

## **INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL POLICE ORGANIZATION (INTERPOL)**

INTERPOL is the world's largest international police organization operating world-wide with 186 member countries. Its headquarters, the General Secretariat, are located in Lyon, France. In addition to a representative office at United Nations Headquarters in New York, INTERPOL currently operates six Sub-regional bureaus staffed by law enforcement representatives originating from the region. These bureaus are located in Argentina, Ivory Coast, El Salvador, Kenya, Thailand and Zimbabwe with a seventh regional office expected to commence functions in Cameroun in early 2008. Each INTERPOL member country maintains a National Central Bureau, known as an NCB. The NCB which is fully staffed and operated by the relevant services of the member country is the designated contact point for the General Secretariat and other member countries requiring assistance with transnational investigations, the location and apprehension of fugitives, and other international enquiries relating to the work of law enforcement.

### **INTERPOL's Mandate**

The mandate and the primary task of INTERPOL is to support police and law enforcement agencies in its 186 member countries in their efforts to prevent crime and conduct criminal investigations as efficiently and effectively as possible. Specifically, INTERPOL facilitates cross border police cooperation and, as appropriate, supports governmental and intergovernmental organizations, authorities and services whose mission is to prevent or combat crime.

### **INTERPOL's Core Functions**

In order to carry out its mandate, INTERPOL provides its member countries and designated partner organizations four core functions or services:

1. Secure global police communications services

INTERPOL recently designed and implemented a state-of-the-art global communications system for the law enforcement community which is called "I-24/7". This new communication tool – to which all member countries are already connected – allows for the transmission of information about suspected individuals and crimes to INTERPOL's member countries requiring assistance with ongoing international investigations in a secure manner within real time.

2. Global databases and data services

Once police have the capability to communicate internationally, they need access to information which can assist investigations or help prevent crime. INTERPOL has therefore developed and maintains a range of global databases and data services, covering key information such as names, fingerprints, photographs, DNA profiles of individuals under investigation or wanted for arrest as well as data concerning Stolen

and Lost identification and Travel Documents (SLTD), stolen vehicles, stolen works of art and illicit weapons related to criminal cases.

### 3. Operational police support services

INTERPOL provides specific crime – related support through its third core function, the provision of operational police support services. INTERPOL has six priority crime areas: drugs and organized crime, financial and high-tech crime, fugitives, public safety and terrorism, trafficking in human beings (including crimes against children), and corruption. Other crime areas of concern include, inter alia, environmental and intellectual property crime. INTERPOL convenes theme-oriented specialized working groups which bring together experts from around the world to share expertise and develop and promote best practice in investigation techniques. INTERPOL also conducts thematic criminal analysis in order to, inter alia, detect new crime trends, trace criminal networks, determine modus operandi, and identify perpetrators.

In addition to specific crime area support, INTERPOL operates a Command and Co-ordination Centre (“CCC”) 24 hours a day/7 days a week, linking the General Secretariat, regional offices and all NCBs for urgent police-related matter or emergency. The CCC co-ordinates the exchange of information between member countries requesting assistance with international investigations. The CCC also assumes a crisis-management role during serious incidents and serves as the first point of contact for any member country which might require assistance with a crisis situation. In addition, upon request of a member country, INTERPOL can deploy Incidence Response Teams (IRT) which have the capacity to provide a range of investigative and analytical support to the local law enforcement authorities at the scene of the incident.

### 4. Training and Development

INTERPOL enhances the capacity of member countries to effectively combat serious transnational crime and terrorism, through the provision of (a) focused police training initiatives and of (b) on-demand advice, guidance and support in building dedicated crime-fighting components with national police forces. The latter includes the sharing of knowledge, skills and best practices in policing through INTERPOL channels and the establishment of global standards on how to combat specific forms of crimes.

## **ENSURING BORDER SECURITY AND PREVENTING TERRORIST MOBILITY**

One of greatest challenges facing law enforcement in ensuring border security is a lack of access to the crucial information needed by frontline police authorities, in particular those at border control checkpoints, to successfully identify suspected individuals and enable them to take appropriate action. Overcoming this and other challenges to border security

requires highly coordinated and efficient international police cooperation, in particular the capacity and willingness to share crucial information.

When processing persons entering a country, specific information is needed to identify suspected and wanted individuals and to enable border security authorities to make informed decisions and take appropriate action. This includes accurate information on “wanted” persons as well as the ability to verify the authenticity of travel documents.

## **DETECTING WANTED PERSONS**

With regard to suspected and wanted individuals, INTERPOL’s color-coded international Notices system informs member countries of the movements of known international criminals either subject to arrest and extradition or suspected of criminal involvement. The most widely known is the Red Notice, an international request by an INTERPOL member country for the provisional arrest of an individual who has been charged with a crime by a judicial authority and based on the requesting country’s commitment to seek extradition.

In addition, INTERPOL in cooperation with the Security Council’s 1267 Committee created the INTERPOL-United Nations Security Council Special Notices. These Special Notices alert national police services to groups or individuals associated with Al Qaida and the Taliban who are subject to UN sanctions. The Special Notice can be especially effective in promoting enforcement of the travel ban as they are available to all of INTERPOL’s member countries through the Organization’s I-24/7 communications system. To date, approximately 290 of these Notices have been published.

## **VERIFY THE AUTHENTICITY OF TRAVEL DOCUMENTS**

Bearing in mind that terrorists and other serious criminals often use false documents to travel, in 2002 Interpol created and launched its database on Stolen and Lost Travel Documents (SLTD). This database, which is also available to all of INTERPOL’s member countries through the I-24/7 system, currently contains more than 15.5 million documents reported by more than 120 countries. However, in many countries, this information may only be available at the INTERPOL national focal point, or NCB.

## **BRINGING INFORMATION TO THE BORDER**

Recognizing that direct access to such information should not be limited to INTERPOL’s NCBs, it is INTERPOL’s policy to extend access beyond these national focal points. In order to make reliable, accurate and up-to-date information available to front-line officers in real-time, INTERPOL has developed new integrated solutions to allow for direct access to INTERPOL’s databases. This new technology called FIND / MIND refers to the two different ways of connecting INTERPOL’s databases at border entry points or other remote field locations. At present, this new technical solution is primarily used to access the INTERPOL databases on Stolen and Lost Travel Document and Stolen Motor

Vehicles. Work is currently underway to also include direct access to INTERPOL's other databases.

### **BORDERS AND PORTS SECURITY CENTER AT THE INTERPOL GENERAL SECRETARIAT**

Finally, to strengthen border protection, INTERPOL intends to establish a Border and Ports Security Center at its General Secretariat in Lyon, France. The goal of the Center will be to increase security at borders and all points of entry by supporting member countries in the monitoring, prevention and investigation of fraudulent and illegal activities in these areas. The specific objectives of this Center will be to monitor, analyze and report on the use of INTERPOL'S tools, such as the Stolen and Lost Travel Documents database, by member countries and to co-ordinate the delivery of training and other capacity-building measures that would help member countries comply with the present international security requirements for ports-of-entry. The Center will develop strong linkages with other international organizations involved in port security and enforcement.