan, his wife and the prince. On either side of the pavilion hung the flags of Turkey, the region and Interpol. The ground was covered with splendid multicoloured wool and silk rugs, reminding us that it was the Turks who first developed the art of carpet-weaving in the 3rd century B.C., and introduced it first to the Muslim world and then to the rest of the world.

Photo: Véronique Castan



The "Thousand and one nights" show at the Hotel Club Sera

Heralded by the sound of horns and cymbals, a huge procession arrived, led by the sultan and his family attired in the dress of the period and followed by a retinue of servants, pages, aides-de-camp and, finally, the musicians.

Once the sultan was seated on his throne, there began a ceremonial ritual which escaped most of us who did not understand Turkish. This was followed by the much-awaited "dance of the seven veils", performed by two attractive young dancers who persuaded some of the delegates to join in their swaying movements.

The music and atmosphere transported us back to the time when Turkey was ruled by a sultan from Constantinople — now Istanbul. In the 14th century, under the royal dynasty, there was much territorial expansion leading ultimately to the foundation of the Ottoman Empire, which lasted for six hundred years until the end of the First World War.

We were caught by the spell, and images of sultans, harems and eunuchs were still running through our minds as we returned to our hotels.

Kemer-Phaselis

Sunday dawned radiantly and, quite early, we made ready for our visit to the coast, west of Antalya. The sun shone brightly in the blue Mediterranean sky, promising an excellent day's sailing.

In festive mood, we set off from our hotels in Belek along the coast road, leaving Antalya behind and

passing through spectacular scenery parallel to the Taurus mountains, until we arrived at the yachting harbour in Kemer.

Boarding a dozen boats of almost as many different sizes, we set sail to coast through stunningly blue waters around the little creeks and coves where the mountains seemed to rise dramatically out of the sea.

With the fervour of experienced yachtsmen and women, we cheered loudly every time our boat overtook another from which our colleagues, in true maritime spirit, returned our greetings like old sea-dogs encountering an ocean-going cargo ship after months of solitary sailing.

Caught up on the wave of general enthusiasm, and reassured by the excellent sailing conditions and the sunny skies, even the most timid of those on board began to abandon their positions of safety near the life-buoys and the main mast and ventured to the port and starboard railings to enjoy the spectacle of the dolphins swimming alongside, or simply take in the full beauty of the calm blue sea.

The port at Phaselis

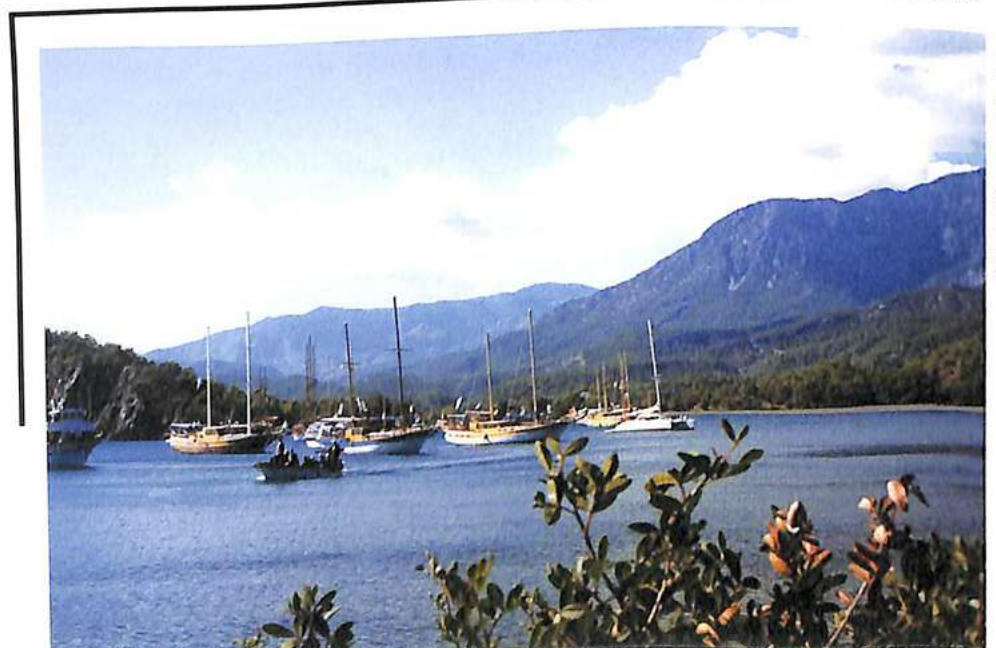


Photo: Véronique Castan

We finally dropped anchor in a bay opposite the rocky headland on which stood the city of Phaselis, an important Lycian and later Roman port. Eager to pursue our sea-going adventures, we were among the last to board the small launches which took us to the jetty in the bay south of the ancient city, at the foot of Mount Tahtali.

In their day, the three ports of Phaselis formed the most important trading centre in the region: the city was even considered worthy of a visit from the Emperor Hadrian, in whose honour a huge gateway was built at the end of the main street. Our

plucked up enough courage to take a dip in the cold waters of the ancient Roman port.

Leaving Phaselis, this time by road, we headed for the free zone in Antalya to see an exhibition of carpets, pottery and jewellery. Sipping our tea, we finally decided — after over an hour's haggling with the seller — to buy a Turkish silk rug, convinced that, in the end, we had found a real bargain.

