

## 78th INTERPOL General Assembly

Address by Minister of Law and Second Minister of Home Affairs Mr K Shanmugam at the Closing Ceremony of the 78th INTERPOL General Assembly  
15 October 2009, Singapore

President [Khoo Boon Hui](#),  
Secretary General [Ronald Noble](#) of INTERPOL,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure and honour for me to address you at the close of the [78th INTERPOL General Assembly](#). I hope you have had a memorable session here in Singapore.

We are pleased that the 78th INTERPOL General Assembly has been a resounding success. Intensive discussions over the past four days were fruitful. The active participation and comments of the delegations have helped to shape the resolutions.

The inaugural INTERPOL-United Nations Ministerial Meeting was held before the General Assembly. The outcome declaration signed by the Ministers, together with the UN Department of Peace-Keeping Operations and INTERPOL has helped to cement a historic partnership. It will help to promote state stability and global law and order. The new partnership is important - we all face threats from the instability of states, terrorism and transnational crime.

With globalisation, lowered trade barriers and technological advances, criminal activities now follow the movement of finance, people, transport and goods across global networks. Criminals operate outside the traditional nation-state system, making detection, intervention and prevention even more difficult.

It is a challenge for enforcement agencies when they attempt to penetrate these modern transnational criminal networks.

The trafficking of drugs and people, money laundering, tax evasion and smuggling will continue. Changing social, economic, climatic and environmental conditions are also creating new habitats for transnational crimes. Criminals are making inroads to global industries that range from financial services, to entertainment and even food and beverage industries.

Crime like fraud, theft, blackmail and copyright infringement have taken an online dimension facilitated by the internet and easy communications. This is an issue of pressing concern. Crimes can be committed without the criminals having to leave their countries. The anonymity of cyberspace makes prevention and enforcement more difficult. Cybercrime has become one of the fastest growing criminal activities in the world.

The link between transnational crime and terrorism has also become more intertwined. Terrorists have committed crimes to finance their activities. Transnational criminal syndicates have no qualms about helping terrorists smuggle resources and material through national borders.



We have also seen terrorist organisations adapt themselves by changing from being centrally-managed, to having cells of operatives. They include educated professionals. Their targets have also changed. Softer targets such as the public transportation network and hotels have been added to hard targets such as warships and foreign missions.

Thus while an individual country's security is a necessary precondition for global security, it is no longer sufficient. Increasingly, no country can act alone and succeed in insulating themselves against the threats posed by crime and terrorism. The starting point has to be the strengthening of the global security community, with global policing as its bedrock. This is where INTERPOL can make a positive contribution.

I am therefore very happy that INTERPOL, as the leader of global policing, has continuously been evolving itself to adapt to ground realities, build new capabilities and fight emerging transnational crime and terrorism. Without INTERPOL's system of international notices, a fugitive Singaporean ex-lawyer, Tan Cheng Yew, would still be at large. He had misappropriated about S\$5 million from his clients and was on the run since 2003. He was arrested by the German authorities in June 09 when he was found to be wanted by the Singapore Police as an INTERPOL Red Notice had been issued. On this note, I am grateful to the German authorities for the close co-operation that led to his arrest.

This week's proceedings have seen speakers covering a wide range of issues of concern to the law enforcement community. Among those that were addressed include border security, cybercrime and maritime piracy. Important resolutions were also passed to tackle corruption and build police capacity.

The closing of this General Assembly marks a new achievement for INTERPOL, a new high for international police cooperation. Let me take this opportunity to urge all of you to continue finding common ground, take joint decisions and build strategic partnerships.

I understand that you have agreed to meet next year for the 79th General Assembly in Doha, Qatar. We trust that you will have an enriching experience in Qatar. In the meantime, we wish you all the very best as you implement the resolutions you have passed. We are also confident that the prominence and effectiveness of INTERPOL as an organisation will grow.

Finally, we hope that you leave Singapore with fond memories and re-invigorated to the cause of global security. I hereby declare the 78th INTERPOL General Assembly closed.