

BWC Review Conference

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INTERPOL Note

Friday 9 December 2011

Mr. Chairman, *President*

Excellences,

Distinguished Delegates,

It is a great pleasure to address this message to the Seventh Review Conference of the States Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention, under the name of The International Criminal Police Organization – INTERPOL.

Recognizing the importance of the Biological Weapons Convention as the cornerstone of the international framework combatting biothreats, INTERPOL has been an active participant in several of the Meetings of Experts and Meetings of States Parties held from 2003 to 2005 and from 2007 to 2010.

President
Mr. Chairman, Excellences,

Criminal Intelligence analysis tell us that terrorists and criminal organized groups around the world are still interested in exploiting biological agents, but also experienced and scientific human capacities, in order to perpetrate their terrorist intentions. In addition, during the last few years, biological agents have been increasingly used by individuals that do not belong to specific terrorist or criminal organizations (lone wolves) in order to perpetrate their criminal actions.

In parallel, recent biological scientific advancements, especially within the field of synthetic biology, provide a new spectrum of dual-use technology that could be misused to serve terrorist and criminal intentions.

President
Mr. Chairman, Excellences,

Since its initiation in 2004, INTERPOL's bioterrorism programme has been dedicatedly participating in the international effort to combat the bioterrorism threat and any other malicious use of biological agents by non-state actors.

As the largest criminal police organization, INTERPOL's effort in this area has been focused on improving the capacity of law enforcement agencies of its member countries to prevent and respond to bioterrorism. This has been concretely implemented through a robust, internationally recognized, capacity building programme that assisted almost all of our member countries facing the bio-threat, by raising awareness and providing incident response methodologies.

In late 2010, thanks to the substantial funding support of the United States Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI), the decision has been taken by INTERPOL's most senior management level to adopt a new comprehensive approach addressing, not only the bioterrorism threat, but also the Chemical Radiological, Nuclear terrorism and the explosives (e) threat (Referred to as CBRNe). Consequently, a CBRNe Terrorism Prevention programme has been launched, adding two more units to the already existing Bioterrorism one with the objective of countering the CBRNe threat family.

The launching of the CBRNe programme has put INTERPOL's bioterrorism countering efforts in a new context, within which each of the three dedicated units adopts an **intelligence driven, prevention oriented investigative methodology, committed to an inter-agency approach.**

In response to this substantial evolution, and in parallel to its senior capacity building programme, the Bioterrorism prevention unit started to develop a substantial intelligence analysis capability, with the aim of gathering comprehensive data on biological incidents, analyzing the threats and providing all INTERPOL member countries a robust analytical support helping them to prevent and address all types of Biothreat:

- A Biocrimes Database has been established in INTERPOL's General Secretariat, gathering information from different open sources on all incidents including malicious use of biological agents occurring around the world. Information registered in this database are analyzed through scientific threat and risk assessment methodologies in order to reach concrete and real results.
- The fruit of this process is the production of robust and reliable analytical products that help INTERPOL's member countries preventing and responding more efficiently to biological attacks.
 - A *quarterly report*, summarizing and analyzing the most remarkable biological incidents that have taken place, ~~will be~~ published and distributed to all National Central Bureaus and contact points. *all around the globe*

Last but not least, INTERPOL's Bioterrorism Unit will keep assisting all member countries in an operational manner through its secured global communication system to safely exchange information, but also the deployment of its Incident Response Teams and Major Events Support Teams, equipped with a CBRNe expertise.

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Mr. Chairman, Excellences,

Bioterrorism is a multidimensional global threat that requires coordinated and harmonized international dedicated efforts. INTERPOL is playing an interactive role by being committed to assist law enforcement authorities around the world confronting the threat. However, law enforcement is far from being the only factor in this equation. The development of partnerships involving other relevant disciplines, such as public health and the scientific community, (on the local, national, regional, and international scale) is, in our view, essential for a more efficient prevention and response effort.

Mr. Chairman

INTERPOL thanks the Chair of the Conference, ~~Ambassador Paul van den Ijssel~~, for the opportunity to address the Conference. We wish it success in its deliberations during the coming weeks.