Our excursion over, we went to the cocktail party given by the United States Delegation: there was general praise for the excellent way our Turkish hosts

Although not on the official programme, there was also the final farewell party given — as every year — by the General Secretariat to thank our Turkish colleagues who had worked directly under the instructions of Mr Dalda, the general coordinator. The evening was an informal occasion but nonetheless full of emotion.

Istanbul

The last night in the hotel, once most of the delegates have left, is always a little sad: the bustle in the hotel corridors has died down, reception rooms are

Photo: Véronique Castan



Istanbul

visit included a tour of the ancient theatre, the baths, the forum and the entry to the other two ports.

During our visit, we met — and photographed — Cleopatra, Mark Antony, soldiers, musicians, gladiators, consuls carrying the General Assembly emblem... and this spectacle lasted the whole time we were in Phaselis.

Dispersed over different parts of the city, we enjoyed an open-air lunch and, by the time the dessert arrived, there were a few who had

had organized the social programme.

During the next few days, we attended extremely interesting receptions hosted by the Indian and Pakistani Delegations. In fact, every day there was at least one social event which gave us the opportunity to meet up again after the day's working sessions.

The social events came to an end on Monday, with a reception given by the Argentine Delegation and which, to our minds, was a model of good taste and elegance.

virtually empty, and the general silence of the place only adds to the sense of solitude. So much so that we in turn are filled with the urge to pack our cases and move on.

Since our journey back meant stopping over in Istanbul, it was an ideal opportunity to visit what the Chinese over 1,000 years ago named the "City of cities", and to wander through the Byzantium of the Greeks, the Constantinople of the Eastern Roman Empire and the capital of the Ottoman sultans.

We checked into the Pera Palas Hotel, famous in its time as the hotel where the passengers from the legendary "Orient Express" train used to stay. We were close to the Galata Tower, a structure built in a distinctive Italianate style, which initially served as a watch-tower for fires, and was later used as a prison. Today, the tower houses a leisure centre and a restaurant, which is where we dined on our first evening in Istanbul, and were captivated by the oriental dances and typical culinary delights.

The following morning, we went along to a travel agency to sign up for a guided tour of the city's main attractions. We started with the Blue Mosque, an extraordinary example of grace and elegance, and then visited the Mosque of Süleyman the Magnificent, the epitome of Muslim architecture in Istanbul. Both these edifices testify to the splendour of the golden age of the Ottoman Empire.

Lunch was a quick affair on the shore of the Bosphorus in a restaurant which used to be the railway station for the Orient Express. From there, we headed for the Great Bazaar — a veritable maze and window-shopper's paradise selling an almost unimaginable range of jewellery, rugs, ceramics, leather and silk objects and handicrafts from all over the country: there was everything from genuine hand-made items to cheap imitations.

With some 40,000 shops spread over an area of about 200,000 square metres, the Great Bazaar is the largest covered market in the world, the hub of all kinds of trading activity since the 15th century and where haggling — practised almost as a sport — is still very much the order of the day.

At the same time as Roman art began to decline, Anatolia saw the birth of Byzantine architecture and sculpture. At the height of the Byzantine Empire, there were some 300 convents and 500

churches in Istanbul alone. We visited the most famous of all, St. Sophia, and were awe-struck at the magnificent dome and its interior; legend has it that the Emperor Justinian, who supervised its construction, exclaimed, when the church was completed: "Oh Solomon, I have beaten you!"

Given the little time available, our visit to the Yerebatansaray cistern would be brief. Known as the "buried palace", the cistern is bathed in a semi-penumbra created by indirect lighting, giving it an unreal, dream-like appearance. The 224 granite pillars rising out of the water seem almost to be detached from the brick vaults they actually support, and the visitor cannot fail to be instilled with a sense of sepulchral peace in an atmosphere so conducive to prayer: yet this is no temple, but simply a cistern designed to supply water to the imperial palace.

We wanted to complete our discovery of Istanbul with a visit to the Topkapi Palace, former residence of the sultans and a splendid example of Ottoman architecture. The palace is one of the oldest still standing and was the focal point from which the Ottoman Empire was governed.

It is difficult to describe all the riches contained within the walls of this remarkable museum: armour, jewellery, and many other mementoes of a not-so-distant past. We toured the sultan's apartments, saw the famous harem and the vast collection of weaponry and, still dizzy with the splendour of it all, left the confines of the palace to breathe in some fresh air on the terrace by the belvedere built by Sultan Ibrahim on the very hill where the acropolis of Byzantium once stood.

Standing on that exceptional spot which dominates the city, we gazed for one last time on the skyline of mosques and minarets from which the muezzins could

be heard calling the faithful to prayer.

Below us, at the foot of the Topkapi Palace, flowed the Bosphorus, the coveted waterway dividing the city and uniting two continents. As we looked down on the boats plying their way along this famous strait, our Spanish friends recalled the words of the 19th-century romantic poet Espronceda, who was probably inspired by this same view when he wrote:

"Y ve el capitán pirata,
sentado alegre en la popa,
Asia a un lado,
Asia a un lado,
al otro Europa
y allá a su frente : Estambul..."
[And the bold pirate captain
Sitting proudly on the deck
Sees Asia on one side,
Europe on the other,
And before him — Istanbul ...]

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