

International Conference on Nuclear Security ICONS 2024 - Shaping the Future

GENERAL STATEMENT

21 May 2024

Co-presidents,

Excellences,

Distinguished delegates

Law enforcement agencies worldwide are at the forefront of protecting communities from the misuse of nuclear and radiological materials. INTERPOL, as a global representative of the law enforcement community, supports its 196 member countries to counter the threat from radiological and nuclear terrorism.

Effective international cooperation and the sharing of information are crucial to mitigate the risk posed from emerging threats to nuclear security. INTERPOL supports its members in this endeavor, fulfilling its mandate to promote international law enforcement collaboration.

At the heart of INTERPOL's operations lies its encrypted global communication system, called I-24/7, which facilitates the secure exchange of information among law enforcement worldwide. Furthermore, INTERPOL manages a comprehensive array of 19 police databases and 10 analytical files housing almost 180 million records encompassing wanted individuals, stolen property, weapons, and various threats. In 2023 alone, these databases witnessed over 7.5 billion searches by law enforcement entities globally.

As part of its CBRNE response, INTERPOL has set up a dedicated, threat-based, criminal intelligence-driven unit for Radiological and Nuclear Terrorism Prevention in charge of implementing our Law Enforcement Support (LES) programme. This program has been established to ensure that support for INTERPOL member countries is measurable, driven by criminal intelligence, and tailored to the needs identified with beneficiary countries. It relies on three main pillars:

- **Police data management:** INTERPOL supports national law enforcement agencies, by issuing alerts about individuals involved in radioactive criminality and for stolen or missing radioactive sources. Through regional working groups and bilateral engagements, we collaborate directly with member countries and international organizations to gather data on individuals and events related to nuclear and radiological threats.
- The data gathered forms the basis for **analysis and reporting**. INTERPOL indeed produces analytical reports in support to investigations. We also aim at providing accurate and credible analytical products, that assist policymakers and legislators in making well-informed decisions. Ultimately, this information is to support the design of proportionate policies and legislation, and the efficient allocation of funding, resources, equipment, and training to the areas of greatest need. Or in other words, INTERPOL plays a key role as the conduit between operational front line officers and strategic policy makers.
- Finally, an effective response to nuclear security threats requires **specialized awareness and capabilities** that are not part of the traditional law enforcement skill set. In this regard, INTERPOL supports member countries build their capabilities; and continues to engage internal and external experts to provide law enforcement with the expertise needed to prevent and counter criminal activities.

I wish to use this opportunity to thank the governments of Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States for their contribution and support of INTERPOL's Radiological and Nuclear Terrorism prevention activities; as well as our partners, in particular the IAEA for the strong partnership we have developed over the years.

Law enforcement plays a crucial role in understanding and addressing threats to nuclear security. They are, or will be, the first responders in situations involving terrorists or smugglers using nuclear material.

Law enforcement does hold a vital position within the global security framework and nuclear security realm. So does international cooperation. In this regard, INTERPOL holds its systems, channels and policing capabilities available to its global membership.

INTERPOL remains dedicated to bringing the needs, perspectives, and on-the-ground experiences of law enforcement into current discussions on nuclear security. This is part of our collective

response to transnational crime and the potential devastating use of nuclear material by criminal actors.

I thank you for your attention.